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PART II

Statutory Notifications (S. R. O.)

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND
TELECOMMUNICATION**
(Digital Nation Pakistan)

NOTIFICATION

Islamabad, the 21st January, 2026

S. R. O. 94(I)/2026.— In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (ab) of sub-section (2) of section 57 of the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act, 1996 (XVII of 1996), read with sections 33C and 33D thereof, the Federal Government is pleased to direct that the following further amendments shall be made in the Research and Development Fund Rules, 2006, namely:—

In the aforesaid Rules,—

(A) in rule 2,—

(a) for clause (i), the following shall be substituted, namely:—

127 (1—7)

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- “(i) “PI” means the Principal Investigator who is an individual designated as responsible for the scientific or technical direction of a project and shall act as the primary point of communication with the Company. The PI, together with any Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs), shall be jointly responsible for the submission of all required project deliverables. For the purposes of these Rules, “PI” includes a Project Director (PD), and “Co-PI” includes a Co-Project Director (Co-PD).;” and
- (b) after clause (i), substituted as aforesaid, the following new clause shall be inserted, namely;—
- “(ia) “PIO” means the principal investigator organization which is a duly incorporated or registered entity, including but not limited to an organization, institute, startup, or company, which is responsible for executing a research and development project or a project aimed at promoting innovation and entrepreneurship;”;
- (B) in rule 4, in sub-rule (9), for the words “Federal Government”, the word “Board” shall be substituted;
- (C) for rule 8, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

“8. Intellectual Property.—(1) All intellectual property rights arising out of or capable of legal recognition in respect of projects funded or supported by the Company shall, subject to the provisions of the Patents Ordinance, 2000 (LXI of 2000) and any other applicable intellectual property law for the time being in force, vest absolutely in the PIs or the PIOs and the terms of contract for funding signed with the Company may provide for any matters ancillary thereto.

(2) The PI or the PIO may assign, license, or otherwise commercialize the intellectual property rights arising out of the funded project on such terms as the PI or the PIO may deem appropriate:

Provided that the PI or the PIO shall ensure that the Company’s contribution is duly recognized, and shall share with the

Company such reports or information on commercialization as may be stipulated in the contract for funding.”;

(D) for rule 11, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

“11. Accounts and audit.—(1) accounts or financial statements of the R&D Fund shall be prepared in accordance with instructions issued by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) with the approval of Auditor-General for Pakistan as per sub-section (2) of section 38 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2019.

(2) In pursuance of Article 169 and clause (2) of Article 170 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Auditor-General’s (Functions, Powers and Terms and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2001 (XXIII of 2001) and any other relevant law, audit of R&D Fund shall be conducted by the Auditor-General for Pakistan, who shall determine the extent and nature of such audit.

(3) There shall be an internal audit wing which shall carry out internal audit of the R&D Fund as per international best practices.

(4) The Principal Accounting Officer (PAO) shall designate an officer for pre-audit of payments and shall authorize all payments from the R&D Fund.

(5) The grants from the Federal Government, in the R&D Fund shall be utilized through ASAAN Assignment Account Procedure. The R&D Fund shall maintain its all other funds in the Public Account of the Federal Government and utilize it through Special Assignment Accounting Procedure issued by the office of the CGA.

(6) The funds from the R&D Fund shall be utilized for the implementation of research and development projects in the information and communications technology sector in accordance with and in furtherance of the objectives, key priority areas and the criteria laid down in the R&D Implementation Framework.

(7) The Secretary of the Division concerned with Information Technology and Telecom or any officer notified in that behalf shall be the PAO of the R&D Fund.

(8) The audited financial statements shall be submitted to the concerned authorities i.e., Finance Division, Public Accounts Committee, administrative division, CGA etc.”; and

(E) in the Annexure,—

(a) in paragraph 1, after sub-paragraph 6, the following new sub-paragraph, shall be added, namely:—

“7. To create enabling environment for promotion of technology innovation and entrepreneurship in Pakistan.”; and

(b) in paragraph 2,—

(i) in sub-paragraph (1),—

(a) in clause (d), the word “and”, occurring at the end, shall be omitted; and

(b) in clause (e), for the full stop, at the end, a semi-colon and the word “and” shall be substituted thereby the following new clause shall be added, namely:—

“(f) nurture start up ecosystem in the country.”;
and

(ii) in sub-paragraph (2), for the table, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

S. No.	Priorities Areas	Sub Areas within each Priority Area	Implementation Plan
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	HR Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of education to all segments of society Creation of industry-driven Human Resource Development (HRD) To create and develop, through ICT, formal and informal learning networks for communities Develop an IT-trained workforce 	Immediate Term
2.	National Productivity Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Indigenous Development Advanced Information Technology and Telecommunication Networks 	Short Term
3.	ICT Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT Innovations to solve local & International problem ICT Infrastructure support 	Medium Term
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-engineering the local industry Identifying and developing technologies, architectures, standards, security & privacy requirements and initiatives 	

4.	ICT Market Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of web-enabled services • Facilitation of e-commerce, digitization of the administration • Provide Government services to stakeholders online 	Long Term
5.	Multi-Sectoral Support Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of ICT in sectors including, but not limited to, Agro-based Industries, Health-tech, Ed- tech, Fin-Tech, e-Mobility and such other emerging or allied sectors as may be identified by the Company from time to time • Support for government initiatives through collaboration with other organizations in the provision of ICT-related services • Policy formulation & provision of Co-investment grants for promotion of ICT innovation 	Long Term
6.	Startup ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide enabling environment to nurture startup ecosystem 	Short Term
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment & wealth creation by building a robust startup ecosystem • Bring all stakeholders of the startup ecosystem on one platform 	

7.	Freelancing Ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide an enabling environment to foster a freelancing ecosystem• Identification of areas where Federal Government support is required, in the form of regulatory, legal, policy, taxation, and banking interventions, which can strengthen the freelancing ecosystem	Short Term
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[File No. 1-114/2005-Legal.]

ABDULLAH JAN,
Deputy Secretary (Dev).