

"We were in the process of setting up a legal process outsourcing institute"

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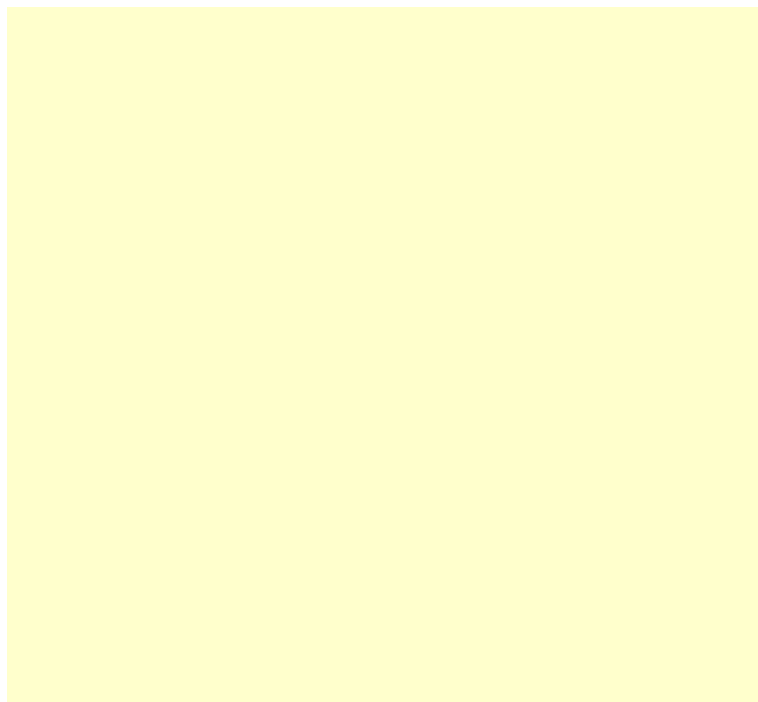


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Atulya Nath (AN)

Girija Verma (GV)

In an interview with Shalini Gupta of BioSpectrum, Atulya Nath (AN), CEO of GIIP, New Delhi, and Girija Verma (GV), senior advisor and curriculum co-chair, elaborate on what this new one-of-its kind institute has to offer to prospective students. Excerpts:

How did you zero upon on the idea of coming up with such an institute with a novel concept?

AN: We were in the process of setting up a legal process outsourcing institute and the focus was on intellectual property. We realized that there was a huge dearth of professionals in this area. Availability of good people trained on the US patents was almost negligible. We did a lot of research, talked to a lot of professionals, studied what was happening in the US and the kind of people getting into it as professionals. We realized that we could devise such a program that will be a jigsaw between theory and practical. It would be delivered on a full time basis because people who are looking to build careers in this will have to put in lot of efforts.

GV: There are two more reasons why we came up with this program. First, there have been changes in the Indian legislation. The patent law has changed and I think that is going to show a lot of activity in the area of transaction in patents. India will see not only the filing of patents but also a lot of litigation. Also, a lot of Indian companies are going internationally. We have a far developed pharmaceutical industry and so far it is dependent on the generic market, but as it continues to expand, we are going to see a growth in the market. So, it is a growing market both ways: not only outsourcing of patents to India, but also Indian companies going international.

What kind of students are you expecting to train?

GV: Mainly we are trying to get people from a technical background for our full time 9-month diploma course, i.e people from science and technical backgrounds, MTech and PhDs, lawyers with relevant experience and BTech with good amount of experience. Fresh graduates can also be taken but they shall have to go through our selection process. Only those with a keen interest on the subject shall be taken. The soon to be started corporate program would be for working professionals who are doing research in corporates and require industry specific knowledge to move up the value chain.

What career opportunities can one look forward to?

AN: The career opportunities range from patent drafting to patent valuation, licensing and litigation support services. Job opportunities will be global, they would not be restricted to people working in the Indian patent law. They can be employed by anyone who is working in the international framework. One can work in Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) firms, Legal Process Outsourcing (LPO) firms, IP departments of Indian corporations, MNCs, government and R&D institutions, or law firms.

How are you looking at placing students after completion of the course?

AN: We have been in talks with corporates, certain legal process outsourcing companies and in fact some have also issued us a letter of interest saying that they would come to our campus for recruitment. They have gone through our course syllabus and we have been having interactions with them wherein they are impressed and have been asking us for corporate training programs which we are holding off till September.

IP and patent industry

Program offered

Initially GIIP will offer Post graduate Diploma in International Patents & Intellectual Property Services, a 9-month full time program, across three semesters. The curriculum comprises up-to-date education in the US and Indian patent laws and IP practices and has been designed by patent agents/professionals from the US and India. These include conducting international patent searches, drafting patent claims and patent applications.

Course methodology

The 9-month training program includes six months of practical training with international trainers and experts mentoring individual students in the last 3 months. The whole 600 hours of this program will include 60 percent of it delivered by the trainers trained under practitioners in the US and 40 percent by them directly. It includes:

- Classroom lectures delivered through video conferencing by experienced instructors and IP practitioners
- Online e-learning modules
- Mentoring sessions: Individual guidance from IP practitioners and experts, specific to the technical field of the participant
- Illustrations and case study methods
- Interactive sessions with both instructors and peer group

Faculty

- A core team with considerable teaching experience trained by the core group in the US. Also academicians from reputed institutions like IIT, IIM, Law Schools, R&D labs, PFC (TIFAC), etc.
- Professionals from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), International Organizations, Government institutions and KPO & LPO firms involved in IP offerings.

Is the course recognized by any government institution?

AN: We are looking at an association with government agencies but nothing in terms of an approval is there as far as AICTE is concerned.

Are you looking forward to any exchange programs as well?

AN: We are talks with some of the universities in the US and we are looking at joint certification programs with them. Students could go there and get some exposure. We are working towards it.

What are your future plans?

AN: In the second year, we are planning to bring a portion of this course online. We are also planning to have centers in different cities in India. There will be local trainers to deliver the course. The entire course cannot be online. Contact classes will be required. We are also planning a lecture series every two months where there will be one international speaker on a specific subject. We are also planning paid workshops every quarter wherein corporates will be invited and carry them to multiple cities. We have been receiving invites from institutes for whom we would like to devise programs. In short, we want to create awareness in this field so that we can commercialize our research and have more professionals in this field.