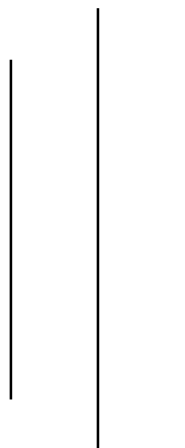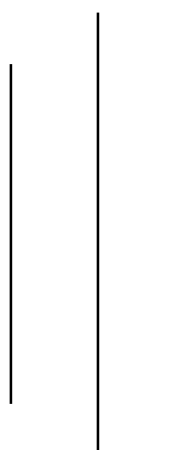# UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program (NEHEP)

2021/22 – 2025/26

EQUITY GRANTS GUIDELINES

JUNE, 2022

Acronyms

CEHRD	Centre for Education and Human Resource Development
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GON	Government of Nepal
GRID	Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development
HDI	Human Development Index
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HRM	Human Resource Management
LMDP	Labor Market Development Program
LOI	Letter of Intent
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluations
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOU	Memorandum of Understating
NEHEP	Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program
NHEP	National Higher Education Program
NPR	Nepalese Rupees
OM	Operations Manual
PMT	Proxy Means Testing
STEM	Science and Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TU	Tribhuvan University
UGC	University Grants Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

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1 - Background

1.1 Context

1.   Education with equal opportunities accelerates the human socio-economic activities and thus, contributes to poverty alleviation around the world[1]. The right of equality and the right of education for equal and equitable access to state offered opportunities have been set as fundamental rights in Nepal[2]. Inclusive Higher Education (HE) is critical to ensure equitable participation of HE graduates' for higher rate of social-economic returns that will meaningfully contribute to the overall national growth.

2.   There is underrepresentation and unequal participation of students from disadvantaged groups in Nepalese HE which is substantiated by the 4.2 percent dropouts[3] from primary and secondary education. Furthermore, national data shows that only 2 percent of students from among bottom two quintiles (poor) household have access to education whereas it is 98 percent from the financially rich (fifth quintile) household students. Nepal has remarkably low enrollment rate (15.0 percent) while compared to other Asian countries (Shrilanka 21 percent, India 26.9 percent, Malaysia 41.9 percent, Thailand 49.3 percent and China 51 percent). Moreover, Nepalese HE has explicit regional/ provincial inequalities[4] in terms of enrollment.

3.   Nepal (0.587) is in 147th position among 189 countries and in 6th position among 8 south Asian countries with HDI[5]. Based on HDI, the inequality also persists among provinces[6], the poverty is rampant in Madhesh, Karnali and Suderpascchim provinces. Twenty-two remote[7]districts from other provinces with low HDI ranking are also lagging in HE enrollment. The inequalities in regard to the distribution of campuses in provinces[8] also show that the provinces are lagging behind. In line with this, it is a pressing issue to be addressed through equity

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[1] SDG-4.

[2] Article 18 and Article 31 of the constitution of Nepal 2015.

[3] CEHRD 2020.

[4] UGC EMIS Report 2019/020: Madhesh 7.30 percent, Karnali 3.94 percent, Suderpaschhim 6.66 percent, Gandaki 8.63 percent, Province one 11.94 percent, Lumbini 12.14 percent, and Bagmati 49.4 percent.

[5] The composite index of achievements in three fundamental dimensions: longevity, educational attainment, and decent standard of living.

[6] Human Development Report, UNDP 2020: Madhesh: 0.51 (the lowest); Karnali province: 0.538 (2nd lowest); and Far-western province: 0.547 (3rd lowest); Lumbini province: 0.563; Province-1: 0.58; Bagmati province- 0.661; and Gandaki province: 0.618.

[7] 'The total number of remote districts are 22 which are: Darchula, Bajhang, Bajura, Humla, Jumla, Mugu, Kalikot, Dolpa, Mustang, Manang, Solukhumbu, Sankhuwasabha, Khotang, Bhojpur, Achham, Dailekh, Jajarkot, Rukum, Okhaldhunga, Myagdi, Terathum, and Ramechaap (Source: https://www.lawcommission.gov.np/en/archives/14027 retrieved on 12/02/2021).

[8] UGC EMIS Report 2019/20: Province one 13.71 percent, Madhesh province 8.56 percent, Bagmati province 43.42 percent, Gandaki province 10.51 percent, Lumbini province 12.87 percent, Karnali province 4.31 percent, and Suderpaschim province 6.61 percent.

approach for expansion of HE with quality and sustainability in the lagging provinces which in turn would assist to meet the national GER target[9] (25 percent by 2030 and 40 percent by 2043).

4.   To address the equity concerns with increased GER in Nepalese HE capable of producing creative, innovative, skilled and market relevant human resource for the sustainable development of the country, Nepal has policy[10] and reform initiatives[11] for the development and promotion of HE. NHEP tries to address inequalities and ease opportunities for all in Nepalese HE focusing on underprivileged students, particularly from disadvantaged provinces and disaster affected regions. NEHEP is to back the NHEP to shape and accelerate opportunities and capabilities to enable all human resources in using their full potential. Furthermore, it helps in achieving some of the SDG Goals[12].

5.   In the aforementioned context, NEHEP has strategically incorporated the provisions to support the HEIs in lagging and/or disaster affected provinces and remote regions. Among others, it has two areas of intervention to address the issue specific to equity viz. (a) Equity Grants to HEIs in lagging and/or disaster-affected provinces and (b) Poverty Targeted Scholarship Scheme to bottom quintile students studying in bachelor level. The equity grants aim to encourage HEIs in the lagging and/or disaster affected provinces and regions for improving the quality standards in teaching and learning including the digitalization of the system namely strengthening connectivity, conducting online courses, making peer learning arrangements, and efficient sharing resources and capacity building.

1.2 Introduction

6.   ***Equity Grants to HEIs in Lagging and/or Disaster-affected Provinces and Remote Regions***: To widen the access to economically disadvantaged students of the lagging behind regions, remote and disaster affected districts, at least 110 HEIs of such regions will be supported with the equity grants. UGC will directly implement the grants scheme in community campuses. TU as the subsidiary implementing agency will implement the scheme in its constituent HEIs. Likewise, universities other than TU will implement the equity program in their constituent HEIs. Selected HEIs and the students getting scholarships will be the direct beneficiaries. The Figure-1 below has summarized the concept of Equity Grants where Access, Governance (i.e. educational

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[9] Three year's medium expenditure framework of NPC (2020) and National budget (FY 2020/021) of Nepal.

[10] National education policy, 2019 has been promulgated to regularize, systematize and strengthen HE. GON has plan to promote its position to middle-income country by 2030.

[11] National Higher Education Program (NHEP) and Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education (NEHEP).

[12] ***Goal-4***: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities; ***Goal-5***: Achieve gender equality and empower all women; ***Goal-10***: Reduce inequality within and among countries; ***Goal-13***: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; ***Goal-16***: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; and ***Goal 17***. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

governance), Quality and Equity are considered interrelated and interdependent attributes of education system, yet Equity remains in the core. *Knowledge management* can increase both access and governance; *capacity building* can increase both governance and quality of education; and *climate change* mitigation and adaptation can enhance quality of education and access of the poor/vulnerable/disadvantaged people in higher education. In the outer layer there are strategic areas[13] which can increase access, governance and quality, equity being the core focus.

Figure-1: Conceptual Framework of HE Equity World
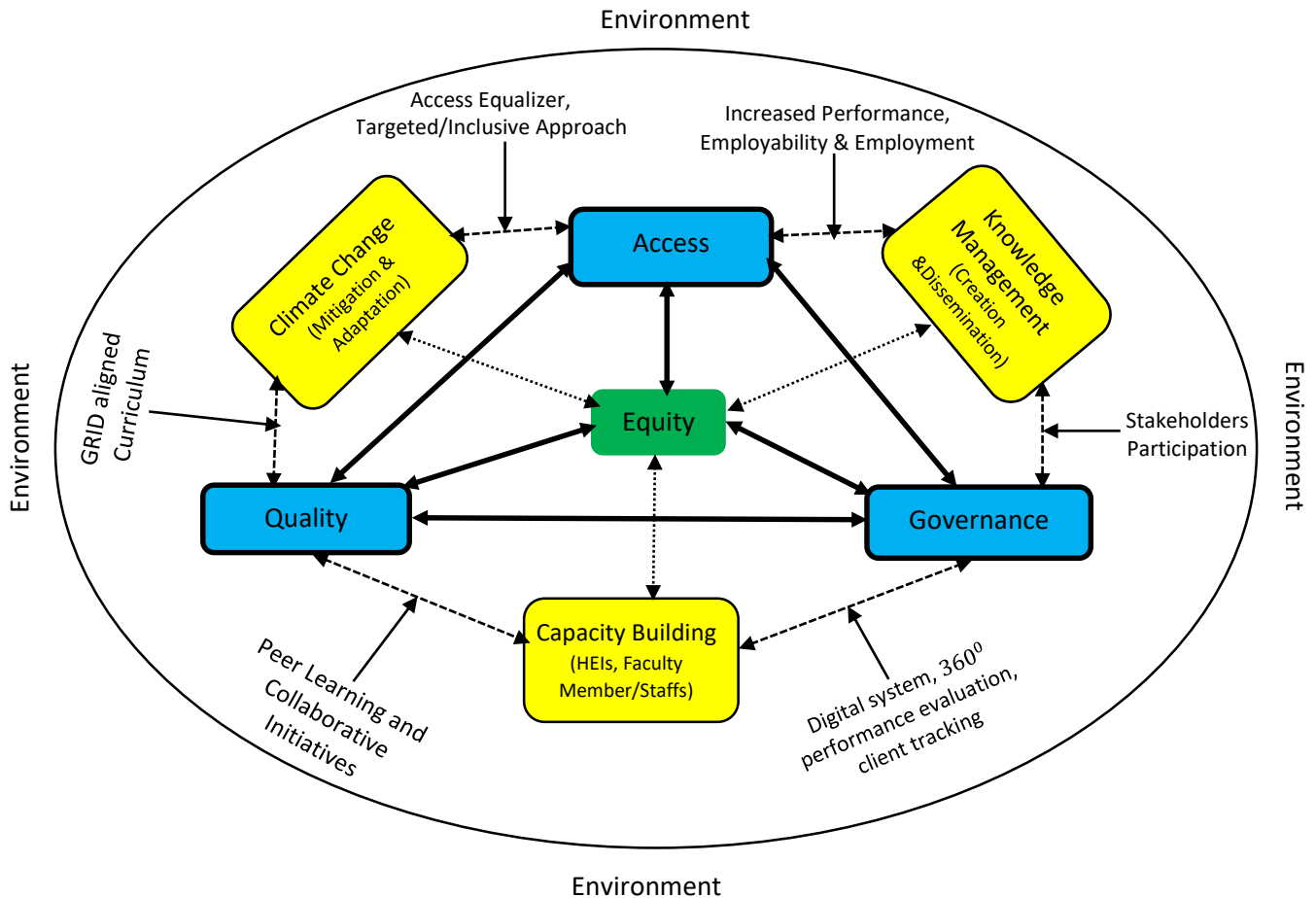
1.3 Scope

7.   The scope of Equity Grants covers the initiatives such as: capacity development of faculties/ staffs, digitalization, targeted scholarships, knowledge management, peer learning, cost sharing among in teaching learning activities, student tracking, 360-degree performance evaluation, stakeholders participation, enhancement in teaching learning, adaptation of GRID approach in climate change adaptations and mitigations. Equitable access of disadvantaged group

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[13] Access Equalizer, Targeted/Inclusive approach with Preferential Treatment; increased performance with employability and employment (close to LMDP concept); stakeholders' participation; adaptation of digital methods, performance culture, client tracking; peer learning, collaborative initiatives; and green resilient and inclusive development (GRID) aligned curriculum.

students in HE will enhance employability of disadvantaged group graduates ultimately in promoting economic growth in the country and making just society in the country.

1.4 Principle

8.   Performance based Equity Grants to HEIs aims at widening the access of underprivileged students in lagging provinces and remote/ disaster affected regions. Among others, the Equity Grants funding is guided by following principles.

   i. Ensure the participation of students from disadvantaged group in national economic growth/ development;

   ii. Increase access of economically poor and disadvantaged groups to HE which shall bring change in their social and economic status *(by shaping and accelerating opportunities/ capabilities of disadvantaged group students with increasing possibility to engage in high/better paid jobs after their HE)*;

   iii. Reduce regional disparities in HE by supporting HEIs in the regions; and

   iv. Link public funding on national priory areas with HEIs performances in promoting quality, productivity/ employability and governance[14] in HE.

1.5 Objective

9.   Equity grants aims to enhance equitable access in HE which shall reduce disparities of economic status and geographic regions for the balanced economic development of the country. The specific objectives of the equity grants are to assist HEI in the following areas.

   i. Strengthening teachers' quality and teaching;

   ii. Improved connectivity;

   iii. Conducting online courses;

   iv. Making peer learning arrangements;

   v. Sharing of resources for efficient use;

   vi. Knowledge generation and management;

   vii. Capacity building; and

   viii. Address the risk of learnings due to disasters/ pandemics.

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[14] Responsibility, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness, efficiency, participation and partnership of stakeholders.

2 - Equity Grants Standard

10. **Standard Thematic Areas**: Based on its conceptual framework, the equity grants have five thematic areas namely: i) Accessibility and Disaster; ii) University Specific Equity Guidelines; iii) Access Equalizer; iv) Climate Change; v) Knowledge Management; and vi) Capacity Building.

2.1 Thematic Areas

11. **Accessibility and Disaster:** It is envisioned that the grants will nurture excellence in quality teaching, improved connectivity, peer learning, sharing resources, capacity building and pro-poor targeted scholarships to equalize regional balance and gender ratio. Disaster[15] here covers both natural[16] and non-natural[17] disasters causing a threatening situation in any place that results in loss of lives and properties and makes severe impacts on livelihood and the environment.

12. **Institutional Equity Policy:** Each participating universities under the funding framework of MOEST/ UGC will prepare, approve and implement their institutional equity guidelines incorporating the provisions of NEHEP's Operations Manual (OM) and the guidelines related to equity.

13. **Access Equalizer:** Planned development and advancement of HEIs' capabilities in digital arena and use of relevant digital technologies in getting/ sharing knowledge can attribute to equalize the regional disparities in quality higher education. Performance based equity grants to eligible HEIs in the lagging/ disaster affected regions for systematic, visible and verifiable initiatives such as free student data pack, web-based communication, online classes in collaborative and resource sharing model are expected to benefit the students and HEIs. This will facilitate HEIs and students to cope with the global pace in using modern information technologies. To equalize and maintain balanced access of males in HE, pro-poor targeted scholarships up to the third quintile boys in the regions will also be provided. Boys up to second quintile and girls up to third quintile will be benefitted through the provisions under poverty targeted scholarship guidelines (PTGS), 2078 of UGC.

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[15] Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, 2074 (with subsequent amendments)

[16] Natural disaster covers snowfall, hailstone, avalanche, glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF), extreme rainfall, low rainfall, flood, landslide and soil erosion, inundation, storm, drought, cyclone, clod wave, hear wave, lightening, earthquake, volcanic eruption, wild fire or similar other disasters occurred form natural causes.

[17] Non-natural disaster means an epidemic, famine, wild fire, insects or anthrax attack, animal and bird flu, pandemic flu, snake bite, animal attach, mine, aviation road water or industry related accident, fire, toxic gas, chemical or radiation leakage, gas explosion, consumption of toxic foods, environment pollution, deforestation or damage to physical infrastructure, and accidents in time of disaster rescue or similar other disasters occurred from non-natural disasters.

14.	**Climate Change:** Interventions on climate change mitigation and adaptation can contribute on both poverty alleviation and economic growth. Output, outcome and impacts level results regarding mitigation and adaptation to the climate change could be achieved through combined efforts on various areas which include education, health, research, demography, human rights, gender equality, conflict and peace building, humanitarian aid, sustainable infrastructure services, market development, environment, agriculture and forestry and alike. This thematic area and its indicators have linkages with the other cross-cutting themes for improved environmental, climate change and disaster risk reduction education which will increase pupils' knowledge on health, nutrition, sanitation and disease prevention, disaster preparedness, sustainable agriculture and forestry.

15.	**Knowledge Management:** HEIs are critical for developing new theories, methodologies, and technologies, as well as sharing and disseminating knowledge and skills to learners. Institutional efforts are critical not just for producing and disseminating proven information through publications, but also for cultivating a research-oriented culture in society. Collaboration with other universities, other HEIs, public and commercial institutions, specialists, and the government, among other things, will help to the extension of knowledge undertaken at the HEI level. Local/ provincial governments/ industries and other stakeholders may also support students for research/ thesis through funding. Among others, the research may include in the areas like climate change mitigation and adaptations, environment, gender and issues of social safeguards. HEIs shall be motivated to pace towards the direction through grants for the results in research and dissemination of research outputs. Equity grants for publication and dissemination of research knowledge will be the breakthroughs for advancing institutional competencies in HE.

16.	**Capacity Building:** Systematic capacity building of HEIs, including that of faculty members, is expected to benefit students. Equity grants shall support HEIs in the lagging behind, remote and disaster affected regions in the capacity development in sustainable manner. Selected HEIs will be funded against their performances on set indicators relating to the planning and execution of activities regarding human resource development.

2.2 Indicators

17.	All thematic areas except institutional equity policy (i.e. university specific guidelines preparation) have sub-areas and multiple indicators (32 in total) with their definitions/ description, and means of verification (*refer to Annex-1*).

3 - Implementation Framework of Equity Grants

18.   This framework includes equity grants processes, eligibility criteria, selection process, evaluation, and funding. Table one below summaries the implementation framework of equity grants in different stages.

Table-1: Implementation Framework of Equity Grants with Stages

Stages	Activities/Process	Implementing Agency/Methods	Criteria
Stage-1	**1. Institutional Equity Policy** (Equity Guidelines Preparation and Approval)	Participating Universities	Universities under MOEST/ UGC financing framework
	2. LOI calling		Eligible community and constituent campuses from among remote and disaster affected districts and in Madhesh, Karnali and Suderpaschim provinces shall be included in the funding provisions of equity grants as per the annex 2.
	Community campuses	UGC	
	Constituent & Autonomous Campuses	Subsidiary implementing agency (TU) and other Universities	
	3. Lagging behind and Remote/Disaster Regions	**110** (90 community and 20 constituent campuses)	
	Karnali Province	10-15	
	Suderpaschim Province	15-20	
	Madhesh Province	20-25	
	Remote and Disaster Affected Districts	25-35	
	Disaster during NEHEP period	Maximum 15	
Stage-2	**MOU/Contract agreement**	Between selected constituent/ autonomous campuses and their respective Universities	
		Between selected academies/ community campuses (other HEIs) and UGC Nepal	
Stage-3	**Implementation of Equity Initiatives**	**Responsibility: Participating HEIs**	
	1. Access Equalizer	i. Development of digital infrastructures	
		ii. Use of digital technologies	
		iii. Poverty Targeted Scholarships (up-to 3rd quintile boys from Karnali, Suderpaschim and Madhesh[18])	
	2. Climate Change Adaptations	iv. Implementation of GRID aligned academic programs	
		Stakeholders' Participation and Student internships	
	3. Knowledge Management	vi. Creation	
		vii. Dissemination	
	4. Capacity Building	viii. HRM planning	
		ix. Individual/collaborative training	
		x. Peer learning	
		xi. Cost sharing basis teaching/learning	
		xii. 360^{0} performance evaluation	
		xiii. Student Tracking	

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[18] No duplication will be ensured while selecting students for scholarship through equity grants and scholarship as per the provisions of PTSG, 2078.

Stages	Activities/Process	Implementing Agency/Methods	Criteria
Stage-4	**Equity Grants Support**	First Installment NPR 800000.00 after sinning MOU/Contract *(Responsibility: UGC)*	
		Annual support upon their progress/performances on implementation of Equity Initiatives *(Responsibility: UGC)*	
Stage-5	**Monitoring and Evaluation**	GON/MOEST, UGC, Universities, Local/provincial governments, Funding partners, HEIs own system.	

Beneficiaries: Selected HEIs from among Madesh Province, Karnali Province, Suderpaschim Province, Remote and Disaster affected districts; and Poverty Targeted Students (boys) under third PMT quintile studying at bachelor level.

3.1 Eligibility

19. **Eligibility Criteria:** Fundamental criteria of the selection to get Equity Grant are that the aspirant HEIs should belong from among the lagging behind, remote and disaster affected regions. Other eligibility criteria will be as follows:

  i. Constituent and Community campuses;
  ii. Community campuses registered/getting regular grants from UGC;
  iii. For new community campuses, conditions fulfilled as specified for new campuses in the UGC's program directives;
  iv. HEIs having minimum of 75 students in Terai districts;
  v. HEIs having minimum of 60 students in Mountain and Hill districts;
  vi. HEIs implementing academic programs in disciplines such as Science and Technology, Sanskrit, and programs of the priority areas including HEIs opened for disabled / physically handicapped people will be eligible to apply if they have at least 40 students per program. However, HEIs that are running the programs with predefined quota should have the student number as per the quota.
  vii. Marks obtained in letter of intent (LOI) (merit based);
  viii. Renewal of the affiliation from concerned University in next years of selection;
  ix. A copy of Mark ledger to show the number of students passed in latest board exams; and
  x. Last FY's Financial Audit Report with management comment/letter.

3.2 Letter of Intent Calling and Selection of HEIs

20. At least 35 days' public notice (website and/or national newspapers) from UGC requesting LOI from among the Community and Constituent Campuses completed at least one academic cycle will be published. Required documents while submitting LOI/proposal, evaluation criteria (refer annex-3) will be disclosed on UGC website. LOIs from eligible HEIs will be accepted for the selection process. Field visit (in need) during appraisal the LOI could be done by UGC mandated review team. HEIs selected undergoing the processes will be notified to participate in the performance based equity grants provision**.**

3.3 Grants Support to HEIs

21.   **Equity Grants Support:** Total allocation under this scheme is NPR 481,570,700.00. **Funding under equity grants for** community campuses will be administered directly by UGC. Constituent/autonomous HEIs will receive performance based equity grants in annual basis through their respective universities against the accomplishments of the performance indicator wise weightage and costing. Per HEI (constituent/ autonomous, community and other HEIs) maximum sum of the grants during NEHEP will be maximum of NPR 3,937,660.00. Please refer Annex-2, Table A 2.1.

3.4 Pro-poor Scholarship to 3rd Quintile Boys

22.   Pro-poor targeted scholarships for the lagging behind regions (Annex-2, Table A 2.2) to male students in the third quintile will be based on Poverty Targeted Scholarship Guidelines (PTSG), 2078 of UGC.

3.5 Disaster Based Chunk Equity Grant

23.   **Disaster Based Chunk Equity Grant**: UGC may support related HEIs with one-time disaster based chunk equity grant if new disaster occur during NEHEP period. This category of the grants shall be based on urgent need of HEIs in the hard times. The ceiling of the grant amount will be NPR 590,000.00 per HEI for 15 HEIs. The HEI selected for equity grant will be excluded for this category.

4 - Institutional Arrangement, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Miscellaneous

4.1 Institutional Arrangement

24.   Under the overall policy guidance of MOEST, UGC will be the main implementing agency and the TU will be the subsidiary implementing agency for the implementation of the equity grants based on NEHEP OM and these guidelines. Programs coordinator in other universities and HEIs will be responsible for managing their institutional level activities based on the related policies, manuals and guidelines.

4.2 Monitoring and Evaluations

25.   UGC will carry out regular supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the equity grants related activities of the HEIs as per the UGC M&E framework. Competitively selected HEIs that deliver results as per the performance agreement will be supported with the allocated performance based equity grants against the achieved indicators. The models for the monitoring will comprise viz. a) desk study, b) field observation and c) online/virtual meeting. The main implementing

agency and subsidiary implementing agency will use the framework to monitor the performance claims made by the participating HEIs under the equity grants. Implementation framework of equity grants (Table-1) and the guiding framework of equity grants (Annex-1) includes institutional responsibilities, area wise definitions of the indicators, their sources and the means of verifications.

4.3 Miscellaneous

26.   These guidelines will be effective form the date of its approval form the UGC. Amendments, modifications, alterations and changes in these guidelines will be done by the UGC based on its implementation experiences. UGC has final right to explain the provisions, condition and ambiguities (if any).

Annex-1: Guiding Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation of Equity Grants

SN	Thematic Areas	Indicators (Activities)	Definition/Description	Means of Verification	Responsibility
1	**Accessibility and Disaster**				
	a) Lagging Behind Regions/districts	1.1 Karnali[19] Province *(range 10-15) HEIs)*	Regions having low HDI, rampant poverty and low level of gross enrollment rate in HE while compared to the national average 15 %.	GON political division	UGC for the selection of participating HEIs
		1.2 Suderpaschim[20] Province *(15-20) HEIs)*		GON political division	
		1.3 Madhesh Province[21] *(20-25 HEIs)*		GON political division	
	b) Remote and Disaster districts	1.4 Remote and Disaster Affected *(25-35 HEIs)*	Government classified/ identified remote districts. Both natural and non-natural disasters which could have adverse effects/impacts in HE access of poor and vulnerable.	GON Classification	
		1.5 Disaster during NEHEP period *(as per UGC decision maximum to 15 HEIs)*		Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, 2074' with subsequent amendments.	
2	**Access Equalizer**				
	a) Digitization	2.1 Blue print plan of Digitization and Connectivity	Measures/indicates the HEIs motive to move ahead systematically in equalizing access through digitization and online system.	Plan Document in place.	Participating HEIs
		2.2 Free Student data pack *(Subsidy pack)*	Unlocks the avenues to students for online learnings.	Field verification	Participating HEIs
		2.3 HEI's website with regular update *(Regular notices and relevant documents uploaded on website)*	Measure the uses of digitization, communication and transparency. Also motivates HEIs for managing their web-sites.	HEIs web-site visit.	Participating HEIs
	b) Digital technologies	2.4 Online library/Students access to other online libraries	Measures the access of the students in latest/updated knowledge; access on the sources of reference multiplied.	Observations/Field monitoring.	Participating HEIs
		2.5 At least 25% classes run in virtual mode		Class observation/Field monitoring.	Participating HEIs

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[19] Karnali is considered to be the most backward province which is comprising of the total number of 10 districts which are: Dailekh, Dolpa, Humla, Jajarkot, Jumla, Kalikot, Mugu, Rukum Paschim, Salyan, and Surkhet.

[20] The Sudur-Paschim Province has 9 districts which are: Achham, Baitadi, Bajhang, Bajura, Dadeldhura, Darchula, Doti, Kailali, and Kanchanpur.

[21] The Madhesh Povince is Terai region comprising of the total number of 8 districts which are: Bara, Dhanusa, Mahottari, Parsa, Rautahat, Saptari, Sarlahi, and Siraha.

		2.6 Online collaborative guest lectures from (inter)national guest experts/professors	Joint and online effort hunts for the quality lectures/guest experts/professors from (inter)national market. Collaborative initiatives motivate HEIs to run classes in cost sharing.	Class observation/Field monitoring.	Participating HEIs
	c) Poverty Targeted Scholarships to boys	2.7 Scholarships up-to third quintile boys in lagging behind regions[22]	To equalize boys access in HE which is low as compared to girls. First and second quintile boys including first, second and third quintiles girls will be benefitted under DLI 5.2 (PTSG, 2078).	Number of boys (students) up-to third quintile benefitted from the scholarships.	UGC
3	**Climate Change Adaptations**				
	a) Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development (GRID)approach alignment	3.1 Implementation of GRID approach aligned Programs	Incorporation of climate change issues in curriculums helps to make positive change in Health, Education, Research, Democracy and Human Rights, Peace and Security, Sustainable infrastructure (water, waste energy) Environment, Livelihood and Forest, HDI, GDP, Institutional Governance, Fender Equality, Carbon Emission practices; and also prepares people for mitigation and adaptations.	Review of the curriculums executed.	Participating HEIs
		3.2 Climate change mitigation and adaptations issues in the programs and/or trainings executed.	Trained teachers/staffs and students aware raised in environmental, climate change and disaster risk reduction will increase people's knowledge in using related technologies and collective actions.	Review of Faculty members/staffs training curriculum/program curriculum.	Participating HEIs
	b) Participation and Internships	3.3 Participation based waste/ energy management practices at HEIs premises.	Participation of stakeholder in University and HEI level advisory and review boards could include environmental, climate change and disaster risk reduction issues in educational and other policies at HEIs.	Observation plastic free and use of natural sources made handcraft dust beans in campus premises; use of alternative energy.	Participating HEIs
		3.4 Student learning opportunities at local market	Individual knowledge and adaptive capacity of the students could be boost up. Level of education and Literacy rate.	Contract/MOUs/related corresponding of HEIs to	Participating HEIs

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[22]Requirement based revision could be done after one year of execution.

			Girls and boys ratio attending the schools/tertiary education could be favorable.	employ their students as interns at local market.	
4	**Knowledge Management Initiatives**				
	a) Creation	4.1 Functional Research Unit/Committee	Measures the authorized start of the quest of knowledge at HEI level.	Attested copy of related decision.	Participating HEIs
		4.2 Faculty members selected/getting UGC research grant	Measures the competency of the faculty member(s) and motivates HEIs to initiate and sustain research activities at HEI level.	Verified UGC record over	Participating HEIs
		4.3 Local/regional governments/industries and other stakeholders funding to student research and thesis	Measures the HEIs initiatives to link student theses/researches with market. Issues, gaps, research findings, learnings, conclusions and way-out could be outlined in the research areas.	Review of approved theses and contract/MOUs/related corresponding of HEIs.	Participating HEIs
		4.4 Collaborative research including collaborations with other University/Institutes HEIs/Experts	Measures HEIs and its Faculty Member's competency in managing the research in conducting and producing quality research and cost sharing and cost effective way.	Verification of Research Outputs/Publications.	Participating HEIs
	b) Dissemination	4.5 Reports, Periodicals, and Journal Publication with ISSN	Academics articles in the journals with ISSN *(International Standard Serial Number-an 8-digit code used to identify the journals.)* could get acknowledgement in academia and also helps to identify the journal.	Verification of the publication(s) with the number authenticated from ISSN releasing officer/agency.	Participating HEIs
		4.6 Publication and upload on web-site the Consolidated Annual Report	Measures the access, transparency and dissemination of knowledge/information.	Observation on the web-sites.	Participating HEIs
		4.7 Reports/Research products uploaded on campus website	Measures the public access, transparency and dissemination of knowledge/information.	Observation on the web-sites.	Participating HEIs
5	**Capacity Building** *(HEI/faculty members/staffs)*				
	a) Planning	5.1 HRM/HRD Plan in place	Measures the HEIs motive to move ahead systematically in HRM/HRD*(merit and open competition based system).*	Plan Document in place.	Participating HEIs

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	5.2 Content[23] of individual HEIs level or collaborative Training *(physical/online/blended mode)*	Measures the cost possibility of delivery of conceptual, research and other skills. It also measures the cost effectiveness, efficiency and quality of the trainings while executing the HRD plans.	Review of training curriculum and training reports.	Participating HEIs
b) Execution HRD plan	5.4 Workshop/Seminar/Conferences at individual HEI *(physical/online/ blended mode)*	Measure the sharing and dissemination of the knowledge produced. And getting knowledge form others researches.	Review of proposals and final report(s).	Participating HEIs
	5.5 Peer learning[24] with leading model HEIs	Measures the exposure of the students and motivates them quality education through learnings/sharing from among inter campuses.	Class observation, Review of annual reports(s).	Participating HEIs
	5.6 Event manager/Facilitator HEIs *(additional incentive)*	Measure the coordinative and managerial capability of the HEIs and motivates them in building their capabilities in this regard.	Verification of Proposals an final reports.	Participating HEIs
	5.7 360 degree performance evaluation *(faculty members evaluation by students)*	Measures the level of client satisfaction and practical competencies of the faculty members; also drive the teaching faculties for being update in their field(s).	Review of HRM policies; Review of annual performance appraisal form on sample basis.	Participating HEIs
	5.8 Student tracking system	Measure the data management system of HEIs so as to evaluate the executed program's market relevance and competency of their products.	Review of Campus data and Annual Reports.	Participating HEIs

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[23]Different weightage will be given to Cognitive Skill; Socio-economic skill; Technical Skill; Digital/Digitization skill; Climate Change; and Research Methodologies.

[24] Physical visit and/or online interaction between and among students and/or their group of different HEIs will get extra incentive.

Annex-2: Cost Allocations of Equity Grants

Table A 2.1: Cost Allocations of Equity Grants to HEIs in Lagging Behind, Remote and Disaster Affected Regions (Amount in NPR)

SN	Thematic Areas	Indicators	Unit	Number of years/ FYs to be supported	Weightage 1 = NPR 118,000.00 (1 = 1,000.00 US$)	Estimated Amount in NPR	Per HEI/ against indicator (amount in NPR)	Remarks
1	**Accessibility and Disaster**					**37,760,000.00**		
	a) Lagging Behind Regions	1.1 Karnali Province (10-15 HEIs)	HEI	1	3.5	5,310,000.00	354,000.00	
		1.2 Suderpaschim Province (15-20 HEIs)	HEI	1	2.5	5,900,000.00	295,000.00	
		1.3 Madhesh Province (20-25 HEIs)	HEI	1	2.5	7,375,000.00	295,000.00	
	b) Remote and Disaster	1.4 Remote and Disaster Affected (25-35 HEIs)	HEI	1	2.5	10,325,000.00	295,000.00	
		1.5 Disaster during NEHEP period *(as per UGC decision maximum to 15 HEIs)*	HEI	1	5	8,850,000.00	590,000.00	
2	**Institutional Equity Policy**	1.1 University Specific Equity Guidelines	University	11	3.5	**4,543,000.00**	413,000.00	one time support
3	**Access Equalizer**					**232,219,000.00**		
	a) Digitization	2.1 Blue print plan of Digitization and Connectivity		1	2	22,420,000.00	236,000.00	
		2.2 Free Student data pack *(Subsidy pack)*	HEI	3	0.5	16,815,000.00	177,000.00	
		2.3 HEI's website with regular update *(Regular notices and relevant documents uploaded on website)*	HEI	2	0.5	11,210,000.00	118,000.00	
	b) Digital technologies	2.4 Online library/Students access to other online libraries	HEI	2	0.5	11,210,000.00	118,000.00	
		2.5 At least 25% classes run in virtual mode	HEI	4	0.5	26,904,000.00	283,200.00	
		2.6 Online collaborative guest lectures from (inter)national guest experts/professors	HEI	4	0.5	44,840,000.00	472,000.00	

SN	Thematic Areas	Indicators	Unit	Number of years/ FYs to be supported	Weightage 1 = NPR 118,000.00 (1 = 1,000.00 US$)	Estimated Amount in NPR	Per HEI/ against indicator (amount in NPR)	Remarks
	c) Poverty Targeted Scholarships to boys	2.7 Scholarships up-to third quintile boys in lagging behind regions				-	-	
		Market Oriented Technical and Professional, STEM (=>4 years) (100 * 5 cohorts = 500)	Student	4		25,620,000.00	21,000.00	per student/ year
		General Education (400 * 5 cohorts = 2,000)	Student	4		73,200,000.00	15,000.00	per student/ year
4	**Climate Change Adaptations**					**42,037,500.00**	-	
	a) GRID approach alignment	3.1 GRID approach aligned Programs implementations	HEI	1	0.25	2,802,500.00	29,500.00	
		3.2 Climate change mitigation and adaptations issues in the programs and/or trainings executed.	HEI	2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
	b) Participation and Internships	3.3 Participation based waste/ energy management practices at HEIs premises.	HEI	4	0.5	22,420,000.00	236,000.00	
		3.4 Student learning opportunities at local market	HEI	2	0.5	11,210,000.00	118,000.00	
5	**Knowledge management Initiatives**					**61,655,000.00**	-	
	a) Creation	4.1 Functional Research Unit/Committee	HEI	2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
		4.2 Faculty members selected/getting UGC research grant	HEI	2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
		4.3 Local/regional governments/industries and other stakeholders funding to student research and thesis	HEI	2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
	b) Dissemination	4.4 Collaborative research including collaborations with other University/Institutes HEIs/Experts	HEI	2	0.5	11,210,000.00	118,000.00	

SN	Thematic Areas	Indicators	Unit	Number of years/ FYs to be supported	Weightage 1 = NPR 118,000.00 (1 = 1,000.00 US$)	Estimated Amount in NPR	Per HEI/ against indicator (amount in NPR)	Remarks
		4.5 Reports, Periodicals, and Journal Publication with ISSN	HEI	4	0.5	22,420,000.00	236,000.00	
		4.6 Consolidated Annual Report upload on web-site the	HEI	2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
		4.7 Reports/Research products uploaded on campus website	HEI	2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
6	**Capacity Building** *(HEIs, faculty members, and staffs)*					**103,356,200.00**	-	
	a) Planning	5.1 HRM/HRD Plan in place	HEI	1	0.5	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
		5.2 Content of Individual or collaborative Training (physical/online/blended mode)	HEI			-	-	
		Cognitive skill		2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
		Socio-economic skill		2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
		Technical skill		2	0.25	5,605,000.00	59,000.00	
		Digital/Digitization skill		2	0.5	11,210,000.00	118,000.00	
		Research Methodologies		2	0.75	16,815,000.00	177,000.00	
	b) Execution of HRM/HRD plan	5.4 Workshop/ Seminar/ Conferences at individual HEI (physical/ online/ blended mode)	HEI	2	0.5	11,210,000.00	118,000.00	
		5.5 Peer learning with leading model HEIs	HEI	2	1	22,420,000.00	236,000.00	
		5.6 Event manager/Facilitator HEIs *(additional incentive)*	HEI	2	0.25	5,829,200.00	61,360.00	
		5.7 360 degree performance evaluation *(faculty members evaluation by students)*	HEI	2	0.25	6,726,000.00	70,800.00	
		5.8 Student tracking system	HEI	2	0.5	6,726,000.00	70,800.00	
				Grand Total Cost in NRs.		**481,570,700.00**	**3,583,660.00**	

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Table A 2.2: Boys Access Equalizer Poverty Targeted Scholarships Cost Allocations

Category-A: Market Oriented Technical and Professional, STEM (=>4 years) | Category-B: General Education

Category	Cohorts	No of beneficiary students	Per Year Scholarship Amount (NPR)	Years wise scholarship amount estimation (NPR)					Total (NPR)
				I (2022)	II (2023)	III (2024)	IV (2025)	V (2026)	
A (20% of total)	I	100	21000	2,100,000.00	1,680,000.00	1,680,000.00	1,680,000.00	-	7,140,000.00
	II	100	21000	-	2,100,000.00	1,680,000.00	1,680,000.00	1,680,000.00	7,140,000.00
	III	100	21000	-	-	2,100,000.00	1,680,000.00	1,680,000.00	5,460,000.00
	IV	100	21000	-	-	-	2,100,000.00	1,680,000.00	3,780,000.00
	V	100	21000	-	-	-	-	2,100,000.00	2,100,000.00
Sub-total		500		2,100,000.00	3,780,000.00	5,460,000.00	7,140,000.00	7,140,000.00	25,620,000.00
B (80% of total)	I	400	15000	6,000,000.00	4,800,000.00	4,800,000.00	4,800,000.00	-	20,400,000.00
	II	400	15000	-	6,000,000.00	4,800,000.00	4,800,000.00	4,800,000.00	20,400,000.00
	III	400	15000	-	-	6,000,000.00	4,800,000.00	4,800,000.00	15,600,000.00
	IV	400	15000	-	-	-	6,000,000.00	4,800,000.00	10,800,000.00
	V	400	15000	-	-	-	-	6,000,000.00	6,000,000.00
Sub-total		2000	15000	6,000,000.00	10,800,000.00	15,600,000.00	20,400,000.00	20,400,000.00	73,200,000.00
Grand Total		**2500**		**8,100,000.00**	**14,580,000.00**	**21,060,000.00**	**27,540,000.00**	**27,540,000.00**	**98,820,000.00**

Note: Instead of calculating *drop outs rate of the students once enrolled in the poverty targeted scholarship scheme, continuation of about 80% students has been expected in next semesters/years and the cost estimation has been done accordingly.*

Annex-3: Documents required in LOI submission and its Evaluation

Table A 3.1: Mandatory Documents required during while submitting LOI for Equity Grants

Among other the bellows will be the mandatory documents to be attached by the HEIs while submitting LOI for the equity grants.

i. Campus official letter signed by the authorized person;
ii. Campus constitution, copy of university affiliation and its renewal released by the related university (for community campuses);
iii. Campus rules and regulations (for constituent campuses);
iv. Audit report of previous year (with management letter);
v. UGC specified statistical form (fully/dully filled with student numbers disaggregated by stream, program, level, gender);
vi. A copy of mark ledger of students (latest);
vii. Latest annual report of the campus (SWOT analysis preferred);
viii. Copy of immediate latest two board meeting minutes; and
ix. Proposal (areas expected to be covered are campus doctrine, development/action plan, HRM, fiduciary management, equity, skills, climate change, sustainability and M &E).

Table A 3.2: LOI and Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Collected LOIs with proposal and other mandatory documents will be evaluated by the UGC based on the following criteria. Eligible campuses under gone in the LOI processes and getting at least pass parks (50%) in evaluation will be selected in ranked list. Form among the ranked list UGC will select and notify the campuses to participate in performance based equity grants funding.

SN	Criteria for Evaluation	Weightage
	Quality of proposal	**40**
1	1.1 Academic quality/ Professional Quality *(contextualization, aim and results chain, rationale, methodology details, ethical consideration)*	15
	1.2 Climate change adaptations and mitigations *(GRID alignment, use of local resource, collective actions with local institutions, reducing use of fossil fuel and use of alternative energy/local materials, disaster warning system)*	10
	1.3 Equity Concerns *(socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and religious belief to the educational setting in regard to access/opportunity, governance and quality)*	10
	1.4 Any Innovative Idea (if flourished)	5
	Institutional Plan and Commitment of Leaders	**30**
2	2.1 Dedication of academic leaders and their career vision *(assessment of leaders self-awareness, forward thinking vision, openness, integrity and honesty through the commitment and motivation letters)*	10
	2.2 Fiduciary management *(vision, plan, budgeting, good value of money, procurement plan)*	10
	2.3 Human Resource Management *(requirement, capacity development, occupational safety, motivation & morale, retirement etc.)*	5
	2.4 Sustainability plan *(sustainability of interventions as well as planned/achieved results)*	5
	Stakeholders participation in decision making	**20**
3	3.1 Students participation	5
	3.2 Faculty members/Staffs participation	5

	3.4 Local government/community engagement	5
	3.4 Partnerships with stakeholders *(private/ public/ social sector)*	5
4	**Digitalization**	**10**
	4.1 Provision of information officer *(EMIS focal point)*	5
	4.2 Initiation of online/blended mode of teaching/ learning	5
	Total Marks	**100**
	Pass Marks	**50**