

DBT and Gates Foundation launch Grand Challenges India

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Recently, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation launched Grand Challenges India. Through this partnership, the government and the foundation will co-fund projects that aim to harness Indian innovation and research, and direct scientific discovery to develop affordable, sustainable solutions that improve health in India and around the world. The program was formally launched late last month.

Commenting on the development, Steven Buchsbaum, Deputy Director on the Discovery & Translational Sciences team at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation said, "We are proud to partner with BIRAC because we believe India is uniquely positioned to be a global leader in the development of new technologies and innovative approaches to achieve sustainable gains in development and health. Under the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed last year, the DBT and the Gates Foundation have agreed to invest up to \$ 25 Million each over 5 years in innovations in vaccines, drugs, agricultural products, and interventions related to malnutrition, family and child health."

DBT and BIRAC join a global network of partners already using the Grand Challenges framework to foster collaborative research to improve global health and development. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recognizes that solving our greatest global health and development issues is a long-term effort. Through Grand Challenges, the foundation along with other Grand Challenges partners such as USAID, Grand Challenges Canada, and Grand Challenges Brazil, are committed to seeking out and rewarding not only established researchers in science and technology, but also young investigators, entrepreneurs, and other innovators to help expand the pipeline of ideas to fight diseases that claim millions of lives each year.