

Research Programme in Development Studies (RPDS)

PROSPECTUS



INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES KOLKATA

DD 27/D, SECTOR-1, SALT LAKE

KOLKATA 700064

About IDSK

IDSK is an autonomous centre of excellence in social sciences, fully funded by the Government of West Bengal. It was established in 2002 as a registered society with a governing body comprising eminent scholars and government representatives. The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) recognised IDSK under the 'New Category of ICSSR recognised Institutes'. IDSK is devoted to advanced academic research and informed policy advice in the areas of education, health, gender, employment, technology, communication, natural resource governance, population displacement, public history, and economic development. The Institute is committed to dissemination of its research findings through scientific publications, public reports, workshops, seminars, publications in the media, and other public counselling and education programmes. IDSK conducted MPhil in Development Studies since 2006 and has been conducting PhD in Development Studies since 2016, under the auspices of the University of Calcutta. During the twenty-two years of its existence, IDSK has made its mark in the world of research in social sciences. It has actively collaborated with the departments of history, economics, political science, philosophy, and business management, Ballygunge Science College, Centre for Urban Economic Studies, Women's Studies Research Centre and Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Calcutta. IDSK has also actively collaborated with such other institutions as Monash University, University of Melbourne, University of Geneva, University of Rome "La Sapienza", Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, and others. The Institute regularly organises research training programmes for young scholars, often in collaboration with other academic institutions. The University Grants Commission sponsored the setting up of the Rabindranath Tagore Centre for Human Development Studies (RTCHDS) under the auspices of the IDSK through the University of Calcutta. The academic programmes of the Centre included organizing seminars, supporting doctoral research, hosting post-doctoral fellows and visiting academics at various levels.

Development Studies as a Field of Research

Development research is a field that seeks to analyse the various aspects of social, economic, political and ecological change by integrating knowledge from multiple academic disciplines such as economics, sociology, political sciences, anthropology, history, geography, and demography. Leading universities in the world offer doctoral programmes in Development Studies.

About the Course

The **Research Programme in Development Studies (RPDS)** is a nine-month course that aims to introduce tools and techniques of development studies research to students who have completed their masters. It combines rigorous course work with guided research. The perspectives are drawn from different disciplines, with a strong emphasis on the classics in social sciences and humanities. The purpose of the course is to encourage the students to engage with the issues of development studies, from the vantage point of critical social science research. The strength of the course lies in the balance it maintains between critical theory, in-depth training in qualitative and quantitative research methods, and guided research. It will sharpen the research aptitude of the students and serve as a bridge course between Masters and PhD programme. The course will be conducted by IDSK and the degree will be given by IDSK.

Eligibility Criterion

Masters degree with 50 per cent marks from a recognized University in Economics, Sociology, History, Political Sciences, Anthropology, Demography, Geography, Development Studies, Liberal Arts and allied subjects. Admission to the course does not have any upper age limit.

Fees

INR 25,000 (Non-refundable). Upto two students will receive a fee waiver on merit-cum-means basis.

Admission Procedure

There are 20 seats and students will be admitted based on a rigorous selection process. Applicants must send their Masters marksheet and a research proposal not exceeding 1000 words to rpds.idsk@gmail.com. Candidates wishing to apply for the fee waiver must additionally submit a certificate of annual family income. Shortlisted candidates will be called for an interview, following which the final selection will be made.

Course Structure

The course will be divided into four segments. Segment I (duration 3 months) and Segment 2 (duration 1 month) are compulsory for all the students. Segment III (2 months) offer optional courses. Each student will have to opt two courses from the available options. Segment IV (2 months) will be used for writing dissertation under supervision.

Timeline	Courses	Compulsory/Optional
3 months	Module 1: Philosophy of Social Science Research in Development Module 2: Quantitative Methods Module 3: Qualitative Methods	Compulsory (25x3 = 75 marks)
1 month	Module 4: Conceptualizing Research	Compulsory (25 marks)
2 months	Module 5: Population, Health, and Development Module 6: Advanced Econometrics Module 7: Gender and Intersections Module 8: Labour and Development Module 9:: Tribals, Resources and Development Module 10: Understanding the Urban Module 11: Space, Region and Development Module 12: History and the Present in Contemporary India Module 13: State Society and Development Module 14: Migration, Displacement and Development in Contemporary India Module 15: Environment, Development and Climate Change	Students have to choose any two (25x2 = 50 marks)
3 months	Dissertation	Compulsory (50 marks)

Course Requirements

This is an offline, full-time course. Classes will be held three days a week for first three segments. At least 75% attendance in each of these three segments is mandatory. Attendance in the final quarter depends on the discretion of the supervisor. Students are also expected to participate actively in seminars/conferences/other academic events held at IDSK.

Facilities at IDSK

IDSK has an excellent library, access to various online journals, a well-equipped computer laboratory, and a canteen. IDSK does not provide hostel facilities.

Further Opportunities

Successful completion of the course will help the students to competently formulate their PhD project. It will teach them interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research methods, close reading and academic writing. Apart from PhD, such trainings will be relevant for jobs in the fields of teaching, publishing, journalism and policy research.

Venue

Institute of Development Studies Kolkata (*Salt Lake Campus*)
DD-27/D, Sector I, Salt Lake, Kolkata – 700 064, West Bengal
Email: rpds.idsk@gmail.com
Website: www.idsk.edu.in
Tel: +91 (33) 2321 3120/21

Important Dates

Last date for submitting applications: 14 August 2026

Publication of List of Shortlisted Candidates: 17 August 2026

Interview: 20 August 2026

Publication of List of Selected Candidates: 21 August 2026

Last Date of Payment of Fees and Admission: 28 August 2026