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India and Australia join forces to drive innovation and create scientific breakthroughs

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New programme to leverage the complementary capabilities and resources of the innovation ecosystem of both the countries



Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia's national science agency, have joined hands by signing a Letter of Intent to encourage joint cooperation to drive innovation activities in areas of national challenges and shared priorities of both countries.

The move comes during the India visit of the Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese as he met the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 10 March 2023 in New Delhi. The meeting between the Prime Ministers spanned across areas of mutual interest and explored avenues of strengthening bilateral engagement in a range of key areas with innovation as one key item.

The Letter of Intent between AIM and CSIRO calls for a greater collaboration in areas of mutual interest and strategic priorities and serves as a general framework for cooperation intended to facilitate the development of more program specific interventions.

The core of the bilateral engagement is the India Australia Innovation and Technology Challenge (IA-ITC) - a programme envisioned to bring together the innovation ecosystems of India and Australia to address shared environmental and economic challenges by supporting cohorts of startups and SMEs on their commercialisation pathways and bring to market innovative tech-based solutions spanning across circular economy, energy transition and food system resilience etc.

AIM and CSIRO are currently working on the design and development of the IA-ITC programme delivery model to ensure the IA-ITC is sustainable, innovative, impactful and aligns with the strategic interests of both India and Australia. The official launch of the programme is expected to be in July 2023.