



MEDIATOR EMPANELMENT CRITERIA

MediateGuru Dispute Resolution Centre (MDRC)

These criteria guide selection, review and maintenance of MDRC's Panel of Mediators. They are designed for a modern, confidential and settlement-focused institution working under the MDRC Mediation Rules.

Empanelment is merit-based. It is not a guarantee of appointment, nor does it create any entitlement to a particular number, type or value of referrals. MDRC may consider the nature of the dispute, the parties, the subject area, availability, language and procedural suitability while making appointments.

1. Guiding principles

- 1.1 Mediators should demonstrate neutrality, patience, discretion, clarity of communication and the ability to guide parties toward practical settlement options without exerting pressure.
- 1.2 MDRC will prefer individuals who can conduct both in-person and online mediation with equal professionalism.
- 1.3 Professional standing, integrity, independence, cultural sensitivity and case-handling discipline are essential at every level of the panel.

2. Common eligibility requirements

- 2.1 Relevant professional experience in law, dispute resolution, business, human resources, public administration, academia, social work, counselling, negotiation, or another field relevant to mediation.
- 2.2 Completion of recognised mediation training, preferably including role-plays, facilitation techniques, caucus practice and settlement drafting.
- 2.3 A demonstrated understanding of confidentiality, informed consent, without prejudice communications and the mediator's non-adjudicatory role.
- 2.4 Ability to manage electronic communication, virtual sessions and secure document handling.
- 2.5 A declaration of independence, availability, absence of disqualifying conflict, and willingness to comply with MDRC procedures and ethics.
- 2.6 No history of conduct that would reasonably undermine confidence in neutrality, confidentiality or professional judgment.

3. Panel structure

Panel	Indicative profile
Tier 0: Reserved Panel of Mediators	Early-career professionals with up to 5 years of experience; suitable for supervised exposure and limited, low-value matters.
Tier 1: Panel Mediators	Qualified mediators suitable for standard matters and routine institutional referrals.



Tier 2: Accredited Mediators	Experienced mediators suitable for higher-value, multi-issue or sensitive disputes.
Tier 3: Senior Mediators	Senior mediators suitable for complex, high-stakes, cross-border or multi-party disputes.
Specialist Mediator Lists	Subject-specific mediators for sectors such as employment, construction, IP, technology, family business, MSME and cross-border disputes.

MDRC may move a mediator between tiers, or remove a mediator from one list and place them on another, after reviewing performance, suitability and institutional need.

4. Tier 0: Reserved Panel of Mediators

4.1 The Reserved Panel is intended to build a pipeline of future mediators through practical exposure, observation and supervised assignment.

4.2 Applicants should ordinarily have **up to 5 years** of relevant professional experience and should show genuine aptitude for communication, listening, empathy and structured problem-solving.

4.3 Members of this panel may be considered for document-led mediation, low-value disputes, pre-litigation matters, co-mediation assignments, research support or supervised mediation exposure.

4.4 Inclusion on the Reserved Panel does not entitle a person to direct appointment as sole mediator in a complex or sensitive dispute.

MDRC shall endeavour to provide meaningful case exposure to the Reserved Panel of Mediators in suitable low-value or document-only matters.

5. Tier 1: Panel Mediators

5.1 Applicants should ordinarily have completed structured mediation training and should be able to show real familiarity with opening statements, joint sessions, private sessions and settlement documentation; and have **at least 5 years** of relevant experience

5.2 They should be able to conduct routine commercial and civil matters with fairness, pace and confidentiality.

5.3 They should have at least one of the following: prior mediation exposure, dispute-resolution work, settlement conference experience, conciliation experience, or comparable practical involvement.

5.4 They should be comfortable with virtual scheduling, concise position notes and case management directions.

6. Tier 2: Accredited Mediators

6.1 Applicants should ordinarily have **at least 8 years** of relevant experience, or an equivalent profile demonstrating mature mediation judgment.

6.2 They should show a track record of successful settlement facilitation, complex negotiation or equivalent dispute-management work.

6.3 They should be capable of handling emotionally charged, multi-party or commercially sensitive matters without losing neutrality or control of process.



6.4 They should be able to assist parties in drafting settlement terms with clarity on timelines, implementation steps and default consequences.

7. Tier 3: Senior Mediators

7.1 Applicants should ordinarily have **at least 12 years** of relevant experience, or a distinguished professional record in mediation, negotiation, dispute resolution or settlement leadership.

7.2 They should demonstrate the capacity to lead complex or high-value cases, including cross-border, multi-party or technically dense matters.

7.3 They should be able to use facilitative and, where appropriate, evaluative techniques without crossing into adjudication.

7.4 They should have the temperament to manage hard stalemates, power imbalance, urgency and confidentiality pressures.

8. Specialist Mediator Lists

8.1 MDRC may create specialist lists for particular subject areas where field knowledge materially assists settlement.

8.2 Specialist listing may be based on sector work, training, publications, leadership roles, prior cases, or demonstrable familiarity with the commercial and practical issues in that field.

8.3 A specialist mediator may still be appointed in a general dispute if the subject matter suggests a clear fit and the parties do not object.

9. Application materials

9.1 Curriculum vitae and professional profile.

9.2 Details of mediation training, workshops, certifications and refresher learning.

9.3 Summary of relevant disputes handled, with enough detail to assess suitability.

9.4 One or more redacted writing samples, settlement drafts, case notes or reflective mediation statements, where requested.

9.5 Statement of subject-matter expertise and preferred case types.

9.6 Languages known and level of comfort in each language.

9.7 Conflict declaration, confidentiality undertaking and availability statement.

9.8 Proof of Payment of Requisite Fees.

9.9 Any prior panel memberships, institutional affiliations or accreditation history.

10. Nature of Fees

10.1 Empanelment fees payable to MDRC are administrative in nature and are charged towards:

10.1.1 processing of applications; due diligence and screening;

10.1.2 panel administration and maintenance;

10.1.3 institutional infrastructure and digital systems.



10.2 Empanelment fees are non-refundable, irrespective of:

10.2.1 acceptance or rejection of the application;

10.2.2 withdrawal of the application;

10.2.3 suspension, non-renewal or removal from the panel.

10.3 Payment of empanelment fees does not create any right to empanelment or appointment.

10.4 Empanelment fees shall be determined based on the category or tier of the panel to which the applicant is admitted.

10.4.1 For the Reserved Panel (Tier 0), applicable to early-career professionals with limited experience, a one-time empanelment fee of ₹5,000 for applicants resident in India and USD100 for applicants resident outside India shall be payable, together with an annual renewal fee of ₹2,500 and USD50 respectively.

10.4.2 For the Panel Mediator category, a one-time empanelment fee of ₹10,000 for applicants resident in India and USD150 for applicants resident outside India shall be payable, together with an annual renewal fee of ₹5,000 and USD75 respectively.

10.4.3 For the Accredited Mediator category, a one-time empanelment fee of ₹15,000 for applicants resident in India and USD200 for applicants resident outside India shall be payable, together with an annual renewal fee of ₹7,000 and USD100 respectively.

10.4.4 For the Senior Mediator category, a one-time empanelment fee of ₹20,000 for applicants resident in India and USD300 for applicants resident outside India shall be payable, together with an annual renewal fee of ₹10,000 and USD125 respectively.

11. Selection process

11.1 Applications may be screened by the Registrar and then reviewed by the MDRC Court or a panel committee constituted for that purpose.

11.2 MDRC may conduct interviews, ask for clarifications, request additional references or require a short practical assessment.

11.3 The institution may approve, defer, conditionally approve or decline an application.

12. Ongoing obligations of panel mediators

12.1 Prompt disclosure of any matter that may affect neutrality, availability or suitability.

12.2 Respect for confidentiality before, during and after the mediation process.

12.3 Professional communication with parties, counsel and the Registrar.

12.4 Timely conduct of sessions, preparation and settlement follow-through.

12.5 Compliance with MDRC rules, administrative directions and applicable law.

13. Review, suspension and removal

13.1 MDRC may review empanelment periodically, or whenever performance, conduct, availability or disclosure concerns arise.



13.2 A mediator may be suspended, downgraded or removed for material non-disclosure, repeated unavailability, confidentiality breach, serious misconduct, or conduct inconsistent with institutional standards.

13.3 MDRC may also revise the panel status of a mediator based on experience gained, quality of work and observed institutional fit.

14. No right to appointment

Empanelment does not create a vested right to appointment or to any minimum number of matters. All appointments remain subject to MDRC's discretion, the needs of the dispute, party confidence, independence, availability and procedural fairness.