

Guidance Note on Form 15

Annual Statement of Donations Received for Scientific Research

(Section 45(4)(a) read with section 45(3) of the Income-tax Act, 2025)

1. Introduction

Form 15 is a statutory annual information statement required to be furnished by prescribed undertakings or institutions receiving sums for scientific research under the Income-tax Act, 2025. The form gives effect to section 45(4)(a) and is an integral part of the scientific research incentive framework under the new Act.

Under the Income-tax Act, 1961, similar reporting was required through Form 10BD read with Rule 18AB for donations covered under section 35 as well as section 80G. The Income-tax Act, 2025 introduces a segregated compliance framework, and Form 15 replaces Form 10BD insofar as it related to scientific research donations.

2. Legislative Background and Continuity

- Section 45(3) of the Income-tax Act, 2025 corresponds to section 35(1)(i), (ii) and (iia) of the Income-tax Act, 1961.
- Section 45(4)(a) corresponds to section 35(1A) of the Income-tax Act, 1961.
- Form 15 replaces Form 10BD for scientific research donations.
- Due date of 31st May is retained from the earlier framework applicable to Form 10BD under Rule 18AB.

This ensures continuity of compliance while achieving policy segregation.

3. Scope and Applicability

Form 15 applies exclusively to sums received by entities referred to in section 45(3) for:

- scientific research;
- social science research; or
- statistical research.

Donations to charitable institutions fall outside the scope of Form 15.

4. Person Responsible for Furnishing the Statement

The obligation to furnish Form 15 rests with the prescribed undertaking or institution receiving the sum. The form is required to be verified by the person authorised to verify the return of income of such institution.

5. Periodicity and Due Date

Form 15 is required to be furnished annually in respect of each tax year in which eligible sums are received.

The statement must be furnished on or before 31st May immediately following the end of the relevant tax year.

6. Contents of Form 15

Form 15 captures donor-wise and donation-wise particulars, including:

- identification and approval details of the prescribed institution;
- donor particulars and PAN;
- amount, date and mode of receipt;
- nature of research for which the sum is received.

The electronic form may provide for pre-filling and validation to ensure accuracy.

7. Correction Statements

To address errors or omissions, the Income-tax administration may permit furnishing of correction statements, following a mechanism similar to that earlier prescribed for Form 10BD under Income-tax Rules, 1962.

8. Role in Deduction Verification

Form 15 serves as a primary data source for:

- cross-verification of deductions claimed by donors under section 45; and
- automated matching and risk-based scrutiny.

Furnishing of Form 15 does not, by itself, confer deduction on the donor.

9. Consequences of Non-compliance

Failure to furnish Form 15, or furnishing incorrect particulars, may:

- adversely affect the allowability of deduction to the donor; and
- attract consequences as prescribed under the Income-tax Act, 2025.

10. System-driven Administration under the Income-tax Act, 2025

Form 15 reflects the broader policy direction under the Income-tax Act, 2025 towards technology-enabled, segmented compliance, with separate reporting streams for scientific research incentives and general charitable donations.

11. Conclusion

Form 15 is a cornerstone of the scientific research donation reporting regime under the Income-tax Act, 2025. By retaining key features such as annual reporting and the 31st May due date from the earlier Form 10BD framework, while introducing purpose-specific segregation, the form strengthens transparency, accountability and ease of verification.