FAQS – INTERCONNECT FELLOWSHIP

A. Eligibility & Application

1. What kind of projects are eligible for the Interconnect Fellowship?

Projects must be in the healthcare domain within the minimum TRL-2 or have clearly defined problems requiring real-world validation. Projects involving public health problem statements and implementation challenges are also eligible.

Projects should go beyond pure ideation and demonstrate early validation or a credible pathway to real-world testing.

2. Who can apply for the Fellowship?

The Fellowship is open to:

- Innovators and entrepreneurs
- Principal Investigators (PIs) from research institutes
- Early-stage healthcare startups
- Clinicians and physicians from medical colleges
- Public health professionals

Applicants must demonstrate ownership and responsibility for the proposed project.

3. Can students or recent graduates apply?

Yes. Students and recent graduates may apply if they:

- Have a qualifying healthcare project
- Demonstrate strong commitment to execution
- Present a feasible roadmap and potential for real world adoption

4. Can I apply as a team?

The Fellowship is awarded to individual Fellows only. Teams may support the work, but one individual must apply as the Fellow.

The Fellow will be solely responsible for milestones, reporting, and outcomes. Fellowship funds are disbursed to the individual Fellow (or their registered entity, if applicable).

5. Can I apply as a team?

Early ideas are encouraged to be shared on the Interconnect platform to find collaborators and refine concepts.

Idea stage concepts are not eligible for the Fellowship. Projects must be TRL 2 or higher, with early validation or a defined plan for real world testing.

6. Is the Fellowship open to non Indian applicants?

Yes. Applicants of any nationality may apply. However the project work must be executed in India, field validation, pilots, or implementation should be India based.

B. Funding & Support

7. What is the Fellowship grant amount?

Each Fellow receives ₹12 lakhs over one year:

- Disbursement is quarterly
- Each tranche is linked to pre-defined milestones
- Continued support depends on satisfactory progress

8. Is additional funding available for prototypes or pilots?

At this stage the Fellowship provides a quarterly grant only. Fellows are encouraged to leverage BFI's ecosystem and Interconnect's network to explore co-funding, pilots, or partnerships.

9. What kind of mentorship is provided?

Through BFI's ecosystem and Interconnect's network, fellows will receive access to the following through:

- Domain experts in healthcare and life sciences
- Experts in commercialization, policy, and technology
- Tailored mentorship aligned to the project's stage and needs

10. Will Fellows get access to labs, test beds, or incubation?

The Fellowship does not guarantee incubation or infrastructure access. Wherever relevant, BFI may facilitate introductions through the Interconnect partner network. Access depends on project requirements and partner availability.

11. Can a Fellowship be terminated mid-cycle?

Yes. The Fellowship may be paused or terminated in cases of:

- Non-performance or repeated milestone failure
- Misuse of funds
- Ethical or compliance concerns

C. Program Structure, Progress & Deliverables

12. What are the expectations from selected Fellows?

Fellows are expected to:

- Submit a milestone based execution plan
- Participate in quarterly reviews
- Actively refine the project toward real world use or scale-up
- Engage meaningfully with the Interconnect platform and BFI network

13. What happens during the quarterly reviews?

- Progress is evaluated against agreed milestones
- Challenges and risks are discussed
- Mentorship, course correction, or strategic inputs are provided as required
- Disbursement decisions are linked to review outcomes

14. What are the expected outputs at the end of the Fellowship?

Outputs may include (depending on project type):

- Validated prototypes or pilots
- Evidence of clinical, public health, or market relevance
- Partnerships or deployment readiness
- Clear next-step roadmap for scale or follow-on funding

D. Intellectual Property & Compliance

15. Who owns the intellectual property (IP) developed during the Fellowship?

All IP remains with the Fellow. BFI does not claim ownership of IP generated during the Fellowship. Fellows must disclose any pre-existing IP or institutional, employer, or collaborator agreements that may affect ownership.

16. Does the Fellowship take equity?

No. The Interconnect Fellowship does not take equity.

E. Duration, Extensions & Overlap

17. What if my project requires more than 12 months?

The Fellowship duration is one year. No-cost extensions may be considered in exceptional cases. Follow-on support may be explored through BFI or external networks, based on performance and readiness.

18. Can I apply if I am already incubated or funded elsewhere?

Yes, provided that:

- There is no conflict of interest
- The Fellowship supports a distinct scope of work
- All existing funding and incubation support are fully disclosed.

F. Selection Process

19. How are Fellows selected?

Applications are evaluated by an expert panel based on:

- Innovation and problem relevance
- Potential impact
- Feasibility and execution capability
- Applicant motivation and commitment

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to:

- Present/Pitch their project
- Participate in interviews with the Selection Committee

20. Can I reapply if not selected?

Yes. Applicants who are not selected may reapply in future Fellowship cohorts after one year.