

BIRAC-SoCH Innovation Challenge Award 2020

The Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a Government of India Enterprise, announced the launch of BIRAC Innovation Challenge Award, SoCH- Solutions for Community Health on 20th March 2020. BIRAC-SoCH Innovation Challenge Award is aimed at propelling the Indian innovators towards fighting the challenges of the community health sector. The announcement was done in association with knowledge partner Social Alpha and BioNest Incubator partner, the Clean Energy International Incubation Centre (CEIIC).

The poster for the BIRAC-SoCH Innovation Challenge Award 2020 features logos for Social Alpha, BIRAC (ignite innovate incubate), and Clean Energy International Incubation Centre (CEIIC). The main title is "Announces Launch of BIRAC Innovation Challenge Award SoCH Solutions for Community Health". Below this, it states "Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (A Govt. of India Enterprise) invites proposals in association with Knowledge Partner Social Alpha and Bio-NEST Incubator Partner CEIIC for Innovative, Efficient and Affordable Solutions for Clean Cooking in Rural and Community Settings". Five icons represent different energy sources: Biomass, Electricity, LPG, Solar, and Biogas. The "Awards & Support" section details: 10 shortlisted applicants receive INR 5 Lakhs each for prototype development; 5 finalists receive INR 10 Lakhs each for product development, design, and fabrication; and 2 winners receive INR 50 Lakhs each after user acceptance field trials. A timeline shows: 14th/20th July 2020 (EoI), 20th/26th Sep 2020 (Detailed Applications), May 2021 (Finalists), and Sep 2021 (Winners). It also notes "Who Can Apply: Start-ups/ Entrepreneurs", "Apply online at: www.birac.nic.in or MyGov.in", and "Important Date: Submit EoIs by: 15.06.2020 5:30 PM". Contact information is provided at the bottom: energy@socialalpha.org & sped-5@birac.nic.in.

The SoCH award is highly oriented and aimed at achieving a simple bold and audacious target, challenging the limits of human imagination by concentrating on topics that are currently considered untraceable or have no clear solution.

India presently is dealing with concerns of maternal and child health, sanitation, clean water availability, healthcare, infectious disease and nutrition which in a broader sense are classified under community health issues. Community health problems need to be addressed with immediate effect in order to address the major chunk of the population.

For the year 2020, the proposals are invited for innovative, efficient and affordable solutions for clean cooking in rural and community settings. Start-ups and entrepreneurs are encouraged to apply and come up with some solutions for community health which makes their lives easier keeping in mind the concern of affordability, uniqueness and efficiency. The

focus areas for innovation would revolve around Biomass, Electricity, LPG, Biogas and Solar energy.

The SoCH is intended to identify and offer financial support to technology innovators and entrepreneurs who have worked in the community health field or are working towards promoting innovative technology concept which can further be turned into a handy technology that would address community health problems at large within the stipulated time period.

Ten shortlisted applicants will receive a support of 5 lakh each in order to develop their idea and for incubation/mentorship support. Five Finalists will receive 10 lakh each along with incubation/mentorship support for product development, design and fabrication. Two winners selected after the user acceptance field trials will receive 50 lakhs each. SoCH' in Hindi means 'thought' indicating the fact that SoCH is oriented towards motivating the scientific thinkers and innovators to address the complex, social, economic challenges in order to bring a positive change in the life of masses.

Online applications can be submitted at www.birac.nic.in or www.mygov.in by 15th June 2020.

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