

DBT institutions issue call under Biotechnology Ignition Grant scheme

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New Delhi, January 01: Department of Biotechnology's Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), and Centre for Cellular And Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) have called for applications for funding upto Rs. 50 lakhs under Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG) scheme.



Introduced by BIRAC, the Biotechnology Ignition Grant scheme is designed to stimulate validation of research discoveries by providing very early stage grants for the development and maturation of those discoveries. BIRAC invites proposals for Ignition grant at least twice a year.

It operates the scheme with the help of several partner organisations. C-CAMP is one of them. The others are: IKP Knowledge Park, Hyderabad, Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), New Delhi, Venture Centre, Pune, SIDBI Innovation & Incubation Centre (SIIC), Kanpur and KIIT Bio-incubator, Bhubaneswar). C-CAMP, among other things, has high-end platform technology access to nurture early stage inventions through the 'Proof of Concept' stage.

Over the last few years, C-CAMP has supported 76 start-ups through the BIG scheme, and close to 100 start-ups through its other activities including bio-incubation, mentorship and other facilitation. C-CAMP start-ups are currently working in a wide spectrum of fields from healthcare and medical devices, drug discovery, molecular biology, transgenic model systems, biomaterials and bioenergy to synthetic biology, upstream & downstream processing, agricultural sciences, and nutraceuticals.

The Biotechnology Ignition Grant Scheme is for researchers / innovators in the area of Biotechnology who want to be entrepreneurs. The main aim is to provide funding and mentoring support to establish and validate proof of concept. Funding will be in the form of Grant-in-Aid limited up-to Rs 50 Lakh.

Any individual or company, which has an idea/concept that has scientific merit and commercialization potential, or address an unmet national need can apply. They need to register on BIRAC website and submit an online application. The partner organization will conduct the initial screening. The shortlisted participants will be called for a presentation to BIRAC office. Based on the proposal and presentation, the final selection will be made by an apex committee.

The applications will be broadly evaluated based on aspects such as the technology, execution capability, potential impact of the technology and business plan. The scheme is meant to encourage high level of innovation. However, existing ideas can also be developed if they have a potential for commercial application or address an unmet national need. The duration of the project will have to be less than 18 months. One can apply for more than one proposal. However, more than one proposal may not be selected for funding.

The new call for application is open from today to February 15.

Keywords: early stage inventions, proof of concept, healthcare and medical devices, drug discovery, molecular biology, transgenic model systems, biomaterials, bioenergy, synthetic biology, agricultural sciences, and nutraceuticals