

## DBT-BIRAC strengthening tech transfer capabilities in India

New Delhi, Aug 20: The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is committed for development of affordable and effective biopharmaceutical products and services. DBT's Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (DBT-BIRAC) is implementing the Department's Industry-Academia Collaborative Mission to accelerate discovery research to early development for biopharmaceuticals. The mission was approved by the Union Cabinet, with a total cost US\$ 250 million, with 50% co-funding by the World Bank.



Also known as the National Biopharma Mission (NBM), this program supports establishment of Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) that are critical for value realization of biotech innovation for inclusive growth. The TTOs facilitate translation of publicly funded research results into products and their delivery to markets by licensing innovation to enterprises. They also facilitate inter-institutional collaborations by collectively engaging them in creating market presence for their innovations.

Indian research results have significant potential to transform markets and this under-realized prospect is addressed by providing strong impetus to the technology transfer process with TTOs created and managed by professionals having skills in technology management. Technology transfer strengthening is a long-time commitment and for the first time the NBM has committed significant resources for creation of technology transfer office framework and strengthening technology transfer professionals for the advancement of publicly funded research.

The TTOs identify inventions, protect them with due assessment of patentability, shape commercialization strategy and identify enterprises for licensing innovations for accelerated delivery to markets. With a vibrant start-up ecosystem emerging in the country, they have potential to create and nurture spinouts too that can support the inventors to create their own enterprises for commercialization.

Five TTOs have already been established across the country with a view to strengthen the technology transfer capacity, evenly in India. These are located at:

- IKP Knowledge Park, Hyderabad
- Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP), Bengaluru
- KIIT Technology Business incubator, Bhubaneswar
- Biotechnology Business Incubation Facility (BBIF), Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), New Delhi and
- Entrepreneurship Development Center (EDC), Pune

Two other TTOs are in the process of being created within the aegis of the Mission. The TTOs have necessary digital tools for patent analysis and management, licensing transactions management and post-license monitoring. The new ones will bring under their fold more institutions that need professional support for advancing their research results to markets.

The TTOs established with NBM support have made significant progress in the recent past. TECHEX.IN is a Technology Transfer Hub operated by EDC at Venture Center, Pune, that aims to help technology developers and technology commercialization entities find each other, forge partnerships and advance the technology closer to the market in a win-win partnership.

It has recently conducted many important trainings: an online session on ‘Negotiation Techniques for Technology Entrepreneurs and Innovation Managers’ was conducted on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020, another on ‘COVID-19 drug candidates: Understanding patent landscapes and navigating patent barriers’ on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and a third online training programme on ‘Understanding and Negotiating Non-disclosure Agreements (NDAs) and Material Transfer Agreements (MTAs)’ on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Further training sessions on ‘Ideating and evaluating commercializable R&D: Thinking frameworks and examples’ and ‘basics of IP and filing of patents’ were conducted on 17<sup>th</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020 respectively.

IKP-PRIME, at IKP, Hyderabad also conducted online training sessions on ‘an insight into IP management’ and ‘scope of patenting AI inventions’ on 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 respectively.

‘Need for IP protection’ and ‘Creating value from your invention’ were dealt with in training sessions conducted on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of Aug 2020.

Another NBM supported TTO-Innovation -Technology transfer office (i-TTO) at Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer, Indian Institute of Technology- Delhi, recently transferred a technology entitled "Unique C1-C2 spacers with occipital-cervical fixation" developed by Prof. Sarat Chandra, AIIMS supported under BIRAC’s BIG grant to Med Solutions, New Delhi

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