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C-CAMP unlocks bio entrepreneurship talent across India

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The National Bio Entrepreneurship Competition, a nationwide platform for bio-entrepreneurs across India to showcase their high impact, deep tech business ideas in the Life Sciences and biotech domain culminated recently with announcement of winners after four months of intense competition.

NBEC 2019, the third in its series, has been conducted by the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms under the BIRAC Regional Entrepreneurship Centre (BREC), a joint initiative of C-CAMP and BIRAC. Eleven bio entrepreneurs in categories as diverse as water and sanitation and maternal and child health to digital health, medical devices and agri-biotechnology were declared winners in the presence of esteemed Chief Guest and Grand Jury member, Dr Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, CMD, Biocon and investment pundit, Mr. Nitin Deshmukh, CEO and Founding Member, Kotak Investment Advisors as Chair of Grand Jury. A cumulative Rs 3 crore in cash prizes and investment opportunities as well as an exclusive scope for mentorship from key industry leaders have been awarded at the glittering ceremony in Bengaluru.

Divanshu, Alcheme, was awarded the WIN Foundation cash prize of Rs 7.5lakhs as well as their investment opportunity of Rs 30lakhs in water and sanitation category.

Mayur Shetty, Blackfrog Technologies Pvt. Ltd. received the WIN Foundation cash prize of Rs 7.5 lakhs and also the WIN Foundation investment opportunity of Rs 30lakhs in maternal and child health category.

Blackfrog swooped up the Social Alpha investment opportunity of 100,000 USD too for their astounding potential for social impact. Ragul Paramasivam, Chimertech Innovations LLP, won the Ankur Seeds award of Rs 5 lakhs in agri-biotechnology category as well as the ID capital investment opportunity of 100,000 USD as top agri-biotechnology, food and nutraceuticals entrepreneur.

Shomeshwar Singh, 4S Medical Research Pvt. Ltd, was awarded the Digital Health cash prize of Rs 5lakhs sponsored by HealthVenture, USA.

Prakhar Jain, MicroX Labs won the Applied Materials India award of Rs 5lakhs in medtech innovation category.

Rajesh Nandipati, Oncosimis Biotech Pvt. Ltd. received the Rs 5lakhs Excellence Prize sponsored by Biocon.

Asawari Kane, PadCare Labs was awarded the Novozymes Excellence Prize of Rs 3lakhs. The Pfizer Entrepreneurship Award of Rs 3.5lakhs went to Arindam Ghatak, Biomoneta. Halagappa Eswarappa Shashidhar, CultivaAgriTech received the Mahyco cash prize of Rs 1lakh in Agri-Biotechnology.

An Investment opportunity of $75,000 USD from HealthVenture, USA in Digital Health was announced for Rohit Hiwale, Morphle Technologies Private Limited. Finally, a special prize from C-CAMP's end was awarded to Shilpa Malik, Bioscan Research.

Dr. Renu Swarup, Secretary DBT, Government of India, and Chairperson, BIRAC in a congratulatory message for the winners as well as the larger 65 strong CCAMP NBEC 2019 portfolio, said - "The purpose of this competition is to attract innovators, potential entrepreneurs who have in them a risk-taking appetite to try and convert an innovative idea to an impactful entrepreneurship venture. NBEC 2019 has witnessed 3000 applications, a number rising every year, clearly indicative of a maturing ecosystem. The fact that applications have been received from places like Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Daman and Diu show that we have been able to enthuse young researchers and innovators across India to come forward with their entrepreneurship ideas, thanks to programs such as this initiated by C-CAMP. Together let us aim for India to be recognised as number one bio startup nation in the world."

Chief Guest and Grand Jury member Dr Kiran Mazumdar Shaw in her message exhorted entrepreneurs to see their innovation from idea through product stage. "I have deep gratitude to C-CAMP for having brought a platform as unique as NBEC to Indian bio entrepreneurship arena. NBEC is about celebrating new ideas and the potential impact these ideas can make to society. But an entrepreneurship is about how you monetise an idea and take it to market. So don't wait for the perfect idea. Wait for that one good idea. Shape its commercialisation journey and scale it up. Because impact and true recognition lie only in scaling."

A cohort of 65 startups gleaned from ~3000 registrations across 33 States/UTs in India participated in a 2 day Boot Camp and Mentoring Sessions with mentors from CIIE - IIM Ahmedabad prior to the finals. 18 of these were selected by a Jury on December 13th to pitch at the Grand Finale gala. The Grand Jury at the Finale consisted of eminent experts representing entire spectrum of biotech industry and investment sector. Apart from the Chief Guest the dignitaries present included Mr. Paresh Vora, Director - India operations, WIN Foundation, Dr. Bhuvaneswari Sridhar, Head, API Technology Group, Pfizer, Dr Bharat Char, Chief Science Officer, Mahyco Seeds, Mr. Srikanth Prabhu, Portfolio and Innovation, Social Alpha, Mr. Nitin

Deshmukh, CEO and Founding Member, Kotak Investment Advisors, Mr. Vipul Patel, Vice President Investments, CIIE. CO, Mr. Abhinav Mehra, Vice President, ID Capital, Dr. Ashwin Kashikar, General Manager, R&D, Ankur Seeds, Dr. Sonjoy Mukherjee, General Manager - HyClone & Scientific initiatives, GE South Asia, GE, Ms. Sowmya Shresth, OD Partner & PO Manager India, Novozymes, Dr. Arvind Ranganathan, HealthVenture and Dr. Taslimarif Saiyed, CEO and Director, C-CAMP.

The competition [https://www.nationalbioentrepreneurship.in/events/nbec2019] in its third edition had 17 industry partners including international partners from the USA, France and Singapore on board: WIN Foundation, Ankur Seeds, Applied Materials India, Amazon Web Services (AWS), Biocon, CIIE – IIM Ahmedabad, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), CNBC-TV18 Young Turks, GE, HealthVenture - USA, Hello Tomorrow, ID Capital, Kotak Private Equity, Mahyco, Novozymes, Pfizer, and Social Alpha.

Dr. Taslimarif Saiyed, CEO & Director, C-CAMP said “CCAMP believes that through fostering deep science innovations we have an opportunity to make a major impact in India’s growth. CCAMP is dedicated to play this vital role and looks forward to working together with you towards building tomorrow’s innovations from India.”