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# 'Indian institutions only seek to sell services'

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**'Indian institutions only seek to sell services'**



He earlier served as KI's scientific coordinator for India from 2000-12. He joined KI in 1989, which selects and awards Nobel Prize for Medicine & Physiology. His area of research interest is in diabetes.

Dr Sanjeevi is also the senior advisor for life science at Business Sweden in Stockholm, and as well as an advisor to TATA Capital Healthcare Fund in India, HBM Healthcare Fund, Switzerland.

He also is a member of the scientific advisory board of Seraxis (USA) Chellaram Diabetes Institute (Pune) and 3Netra (Bangalore).

He serves in the editorial board of several scientific journals, and has edited 'Immunology of Diabetes' series (of 5 volumes) for Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, USA.

**Q: Any advice for Indian life sciences companies seeking to establish or collaborate in Sweden?**

**Dr C B Sanjeevi:** The main advice would be to contact the right set of players to receive guidance. The Swedish Embassy in India has a science counsellor who can be the first meeting point in academy-industry, and as well as, academy-academy collaboration.

The industry-industry collaboration can also be supported by the Swedish Embassy through the office of Business Sweden.

Business Sweden offers two lines of support - Investment and Trade. The advisors in both sections of Business Sweden will be able to support Indian companies seeking entry or partnership opportunities with Swedish companies and vice versa.

When Indian companies seek their support, they would offer advice and help in making connections between Indian and Swedish life science companies.

Since 2006, after the visit by Swedish Minister to India, in life sciences alone, more than SEK 800 million has been invested into Sweden, and more than 1000 jobs created in Sweden, based on these investments.

**Q: What would be the initial challenges for Indian companies?**

The initial challenges would be to promote innovation at University level. Each University should have an innovation office that has full knowledge of all the research going on in their departments.

Then the Innovation office should find opportunities for interaction with financial institutions and venture capitalists to bring scientists and the business together.

They should also map the funding available from national and international resources in the form of grants and promote partnerships between academy-industry as well as academy-academy interactions to seek international funding.

These will be in the form of network grants, which is not in place in India from DBT, DST or ICMR.

**Q: What message do you have for Indian entrepreneurs who are apprehensive investing in Sweden?**

Sweden is a knowledge economy. A lot of money like federal research grants, EU grants, and NIH grants are invested in creating new knowledge by strategic partnerships and networks, which lead to new discoveries and innovations that get IP and creation of companies around the IPs.

There is a lot of opportunities available for a lot of Indian companies in technology, diagnostic, and vaccine platforms.

Seeing is believing, and they should visit Sweden. Business Sweden can be a starting point for finding the right partners and networks.

**Q: In terms of finances, how would Sweden help Indian life sciences companies who want to collaborate?**

For academic institutions as well as SMEs, there are partnership opportunities for inter-governmental grants, EU grants, and network grants.

The person in the Indian institutions should seek these sources of information, and have their names enrolled for email updates.

Most of the Indian institutions are only seeking to sell their services to Swedish clients but not pursue partnership opportunities to bring innovation from Sweden to India.

Some big Indian pharma are venturing into co-development opportunities with Swedish companies thereby bringing innovation, IPs (through partnerships) and technology that can help jump-start the local efforts.

**Q: Post establishing, what kind of support would be extended to companies?**

Post establishing, it is always important to be in touch with key players. People do not stay in one job alone for a lot of time.

There is constant churning and by being in touch, it always helpful to expand the network. Networking is the key mantra.

Support is always available and they are always bi-directional and not uni-directional.

Sweden has a lot to learn from India, and this should be emphasized in all relationships. Information and communication are the key to success.