

## Government incentive in offering for 75 start-ups in telemedicine, artificial intelligence, and digital health

New Delhi, Aug 26 (India Science Wire): The Government of India will soon launch a special incentives scheme to support 75 start-ups in areas of telemedicine, digital health, and artificial intelligence (AI) to coincide with the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' being celebrated in the country from August 15.

The scheme will be launched by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a public sector enterprise under the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India.

This was announced by the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences, and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh. He said that instructions to this effect had been conveyed to the members of BIRAC led by its Chairperson Dr. Renu Swarup, who is also Secretary, Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology.

Interacting with the Board of Directors of BIRAC, the Minister said the grand challenge to identify the top 75 innovations is the most appropriate task in the 75<sup>th</sup> Year of India's Independence that will promote R&D in the health sector at a time when humanity the world over is dealing with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

He exhorted the senior officers to make efforts to reduce the turnaround time while supporting the startups to retain the edge over the private sector. He also called upon the Board of Directors of BIRAC to give startup applicants particular themes to focus on different aspects of tackling Covid-19.

BIRAC has been promoting and supporting new ventures under the Startup India and Make in India programmes in the areas of biotechnology ecosystem growth. The BIRAC has lent funding support of over Rs.2128 crore to more than 1,500 startups, enterprises, and SMEs. From supporting less than 50 biotechnology startups in 2012 with funding of less than Rs. 10 crore, the BIRAC is now funding over 5,000 biotech startups with over Rs. 2500 crore. By the year 2024, the BIRAC targets to support more than 10,000 biotech startups.

Earlier, Dr Jitendra Singh launched the e-office of BIRAC, and the BIRAC e-Office software was made live today. BIRAC e-Office Lite software has been deployed on NICSi server in testing mode from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021. The Union Minister of State said that the Digital India Mission is an ambitious project that will promote the country's prosperity by encouraging transparency and good governance.

BIRAC has an in-house BIRAC 3i portal to its credit, where all the applications and proposals are submitted online. This portal was launched in February 2010 and is a dynamic, robust, scalable application for science and innovative research fund management wherein various stakeholders like companies, institutes and individuals submit their proposals online.

Ms. Anju Bhalla, Joint Secretary, DST, and Managing Director, BIRAC, and senior officers of BIRAC and DBT were also present at this event.

ISW/SP/DBT/26/08/2021

**keywords:** Government of India, incentive, start-up, telemedicine, digital health, artificial intelligence, Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, BIRAC, Department of Biotechnology, DBT, Independence, R&D, health, humanity, COVID-19, pandemic,

private, Startup India, Make in India, ecosystem, growth, funding, software, NISCI, Digital India Mission



The Minister Interacting with the Board of Directors of BIRAC