

## Guidance Note on Form No. 17

Form No. 17 is an Income tax form used by an Indian company **applying for approval u/s 45(3)(b) and** by a research association, university, college or other institution **applying for approval u/s 45(4)(b) of the Income Tax Act, 2025.**

### **Purpose of Form No. 17**

The primary purpose of filing Form No. 17 is to:

Apply for approval u/s 45(3)(b) of the Act by an Indian company and u/s 45(4)(b) of the Act by a research association, university, college or other institution.

### **Filing Requirements**

**Who can file:** An Indian company, research association, university, college or other institution seeking to claim benefit available u/s 45(3)(b) of the Act

**When to file:** Form No. 17 can be filed at any time during the financial year preceding the tax year from which the approval is sought. However, application for tax year 2026-27 can be made at any time during that tax year.

**How to file:** The form must be filed electronically, either using a Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) or through an electronic verification code (EVC). The form shall be verified by the person who is authorised to verify the return of income under section 265 of the Income Tax Act, 2025. Additionally, the applicant is required to send a copy of the application in Form No. 17 to **Member (IT), CBDT** along with the acknowledgment receipt as evidence of having furnished the application form in duplicate in the office of the jurisdictional Commissioner/Director. **Information required:** The form requires general taxpayer details, specific details of the scientific research being undertaken by the applicant taxpayer (e.g., name, duration, date of initiation, present status, cost of the project etc.), and details of business, if any, of the taxpayer and details of donations/ grants received.

### **Frequency and Due Date**

**Frequency:** Form No. 17 is an **application form** to seek approval u/s 45(3)(b) or 45(4)(b) of the Income Tax Act, 1961. It is generally filed once when the taxpayer decides to seek approval under the said sections.

**Due Date:** The Form No. 17 can be filed at any time during the financial year preceding the tax year from which the approval is sought.

### **Structure of Form No. 17**

The form is divided into the following key parts:

#### **Part -A**

**Personal Information:** This section captures basic identifying information about the assessee:

Full name of the assessee

Permanent Account Number (PAN)/ Aadhaar Number

Address

Tax year

Residential status

Type of the taxpayer making application

Details of previous rejected applications under these provisions

### **Part -B**

This part has several tables seeking the following details:

**Details of key persons:** This table seeks details such as Name, PAN, relation with the taxpayer etc of persons such as Author, Founder, Settlor, Trustee, shareholders holding 5% or more of shareholding etc.

**Operational details:** This table seeks details of laboratory/ research facility etc owned, managed or controlled by the applicant taxpayer and details of person-in-charge and activities carried out by such facilities.

**Research projects undertaken:** This table seeks details such as name of project, date of initiation, duration of project, current status and projected costs of research projects undertaken by the taxpayer during last 3 tax years.

**Income and Expenditure:** The tables under this heading seek details of business income, if any, of the taxpayer and details of ITR filed during last 3 tax years. Besides other tables seek details of income received from donations/ grants by the taxpayer and expenditure made on scientific research during last 3 tax years.

**Declaration/Verification:** The form concludes with a verification section where the assessee (or an authorized person) declares that the information provided is correct and complete. The form must be verified electronically, either by digital signature or electronic verification mode.

### **Key Points to Note**

**Mandatory Filing:** To apply for approval u/s 45(3)(b) & 45(4)(b) of the Income Tax Act, 2025, an Indian company or a research association, university, college or other institution must file Form No. 17 in the prescribed manner.

**Filing Deadline:** The Form No. 17 can be filed at any time during the financial year preceding the tax year from which the approval is sought. However, application for tax year 2026-27 can be made at any time during that tax year.

## **Documents required**

Proof of identity and address: PAN card and Aadhaar card.

Audited annual accounts

Bank statements: To verify income and expenses.

Form 26AS: To reconcile any tax deducted at source.

Details of registrations/ approvals received under other provisions of the Income Tax Act, DARPAN portal and FCRA 2010.

self-certified copy of instrument of creation (if constituted under an instrument)

self-certified copy of creation/establishment document (if not constituted under an instrument)

self-certified copy of registration documents (RoC/ firms & societies/ trusts etc.)

self-certified copy of FCRA registration (if applicable)

self-certified copy of existing notification/ order granting approval under section 45 (if any)

comprehensive note on research activities (or NIL declaration if none)

audited annual accounts for last three Tax Years (or NIL declaration for each year)

donors list for last three Tax Years (or NIL declaration)

patent/copyright/ trademark details (if any)

## **Outcome Details**

**Deduction for donation made:** The primary purpose of Form No. 17 is to apply for approval u/s 45(3)(b) & 45(4)(b). Any donations made to an entity approved under these sections becomes eligible for deduction from income of the donor.

**Deficiency notice and enquiry by the prescribed authority:** The prescribed authority may issue a deficiency notice to the applicant in case any defect is noticed which the applicant may correct within one month from the end of the month in which the deficiency letter is served. If the applicant fails to remove the deficiency within the prescribed period, the Commissioner shall send his recommendation treating the application as invalid. The prescribed authority will complete its inquiry and make recommendation to the central government within 3 months.

**Notification u/s 45:** After the Form No. 17 is filed, the prescribed authority after satisfying itself as provided in the grants approval and the central government notifies the entity u/s 45 of the Income Tax Act, 2025 and any donation made to such entity is eligible for deduction.

**Post approval annual compliances:** After the approval is granted to an entity such entity shall submit following documents to the jurisdiction Commissioner of Income Tax:

- (a) a detailed note on the research work undertaken by it during the tax year;
- (b) a summary of research articles published in national or international journals during the tax year;
- (c) any patent or other similar rights applied for or registered during the tax year;
- (d) programme of research projects to be undertaken during the forthcoming tax year and the financial allocation for such programme.

**Challenges and Solutions:**

The revised Form No. 17 is proposed to be a smart form aimed at enhancing user experience and providing ease of filing through

auto-population/ pre-filling of relevant details using information available in ITR.

real time validations & error handling

tab for ticking appropriate options

Standardization of name & address fields etc.

**Common Changes made across Forms:**

Assessment/ Financial/ Previous year or years have been replaced with Tax year or years, wherever appearing in the Form/ Annexure.

Sections, Clauses and Schedules changed as per the Income-tax Act, 2025.