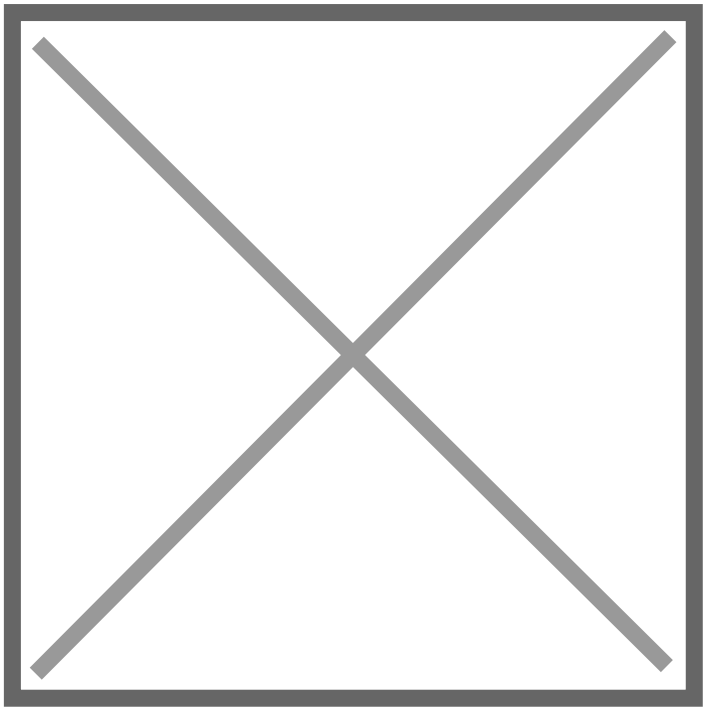
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BIRAC

17 July 2012 | News



Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a 'Not-for-Profit Company' of Government of India, registered under India Companies Act 1956, as the Department of Biotechnology's interface agency, serves as a single window for the emerging biotech industries. BIRAC is guided by an Independent Board of Directors comprising senior professionals, academicians, policy makers and industrialists.
BIRAC aims to become a dynamic organization, applying unique methodologies for nurturing the high risk projects which hold potential for commercialization. BIRAC would like to position itself as an organisation nurturing and promoting innovation led research and will play an important role as a facilitator and not merely a service provider.

Taking discovery forward to product development
BIRAC Operational Mode
BIG Biotechnology Ignition Grant

BIRAC offers Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG) to scientist entrepreneurs from research institutes, academic private sector and start ups, who have an exciting idea which may be in the nascent and planning stage. This scheme is designed to stimulate commercialization of research discoveries by providing very early stage grants for the development and maturation of those discoveries into marketable product or intellectual property (IP), in particular to help bridge the gap between discovery and invention.

The purpose of the BIG Scheme is to:

- pscale and validate of Proof of Concept
- Encourage researchers to take technology closer to market through a Start Up
- Excite interest of potential licensees or investors

The scheme is managed by the BIG Partners who work with the Ignition grantees (BIG Innovators) to provide mentoring and hand-holding for activities related to mobilizing resources, IP management, legal and contracts and other business development related activities for the BIG innovators. The BIG Partners monitor targeted milestones for disbursement of funds and also organize workshops and networking meetings for facilitating interaction with senior experts.

Target Groups- The Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG) scheme is for potential entrepreneurs from Academia or an Incubatee (PhDs, Medical degree holders or Biomedical Engg. Graduates) who have an exciting idea which may be in the nascent and at a planning stage and have an unmet need for mentorship and funding from Angel Investors or Venture Capitals in India. The Biotechnology Ignition Grant would help to support and nurture these high risk early starters and their concepts.

BIPP Link graph
Biotechnology Industry Partnership Programme Biotechnology Industry Partnership Programme (BIPP) is a government

partnership with Industries for support on a cost sharing basis for path-breaking research in frontier futuristic technology areas having major economic potential and making the Indian industry globally competitive. It is focused on IP creation with ownership retained by Indian industry and wherever relevant, by collaborating scientists.

BIPP supports the development of appropriate technologies in the context of recognized national priorities in the area of agriculture, health, bio-energy, green manufacturing, when the scale of the problem has serious consequences for social and economic development. BIPP is an Advanced Technology Scheme only for high risk, transformational technology/process development. It is for high risk futuristic technologies and mainly for viability gap funding. The uniqueness of this scheme is that it is for Ã¢â?¬Å?Break through researchÃ¢â?¬? which enables product and process development and is patentable, with IP ownership rights resting with industry.

Target Groups- Indian Biotech companies regulated under Indian Company Act 1956 with 51% Indian shareholding (including NRI's) who have DSIR recognized R&D are entitled for BIPP funding, either independently or in collaboration with companies, not for Profit organisation or academics partners.

So far 88 agreements have been signed with 72 companies involving aprrox. 50 startups and SMEs. Scheme provides for both soft loan and grant. A total of investment of US $ 141m has been committed with US $ 50m by Govt. of India with a matching contribution of US$ 91m coming in as private sector contribution.

SBIRI

Small Business Innovation Research Initiative The Small Business Innovation Research Initiative (SBIRI), a scheme launched in September, 2005 by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), aims to encourage small and medium scale industries to take up risk in innovative R&D in biotech sector. The main focus is on supporting proof of concept and early stage research in startups and SMEs.

Over 100 projects from small and medium entrepreneurs have been supported. SBIRI has deployed $36 million, of which $5 million in grants and $31 million in soft loans, with a debt-to-grant ratio of roughly 6 to 1. Public SBIRI funding has leveraged an additional $33 million in private investment by recipient enterprises as their core contribution, for a total investment of $69 million across approved projects.

CRS

Contract Research Scheme BIRAC endeavours to extend its support to Academia in the form of grant-in aid for validation of the Proof of Concept (PoC) by an Industrial partner.

Why CRS- The CRS scheme supports the academia-industry interaction between research institutes, universities, public funded research laboratories, governmental organizations, research foundations and companies / industries under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

Target Groups- Under this CRS Scheme, Public Sector Research Institutes, Universities who have already generated or have pre-existing scientifically established proof of concept/leads seek support for specific research and validation process to be performed by a company partners within a defined time frame. The industry partner in turn would complete the Validation Phase in a Contract Research mode. The IP rights belong solely to the academic partner(s).

In addition, if the Academic group requires some specific services from the industry such as toxicology, sequencing, use of specific equipment etc. are also supported under this scheme. Public and/or Private Universities and Research Institutions are eligible to apply under the Contract Research and Services Scheme with pre-determined company partner(s) having DSIR recognized R&D/Service unit(s).

BIRAC not only funds the validation of proof-of-concept but works closely with academic research scientist to provide them enabling services of FTO search, IP management. The Legal and Contracts Cell facilitates preparation of required Material Transfer Agreement, Non- Disclosure Contracts, IP protection contracts and when required licensing agreements. BIRAC ensures complete protection of IP rights of the academia scientist and also facilitation technology transfer.

BISS

Bio-incubator Support Scheme In order to foster techno entrepreneurship in biotechnology, BIRAC has initiated a scheme for Strengthening and Up-gradation of the existing Bio-incubators and also to establish New World Class Bio-incubators in certain strategic locations. These Bio incubators will provide the incubation space and other required services to start-up companies for their initial growth.

Strengthening existing Bio-incubators

The Bio-incubators for SMEs and start-ups could be as a stand-alone facility or as a part of an existing University/ Institute or Science

Park. The BIRAC Bio-incubator strengthening support is provided to those existing Incubators which have proven experience and competence to run successful incubators, have an existing network for mentoring and handholding of incubatees, and also can provide the enabling services to promote innovation research. There should be a well-structured governance model which allows for such activities to be conducted within the host institute, providing the required autonomy and flexibility for operation.

Establishing World Class Bioincubators BIRAC is will also set up a limited number of new World Class State of Art, National Bio-incubators at strategic locations, especially in an around the DBT Bio-clusters. These would be closely located to existing Academic hubs and have a well-developed management model. It would provide the required infrastructure, incubation space, access to central equipment and pilot plant and enabling services. Most importantly the proximity to the Academic Centres of Excellence would provide access to the Translational Research strength and capacities. These BIRAC Bio-incubators would benefit from the close interaction with the Academic Institute in the cluster and on the other hand provide opportunities to the scientists / entrepreneurs who could create their own spin offs, or are incubated in close proximity to the Academic Centre of Excellence. The two way flow of knowledge between Academia and Start-up would be beneficial to both and provide a boost and help nurture innovative technologies for affordable product development.

Seven existing Bio-incubators across the country have been strengthened and approximately 55,000 Sq.ft of Bio-incubator space has been created to support start up.

BIRAC shall operate as an organization which will act as a facilitator and not merely as a service provider. BIRAC looks ahead to creating a Biotech Innovation Enterprise which is at par with the Global Best.

Product innovation and commercialization for addressing Grand Challenges of national relevance

BIRAC will shortly launch the Grand Challenges Programme, offering researchers and scientist opportunities to innovate and work on scientific and technological solutions for affordable product development to meet national needs. The Grand Challenges have one common defined goal: Ã¢â?¬Å?Create Scientific and technological tools to overcome hurdles and find solutions for novel affordable products of national relevanceÃ¢â?¬?. High level of innovation, new tools and transformative ideas would be supported. These could be in health care, agriculture and energy.

These Grand Challenges Programmes could be implemented in an industry - academia partnership model to be co-funded with strategic partners through both national and global alliance. These could be self-governed consortia with clearly defined milestones, deliverables, management models and IP sharing contracts.

Services for Entrepreneurial Development

- IP Services
- Technology Transfer and Acquisition
- Legal and Contracts
- Policy and Analysis
- Mentoring & Capacity Building

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