



PSU · MAP #25

## DRDO Scientist — strategic tech and a merit ladder, built on programs that outlast the news cycle



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Clear GATE, join a defence lab, and climb Scientist B to G on merit rather than vacancies — for the same modest government pay as ISRO, and programs that run for a decade under the country's scrutiny.

Last reviewed 22 July 2026

### THE 30-YEAR JOURNEY

Like ISRO, DRDO runs on a Flexible Complementing Scheme: through Scientist B, C, D and E you climb on assessed merit, not on a senior retiring. A satisfactory-or-better scientist keeps moving up. The fork comes near the top. Most strong performers settle around Scientist G, a senior grade reached on merit. A rare few break into the selection grades above it: Outstanding Scientist, Distinguished Scientist, and ultimately Director General, where the vacancy-free climb ends and the seats are few.

### SALARY PROJECTION

#### If you joined today

Figures as of June 2026

7th CPC pay matrix, DA ~57–60% (2026), 27% HRA (metro lab), NPS 10%, plus DRDO Professional Update Allowance; merit-promotion timing for a satisfactory-or-better performer. Both columns are identical for the first decade-plus — the merit ladder carries every strong performer up Scientist B>C>D>E the same way. The split comes at the top: most settle at Scientist G (Level 14) on merit; a selection-grade few reach Outstanding and Distinguished Scientist. These figures share the ISRO scientific cadre exactly (both start at Level 10), so they should read the same at the entry grade. We update this every year.

| YEAR | MILESTONE             | MERIT-PROMOTION LADDER<br>where most strong performers land   | SELECTION GRADES<br>the rare summit, if you break in |
|------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 0    | Joining (Scientist B) | Sci-B · ₹92k<br>Both paths identical so far · Scientist 'B'   |                                                      |
| 10   | Scientist D           | Sci-D · ₹1.23L<br>Both paths identical so far · Scientist 'D' |                                                      |
| 26   | Paths split           | Sci-G · ₹2.18L<br>Scientist 'G'                               | L15 · ₹2.78L<br>Outstanding Scientist                |
| 34   | Retirement range      | Sci-G · ₹2.32L<br>Scientist 'G'                               | L16 · ₹3.1L<br>Distinguished Scientist               |

In-hand figures, metro lab with Professional Update Allowance. Both paths are identical until ~year 26, then split between the merit ceiling and the selection grades. Snapshot dated June 2026.

Sarkari Job Guide does not claim this salary structure. The figures come from the verified sources listed on the career page.

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## ABOUT

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Visual career maps for government jobs in India. Each map shows the full 30-year path: pay at every stage, promotion timelines, and the costs nobody mentions.

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