



Centre for Research on Start-ups and Risk Financing

Job Opening Executive Director

The Centre for Research on Start-Ups and Risk Financing (CREST) is an Institute of Eminence Research Centre established at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras). CREST was set up with the objective of providing academic and thought leadership in the areas of innovation, entrepreneurship, and risk capital. The Centre engages in high-quality scholarly research, develops world-class data repositories on Indian start-ups and ventures, and builds evidence-based insights to inform policymakers, investors, and practitioners. Through its close collaboration with YNOS Venture Engine, a leading information platform on the Indian start-up ecosystem, CREST has been able to democratise access to high-quality data, investor intelligence, and risk capital insights for founders, researchers, and policymakers alike. CREST also fosters cross-country collaborative research and is committed to creating a sustainable, globally-linked ecosystem that bridges academia and industry in the start-up and innovation.

Visit us: <https://doms.iitm.ac.in/crest/>

Role Overview

CREST is seeking a dynamic, organised, and proactive Executive Director to oversee the day-to-day operations of the Centre, facilitate inter-centre coordination, manage stakeholder relationships, and support the strategic and administrative goals of CREST. The Project Manager will serve as the primary interface between CREST and its partner centres, donors, visitors, and collaborators, ensuring smooth execution of projects, programmes, and events.

This is an immediate requirement, and candidates available to join at the earliest will be given preference.

Key Responsibilities

1. Inter-Centre Coordination & Collaboration

- Coordinate with managers and leads of partner research centres to ensure alignment of objectives, timelines, and deliverables.
- Act as the primary liaison between CREST and other centres, facilitating information exchange, joint planning, and collaborative initiatives.
- Schedule and manage regular inter-centre meetings, record minutes, and track action items to ensure accountability.

2. Proposal Preparation & Grant Support

- Assist in the preparation, compilation, and submission of research proposals, grant applications, and project documents.
- Coordinate with faculty, researchers, and partner organisations to gather inputs required for proposal development.
- Monitor proposal pipelines and maintain a repository of submitted and ongoing proposals.

3. Donor & Stakeholder Liaison

- Support CREST in identifying and engaging with potential donors, funding agencies, and strategic partners.
- Facilitate communication and relationship-building with existing and prospective donors, including preparation of presentations, concept notes, and updates.
- Assist in organising donor meetings, briefings, and site visits, ensuring a professional and impactful experience.

4. Visitor & Official Visit Management

- Plan, coordinate, and manage all official visits by external stakeholders, delegations, collaborators, and dignitaries to CREST.
- Prepare visit itineraries, briefing materials, and ensure all logistics, hospitality, and protocol requirements are met.
- Follow up on outcomes and action points arising from official visits.

5. Communication & Outreach

- Prepare periodic progress reports, project summary reports, and activity updates for internal and external stakeholders.
- Support CREST's communication and outreach activities, including managing website updates, social media, newsletters, and press releases.
- Represent CREST at external forums, meetings, and networking events as required.
- Build and maintain a strong professional network with start-up ecosystem stakeholders, incubators, investors, and academic institutions.

6. Internship Programme Management

- Oversee and manage the internship programme at CREST end-to-end — from onboarding to completion — ensuring that interns are meaningfully and productively engaged in research, data, or project activities aligned with the Centre's objectives.
- Coordinate with faculty and researchers to define intern assignments, set clear deliverables, and monitor progress on a regular basis to ensure quality of output.
- Handle all administrative requirements pertaining to interns, including documentation, compliance with institute norms, attendance, stipend processing, and issuance of completion certificates.
- Serve as the primary point of contact for interns during their tenure, addressing queries, facilitating access to resources, and ensuring a positive and structured internship experience at CREST.

7. Cross-Project Coordination & Research Staff Management

- Coordinate actively with Project Managers (PMs) overseeing CREST's various funded research studies and sponsored projects, ensuring alignment of timelines, resource allocation, and reporting commitments across all ongoing initiatives.
- Lead and facilitate the recruitment of project staff — including research associates, field investigators, and data analysts — for funded projects.
- Monitor the progress of all funded studies on a regular basis, flagging delays, resource bottlenecks, or scope deviations to the concerned PI or Centre leadership in a timely manner.
- Maintain a consolidated project tracker covering milestones, deliverable deadlines, fund utilisation, and staff positions across all active projects

8. Event Organisation & Management

- Plan and execute various events such as conferences, seminars, workshops, panel discussions, and outreach events organised by CREST, including flagship events such as the International Confluence Conference on Start-ups and Innovation (ICCSI).
- Coordinate with vendors, speakers, sponsors, and participants to ensure successful event delivery.
- Manage post-event documentation, feedback collection, and reporting.

Qualifications & Experience

- Postgraduate degree in Management, Social Sciences, Development Studies, or a related field with familiarity to areas of startups, ventures and innovation
- Minimum 10 years of relevant experience in project management, research administration, or academic/institutional coordination.
- Prior experience in a research centre, university, think tank, or development organisation is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated experience in proposal writing, donor communication, and stakeholder management.

Skills & Competencies

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English; proficiency in Tamil will be an advantage.
- Strong organisational and multitasking abilities with keen attention to detail.
- Proficiency in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and project management tools.
- Ability to work independently as well as collaboratively in a fast-paced academic environment.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to engage professionally with diverse stakeholders.
- Understanding of the start-up, innovation, and research funding ecosystem in India will be an added advantage.

What CREST Offers

- An intellectually stimulating environment at one of India's premier academic institutions.
- Opportunity to work at the forefront of start-up ecosystem research and policy engagement.
- Exposure to a wide network of researchers, industry leaders, investors, and policymakers.
- Competitive remuneration commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Location of Work

IIT Madras Campus, Chennai – 600 036, Tamil Nadu, India.

How to Apply

Interested candidates are requested to send their updated resume / CV to: crest@wmail.iitm.ac.in along with their expected salary details

Note: This is an immediate opening. We prefer applicants who can join at short notice.