

Fellowships play a key role in drawing Indian origin experts back to India

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After having studied and worked overseas, there are a number of reasons in my mind for leaving the "greener pastures" and coming back to India. One of the major reasons that drew me back was the immense growth and hence, opportunity, which I could see in India within the biotech sector and also the need for skilled and experienced people across life sciences in general.

- Growth of biotech sector and opportunity

The biotech sector in India is growing rapidly in several aspects, although one can't deny that some challenges persist. As the sector grows, it provides tremendous opportunity to contribute, as well as play a significant role towards growth and new indicatives within academia, industry, and academia-industry linkages. I believe, this was the most exciting factor for me when I was in the contemplation mode.

- Government pushes investment

Now, there are schemes from government departments aimed at funding early-stage ideas [Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG)], bridging the gap between proof-of-concept and finished product [Biotechnology Industry Partnership Program (BIPP)] and funds for establishing links between institutes and private companies to develop and commercialize inventions jointly developed.

- Attractive fellowships

There are also fellowships, which routinely draw Indian-origin experts and researchers to India to contribute their wealth of knowledge to growing life science here.

Some of these incentives are the Ramalingaswamy Fellowship, Ramanujam Fellowship, and Wellcome Trust India grants, to name a few. These schemes and cutting-research funding are making India a more and more attractive place to work

particularly in biotech.

- Encouraging local environment

For an individual to grow and contribute, the local environment, the host organization and colleagues play the most important role. It won't be an exaggeration to state that at the time of making a choice from possible offers, this factor played a significant role for me to choose C-CAMP, NCBS over other possibilities. This local environment nurtures the individual and allows them to grow into a competent player to contribute back to the environment-to the organization.

- Homeland calling

Last but not least, having grown up in India, there is always an attraction to come back and contribute to society. Family has a part to play, but ultimately knowing that what work I do will benefit India is a huge incentive! It would be something to cherish and look back on when in 10-15 years' time India is competing globally and I can say I had my part to play!