BIRDI
Bangladesh Industry Research Development & Innovation Grants

How to Fill the BIRDI R&D EOI Online Form

A practical workshop for applicants: what to write, what evidence to attach, and how reviewers score it

SICIP
SKILLS FOR INDUSTRY COMPETITIVENESS & INNOVATION PROGRAM

ADB

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

By the end, applicants should be able to submit without confusion

1
Know the form structure

→

2
Write each section to the score

→

3
Attach the right evidence

→

4
Self-check before submission

- Understand eligibility checks before writing the technical content.
- Use the same language reviewers use: problem, solution, partner capacity, value, sustainability, skills, research impact, timeline, transformation.
- Learn from one dummy EOI that connects every section into one logical project story.

GRANT PURPOSE IN ONE SLIDE

What BIRDI is looking for

- Applied RDI that solves a real industry problem, not problem, not a general business idea.
- Industry–academia or industry–training collaboration with clear roles.
- Solutions that improve competitiveness, productivity, sustainability, and high-level skills in Bangladesh.
- Projects that can be piloted, validated, and reported within about 12 months.

1. Overview

The Finance Division in the Ministry of Finance, is implementing the Skills for Industry Competitiveness and Innovation Program (SICIP) which will contribute to building a technology-ready workforce for diversified and innovation-driven economy in Bangladesh. SICIP, with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), will implement skills development training through industry associations, non-government organizations and training institutes administered by five ministries to boost productivity and competitiveness across the priority and emerging sectors. The program aims to increase technology-oriented skilled workforce, promote inclusive skilling and upskilling opportunities, foster skills for climate-resilient manufacturing processes and green technologies, and incentivize partnerships with industry to nurture innovation capacity namely through industry-focused research and development (R&D) initiatives.

To implement the R&D component under Scheme 1: Advanced Technical Skills, Managerial Capability, and R&D Driven Innovation Capacity Development for Priority and Emerging Industries (Professional Services with economic code group 3257), the Program has introduced competitive grants for collaborative **industry focused** research, development, and innovation projects. This initiative aligns with the nation's aspiration for accelerated growth, which seeks to position Bangladesh as a high-income, knowledge-driven competitive economy. The **Bangladesh Industry Research Development and Innovation (BIRDI) Grants** aim to address critical gaps in Research Development and Innovation (RDI) capacity by fostering collaboration between industry and academic and training institutions enabling businesses to develop innovative, market-driven solutions.

Translation for applicants: write like a problem-solver, not like a brochure.

FORM ARCHITECTURE

The online EOI has 10 sections — but one project story

Section 1
Sector + project name
Start

Section 2
Problem (5%) + RDI solution(20%)
=25%

Section 3
Industry partner
10%

Section 4
Academic partner
10%

Section 5
Ongoing value
10%

Section 6
Ethics + sustainability
10%

Section 7
High-skilled jobs
10%

Section 8
Research + curriculum
10%

Section 9
Work plan
5%

Section 10
Transformation
10%

If one section says "AI prototype" and another says "manual inspection training," reviewers see inconsistency. Keep one consistent story across all sections.

Section 1
Sector + Project Name

START WITH A CLEAR SECTOR AND PROJECT NAME

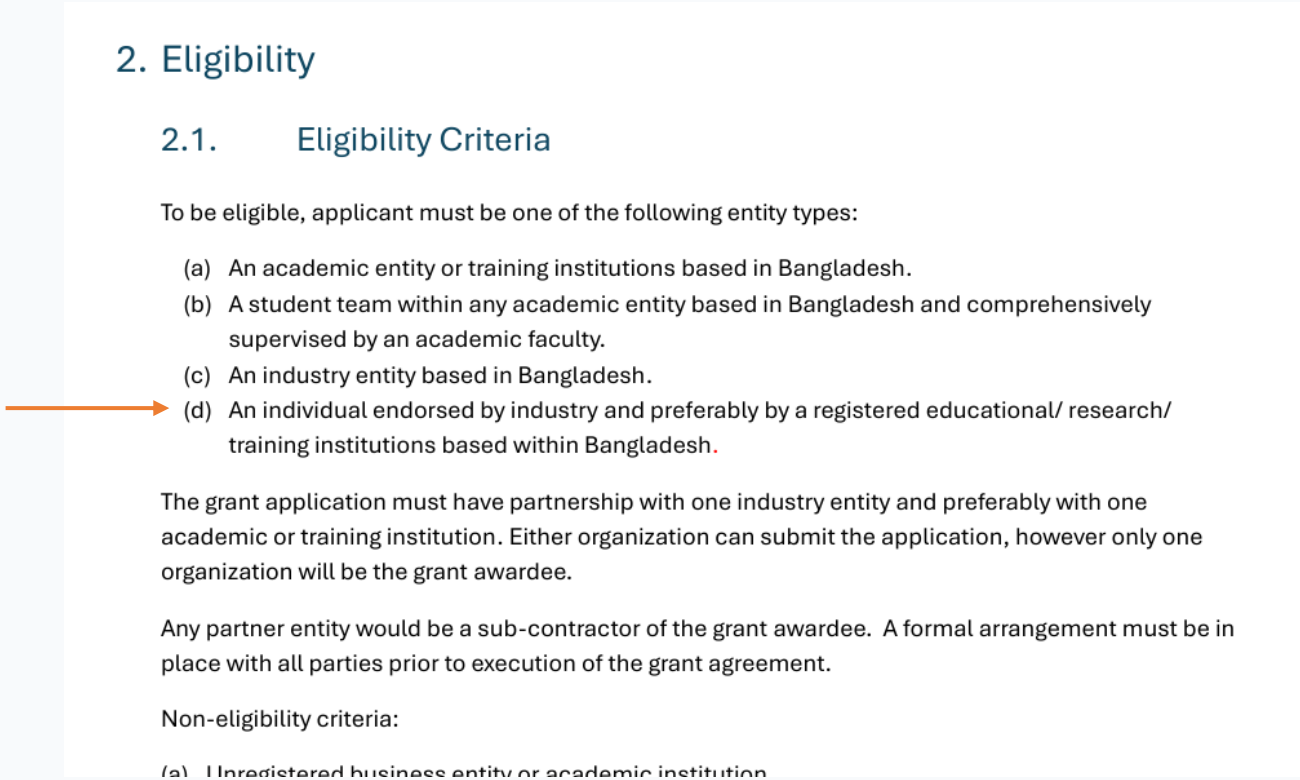
First gate: current online form basics and eligibility

Section 1 fields

- Select the correct sector identification
- Enter the full project name
- Keep the project name consistent in all attachments
- Use a title that shows technology + problem + sector

Eligibility essentials

- Bangladesh-based eligible entity
- Partnership with one industry entity
- Preferably academic/training partner
- No unregistered or non-compliant entity



2. Eligibility

2.1. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, applicant must be one of the following entity types:

(a) An academic entity or training institutions based in Bangladesh.
(b) A student team within any academic entity based in Bangladesh and comprehensively supervised by an academic faculty.
(c) An industry entity based in Bangladesh.
(d) An individual endorsed by industry and preferably by a registered educational/ research/ training institutions based within Bangladesh.

The grant application must have partnership with one industry entity and preferably with one academic or training institution. Either organization can submit the application, however only one organization will be the grant awardee.

Any partner entity would be a sub-contractor of the grant awardee. A formal arrangement must be in place with all parties prior to execution of the grant agreement.

Non-eligibility criteria:

(a) Unregistered business entity or academic institution

WHAT SEPARATES STRONG FROM WEAK EOIS

The reviewer's mindset: evidence beats claims

Weak claim	Stronger evidence-based statement	Reviewer questions
"This project will improve productivity and support sustainability."	"The pilot will reduce manual inspection time by 30%, cut defect escape by 20%, and validate the model on 10,000 factory images."	• What is the baseline? • What exactly changes? • Who provides data/site? • How will success be measured? • Can it finish in 12 months?

Convert every attractive statement into a measurable, testable commitment.

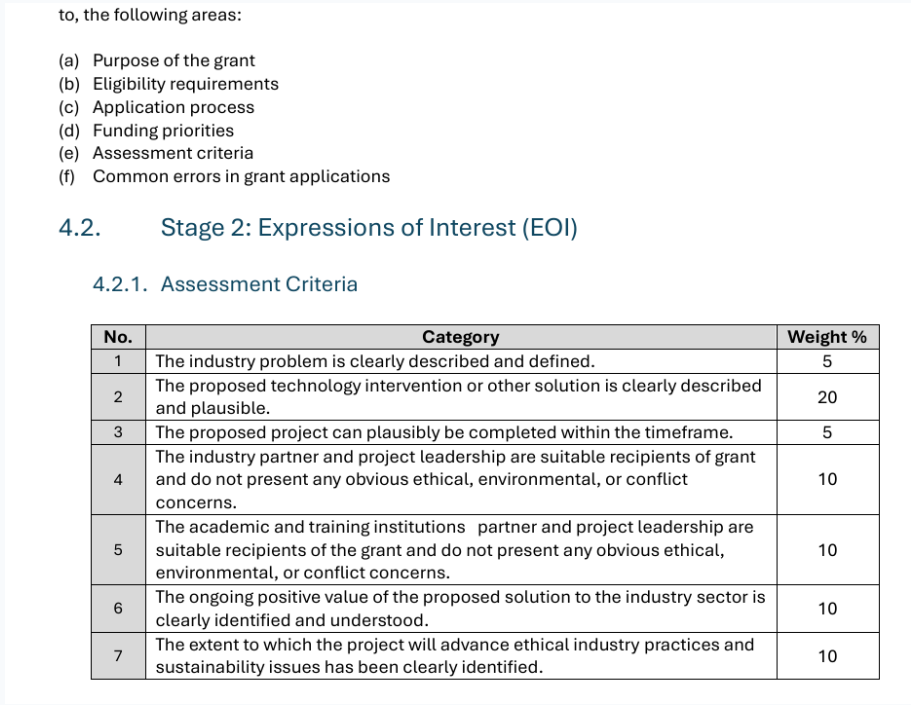
100% ASSESSMENT LOGIC

How reviewers score the EOI

Weighted score = (0–5 score ÷ 5) × section weight

The highest-mark EOI is specific, evidence-based, technically plausible, and measurable.

- 5 = clear evidence, logic chain, measurable outcomes
- 4 = strong but minor gaps in evidence, method, or measurement
- 3 = understandable but generic or weakly measured
- 2 = weak or incomplete; major gaps in evidence, feasibility, or role clarity
- 1 = vague claims without method, evidence, or role clarity
- 0 = missing, irrelevant, or unrealistic content



to, the following areas:

(a) Purpose of the grant
(b) Eligibility requirements
(c) Application process
(d) Funding priorities
(e) Assessment criteria
(f) Common errors in grant applications

4.2. Stage 2: Expressions of Interest (EOI)

4.2.1. Assessment Criteria

No.	Category	Weight %
1	The industry problem is clearly described and defined.	5
2	The proposed technology intervention or other solution is clearly described and plausible.	20
3	The proposed project can plausibly be completed within the timeframe.	5
4	The industry partner and project leadership are suitable recipients of grant and do not present any obvious ethical, environmental, or conflict concerns.	10
5	The academic and training institutions partner and project leadership are suitable recipients of the grant and do not present any obvious ethical, environmental, or conflict concerns.	10
6	The ongoing positive value of the proposed solution to the industry sector is clearly identified and understood.	10
7	The extent to which the project will advance ethical industry practices and sustainability issues has been clearly identified.	10

8	Future high-level skills for the industry/industry sector have been clearly identified.	10
9	The positive impact of the project on either future research, curriculum design, or industry engagement has been clearly identified.	10
10	Overall, the project demonstrates industry innovation or transformation solutions that will deliver meaningful outcomes for Bangladesh.	10

Note: 1. This is an indicative assessment matrix which may be revised subject to the approval of the NPD
2. The weight assigned for different categories will be subdivided by the experts of the review panel for objective evaluation

4.2.2. EOI Submission

Section 2

Problem (5%) + RDI solution(20%) =25%

PROBLEM AND PROPOSED RDI SOLUTION — UP TO 600 WORDS

Section 2 is the heart of the EOI

Problem definition 5% → **Technical plausibility 20%** → **Validation evidence images / data / pilot** → **12-month deliverable**

Recommended structure

- Context and pain point: 120–150 words
- Root cause and operational impact: 80–100 words
- RDI solution and technical method: 180–220 words
- Pilot, validation, and expected outputs: 80–100 words

Do not write only “we will develop software/machine/process.”

Explain how it will work, what input it needs, where it will be tested, and what output proves success.

USE THIS FORMULA

Writing a strong industry problem

Problem = symptom + root cause + measurable impact + urgency +affected group +affected group

Symptom	Root cause	Impact	Urgency	Affected group
What is visibly going wrong?	Why is it happening?	Cost, waste, downtime, defect, safety, export risk	Why must it be solved now?	Factory, workers, buyers, farmers, patients, sector

Weak: “Quality problems are common in the textile industry.”

Strong: “Manual fabric inspection misses recurring defects, causing rework, delayed shipment, and buyer rejection risk in knit production lines.”

EXPLAIN THE METHOD, NOT ONLY THE IDEA

Writing a technically plausible RDI solution

1	2	3	4	5
Input	**Method**	**Pilot**	**Validation**	**Output**
data, material, samples, machine readings	algorithm, prototype, formulation, process design	factory/site/lab test with partner	KPIs, accuracy, cost, safety, waste, energy	prototype, process, model, SOP, report

Minimum technical detail to include

- Technology or RDI approach
- Why the approach fits the problem
- Data/material/sample requirement
- Prototype or process development steps
- Testing environment and success indicators

Feasibility risk to acknowledge

- Data quality
- Lab-to-industry scale gap
- Machine integration
- Worker adoption
- Regulatory or safety issue

UP TO 3 FILES/IMAGES WHERE REQUIRED

Use attachments as evidence, not decoration

Upload 1
Problem evidence

- baseline chart
- defect photo
- production log
- energy bill summary
- lab test result

Upload 2
Technical framework

- process flow
- prototype drawing
- architecture diagram
- experimental setup
- data pipeline

Upload 3
Validation plan

- KPI table
- test protocol
- pilot schedule
- sample size
- acceptance criteria

Max 3 files per section | Max 5 MB per file | Accepted types: PDF, DOC/DOCX, XLS/XLSX, JPG/JPEG, PNG. Use clear filenames.

Section 3

Industry partner

10%

150–200 WORDS | 10%

Section 3: Industry partner

- Name and short profile of the industry partner.
- Core business and sector relevance.
- Specific role: site, data, samples, machines, operators, testing, adoption.
- Capacity to support pilot or validation.
- Why this partner is suitable for this project.

Dummy example

ABC Knitwear Ltd. will provide two production lines, historical defect logs, fabric images, quality inspectors, and a pilot site. The partner will validate whether the AI-assisted inspection system reduces defect escape and inspection time under real production conditions.

Reviewer signal: partner is not just supportive. It has a test site, data, staff, and an adoption pathway.

Section 4
Academic partner
10%

150–200 WORDS | 10%

Section 4: Academic partner

What reviewers want

- Lead researcher and department
- Relevant technical expertise
- Lab, equipment, software, testing capability
- Supporting team and student involvement
- Previous applied RDI or industry collaboration

Dummy example

Professor Mr. X, the Department of CSE at XYZ University, will lead model design, data annotation protocol, AI training, accuracy testing, and curriculum integration. Mr. X has experience in computer vision, industrial automation, and student capstone supervision. The Department of CSE at XYZ University has previously undertaken a project like this.

Avoid: “The university has good teachers and labs”

Use: exact lab, expertise, task, and output.

Section 5

Ongoing value to industry

10%

150–200 WORDS | 10%

Section 5: Ongoing value to industry

Turn value into numbers

Value area	Baseline	Target after pilot
Inspection time	100% manual checking	30% faster review
Defect escape	Recurring missed defects	20% reduction
Rework cost	High rework and delay	Measurable cost saving
Scale benefit	Single line pain point	Replicable across lines/factories

Good value statements include cost, time, defect, yield, energy, water, safety, downtime, quality, or export readiness.

Section 6

Ethical and sustainable growth

10%

200–300 WORDS | 10%

Section 6: Ethical and sustainable growth

No greenwashing

- Do not only say “eco-friendly.”
- Explain specific actions and safeguards.
- Mention any worker, data, safety, chemical, waste, or energy risk.

Strong sustainability logic

- Cleaner production or resource efficiency
- Waste/defect/emission reduction
- Safer working conditions
- Responsible data/automation
- **ESG** and compliance readiness

E = Environmental
How the project reduces environmental harm.
Examples: less energy use, less water use, waste reduction, pollution control, lower emissions, cleaner production.

S = Social
How the project benefits people and workers.
Examples: safer workplace, worker welfare, skill development, fair employment, health and safety improvement.

G = Governance
How the project is managed honestly and responsibly.
Examples: transparency, proper record keeping, legal compliance, no conflict of interest, ethical data use, and accountable project management.

Dummy example: The AI system will not replace workers; it will support quality inspectors with early defect alerts. Training will focus on human-supervised use, data privacy, and safer decision-making. Lower rework will also reduce wasted fabric, chemicals, water, and energy.

Section 7

Higher-skilled jobs

10%

250–300 WORDS | 10%

Section 7: Higher-skilled jobs

Role	Skills needed	Training route
AI inspection operator	Image capture, dashboard use	Factory training + SOP
Data annotation assistant	Defect labeling, QA rules	University-led module
Quality analytics officer	KPI tracking, root-cause analysis	Industry case workshop
Automation technician	Sensor/camera maintenance	Hands-on technical training

Do not only write “jobs will be created.” Name the roles, skills, training provider, and how existing workers will be upskilled.

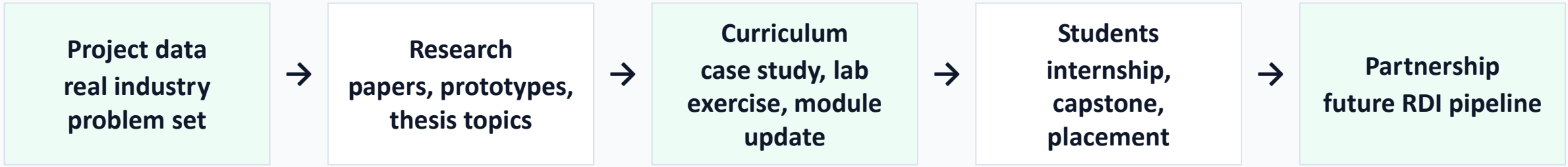
Section 8

Future research and curriculum impacts

10%

200–300 WORDS | 10%

Section 8: Future research and curriculum impact



Dummy example

The project will create an industry image dataset, a fabric defect case study, a computer vision lab exercise, two student capstone topics, and an industry seminar on quality analytics for RMG.

Section 9

Work plan and timeline

5%

150–200 WORDS | 5%

Section 9: Work plan and timeline

M1–2 Baseline + design	M3–5 Prototype / solution development	M6–8 Industry pilot	M9–10 Validation + refinement	M11–12 Reporting + scale-up plan

Every phase should show: activities + responsible partner + milestone + output output

- Month 1–2: baseline defect data and final design report
- Month 3–5: AI model and prototype dashboard
- Month 6–8: pilot on two production lines
- Month 9–10: KPI validation and model refinement
- Month 11–12: final report, SOP, training, scale-up roadmap

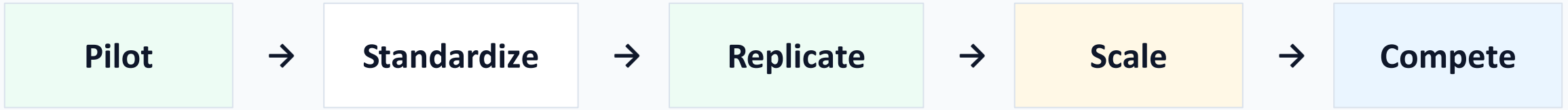
Section 10

Industry transformation

10%

200–300 WORDS | 10%

Section 10: Industry transformation



- Show how the solution goes beyond one firm after the pilot.
- Explain what will be standardized: SOP, toolkit, model, machine settings, training module, validation protocol.
- Link transformation to Bangladesh: productivity, local innovation capacity, import substitution, export readiness, compliance, competitiveness.

Transformation is not “big words.” It is a credible pathway from one pilot to wider sector adoption.

Dummy EOI Learning Tool

Use this fictional example to understand how every section connects.

Project title: SmartFab-AI — AI-based fabric defect detection and root-cause analytics for knit manufacturing

Sector: Textiles and Ready-Made Garments | Industry partner: ABC Knitwear Ltd. | Academic partner: XYZ partner: XYZ University, CSE Department

This is a teaching example only. Applicants must replace all content with their own real project, partner, data, and evidence.

EXAMPLE OF A CONNECTED PROBLEM-SOLUTION STORY

Dummy Section 2: Problem and RDI solution

Problem

Manual fabric inspection is slow and inconsistent. Recurring defects are detected late, causing rework, shipment delay, and buyer rejection risk.

RDI solution

Develop and pilot a computer-vision model trained on factory fabric images. The system will detect common defects, generate alerts, and support root-cause analytics for quality teams.

Validation

Pilot on two production lines; test accuracy, inspection time, defect escape, and user acceptance against baseline.

Evidence to attach

- defect photo samples
- process flow
- KPI validation table

Dummy Sections 3–5: Partners and value

Section 3 Industry partner	ABC Knitwear Ltd. provides production lines, defect logs, fabric images, quality inspectors, pilot space, and adoption pathway.
Section 4 Academic partner	XYZ University CSE team leads AI model development, annotation protocol, dashboard testing, student projects, and validation reporting.
Section 5 Ongoing value	Expected value: faster inspection, reduced defect escape, lower rework cost, better shipment reliability, and a repeatable quality analytics model for other knit units.

Learning point: partner roles and value must directly support the technical solution from Section 2.

SHOW WIDER IMPACT WITHOUT LOSING PROJECT FOCUS

Dummy Sections 6–8: Sustainability, skills, research

6. Ethics + sustainability	7. High-skilled jobs	8. Research + curriculum
Human-supervised AI, worker upskilling, data privacy, lower rework, less wasted fabric, chemicals, water, and energy.	AI inspection operator, data annotation assistant, quality analytics officer, automation technician, and process improvement engineer.	Fabric-defect dataset, computer vision lab exercise, student capstones, industry case study, and future RDI pipeline.

Learning point: do not add unrelated “impact.” Explain the impact created by the same pilot.

FINISH WITH DELIVERY CONFIDENCE

Dummy Sections 9–10: Timeline and transformation

M1–2	M3–5	M6–8	M9–10	M11–12
baseline + design	model + dashboard	factory pilot	validation	SOP + scale plan

Transformation statement

If validated, the project creates a local AI-enabled quality inspection model that can be replicated across knit factories, reducing reliance on purely manual inspection and supporting higher-value, data-driven RMG production in Bangladesh.

AVOID THESE BEFORE SUBMISSION

Common mistakes that lose marks

Generic problem
No factory/process evidence or baseline

Unclear method
Idea stated, but technical pathway missing

Passive partner
Partner named but no site/data/testing role

Unmeasured value
Benefits claimed without KPIs

Weak timeline
Activities not sequenced or impossible in 12 months

Decorative attachments
Files do not verify problem, solution, or validation

Rule: before submitting, every section must answer “what, why, how, who, evidence, timeline, and measurable result.”

QUICK CLARIFICATION SLIDE

FAQ answers applicants usually ask

Can industry submit?	Yes, eligible industry entities can submit with required partnership logic.	**Does it need an academic partner?**	The EOI scoring includes academic/training partner suitability; include one where possible.
Can I write in Bangla?	The guideline requires EOI and a comprehensive application in English.	**Should I exceed word limits?**	No. Keep each section within the stated limit and target about 2,300–2,300–2,530 words total.
What if data is not ready?	State Month 1 baseline data and realistic pilot KPIs.		

BEFORE CLICKING SUBMIT

Final submission-ready checklist

- Section 1 completed with correct sector identification and a consistent project name.
- One clear industry problem with baseline evidence or a plan to establish baseline.
- RDI solution explains method, testing environment, and validation KPIs.
- Industry and academic partners have specific roles and resources.
- Benefits are measurable: cost, time, quality, safety, waste, energy, productivity, or competitiveness.
- Ethics, sustainability, skills, research/curriculum impact, timeline, and transformation are directly linked to the same project.
- Attachments are relevant, readable, correctly named, and within the file limit.
- Final text is in English, within word limits, and consistent across all sections.

If a reviewer cannot understand the project in 3 minutes, simplify the story before submission.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS

Sources used for this workshop deck

- Online EOI Grant Application Form — structured online form sections, word limits, attachment rules, and weight summary.
- EOI Submission Form with Detailed Marking Guide — section-wise instructions and 0–5 reviewer rubric.
- BIRDI Grant Guidelines — purpose, eligibility, application process, assessment criteria, monitoring, and compliance expectations.

https://birdi.sicip.gov.bd/#birdi

Workshop closing message: a strong EOI is clear, evidence-based, technically plausible, partner-supported, and measurable.

Thank you