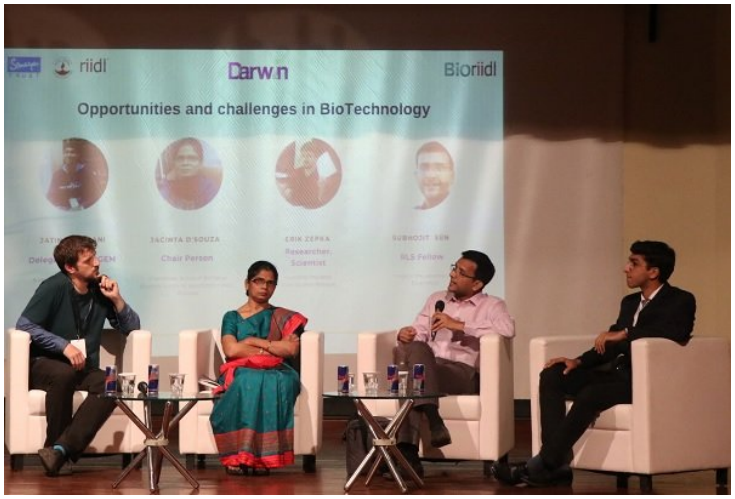
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Bio-riidl hosts Biohackathon as innovation competition

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More than 130 biohackers participated in the competition



Darwin, the three day event organized by Bioriidl from 28th to 30th November in Mumbai, saw bio-experts and enthusiasts share their knowledge & present solutions to the existing world problems using science, imagination and innovation. Darwin hosted ‘Biohackathon’ a competition in which teams from across India compete to present their solutions in the areas of Water Management, Waste Management, Bio Products, Energy, Genetics, Environment and Bio Medical.

Teams with expertise as diverse as Computer Science, Genetics, Medicine, and Art/Design participated in the event. Kartik Vipin Savla, the winner of the competition for innovation, created a replacement of aromatic oils with vegetable oils in rubber products, thereby reducing the ill-effects that it was contributing to the environment.

Bioriidl was set up by Somaiya Vidyavihar’s riidl (Research Innovation Incubation Design Laboratory) in 2015, to nurture technology and knowledge-based enterprises in the areas of biotechnology majorly focusing on Biopharma, Agrobiotech, Industrial biotech, clean technology and many other domains. Renowned global speakers conducted workshops aimed at enhancing science literacy among non-science majors. Workshops included creating Bio-materials (Bio-Polymers, Bio-Plastics, and Bio-Leather), DNA Extraction, Bio Brick and growing algae.

Joe Davis, a Research Affiliate in the Department of Biology at MIT and an Artist Scientist in the George Church Laboratory at Harvard Medical School, said "There haven’t been any events like this that have taken place before as Darwin and the events like this are significantly important in India. The dedication and devotion of the participants towards their projects has been immense. The placement of the Do-It-Yourself bioresearch lab in Somaiya Vidyavihar’s campus adds on to the achievement in the field of science. Scientific literacy is essential; regardless of any field. Events like Darwin, aid in understanding the reason we practice science. It further helps in refining the prominence of the problems that have been neglected and that which require the need of being addressed.”

Eric Zepka, co-founder of Vancouver-based community lab The Open Science Network said "During my visit to India, I have learnt a lot of Indian culture. The skillset and eagerness level of the minds here is very high. The projects exhibited during Darwin biologically addressed solutions to critical real-time situations. This highlighted the excitement amongst the participants in order to revivify science. To never stop experimenting is the key to scientific success here. There's no real barrier between you and your scientific goals, but it is the willingness to commit. Somaiya Vidyavihar is a rich campus with a dynamic and innovation-friendly community."

Somaiya Vidyavihar encompasses 34 institutions, with more than 39,000 students and 1,500 faculties. Its main campus is in Mumbai, but Somaiya Vidyavihar also operates six schools in rural India i.e. in Dahanu, Sakarwadi, Laxmiwadi, Kopargaon, Sameerwadi, Kutch, Bagalkot and Bhopal.