

Facilitating Faculty to Propel Sponsored Research and Consultancy Activities.

A step towards building IITH as a Global Leader

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IITHs have been the pride jewels in the crown of independent India and have produced a phenomenal impact in India and abroad as outstanding centres of nurturing world-class engineers and scientists. Addition of second and third generation IITHs is a challenging task, and we are extremely hopeful to see that IITH has emerged as an institute of great strength and very close to reaching the standards of first-generation IITHs, which were established in the 1950s. While teaching and creating outstanding human resources continues to be the primary focus of the institute, the importance of shouldering the responsibility to build the research and technological power to make "Aatmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat" is being felt very strongly in recent times. IITH has always been a hub of excellence in research and innovation, and I am committed to further strengthening this ecosystem.

IITH, with about 330 faculty members, 800 running projects (including over 3000 completed projects), with an annual fund from research and consultancy of over 330 crores (in 2024-25 financial year) and 250 crores (in 2023-24 financial year) has become a force to reckon with in any measurable indicator. SRC team efforts are mainly focused on ensuring continuity in research support, launching new initiatives, and fostering a collaborative environment for our faculty and researchers.

I have taken the responsibility of Dean (Sponsored Research & Consultancy) at the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad from September 5, 2024, which is both a privilege and responsibility to build upon the strong foundation laid by my predecessors.

On the first day of my tenure, we facilitated the release of the June Seed Grant cycle on September 5, 2024. This prompt action ensured that the funding was disbursed on time, enabling our faculty to continue their research activities seamlessly and aligned with institutional priorities.

We initiated the open call for the next round of Seed Grant proposals, which attracted interest from 12 faculty members. Presentations were organised on December 13, 2024, where faculty shared their project ideas and received valuable feedback. This peer-review mechanism has helped applicants refine and strengthen their proposals, increasing their alignment with IITH's research vision.

An interactive session was held with newly joined faculty members to introduce them to the system of sponsored research and consultancy, emphasising the Seed Grant scheme and the overall functioning of the SRC office. This orientation aimed at demystifying the application process, clarifying expectations, and encouraging them to engage actively in research activities from an early stage.

Our new initiative of granting about 10 Technology Development Grant (TDG) proposals is primarily intended to have a strong industry connection as each scheme has an industry partner, who also funds it and gets involved in developing the technology.

A staff interaction session was also conducted with the SRC office team. It was a warm and engaging experience that helped me understand the operational dynamics and connect with the team on a personal level. Their enthusiasm and support have been truly motivating.

We have significantly expanded the Summer Undergraduate Research Exposure (SURE) program. This year, 250 students will be supported under SURE, out of which 100 positions are reserved exclusively for female students. We have since constituted a new RAC with representation across departments to sustain the momentum and offer strategic input for enhancing the research culture at IITH. With the new Research Advisory Committee in place and our faculty actively engaging with various grant mechanisms, we look forward to scaling greater heights in research and development. Our commitment remains firm: to enable and empower our researchers, streamline processes, and nurture innovation that addresses national and global challenges.

SRC section is there to ensure that the faculty gets the best possible system within the system. We are striving our best to serve the faculty to think big, engage in cutting-edge research, and take up the leadership role. Obviously, transparency in policies, compliance with regulations, and a cooperative approach to amicably solve bottlenecks (if any) are essential to reach greater heights. I am very positive that every member in SRC is committed towards ensuring their best services to strengthen the resolve of the faculty members to give their best for the nation in general, and IITH in particular.

I sign off here on an optimistic note, with the belief that the coming months will see new ideas blossom and the spirit of research grow stronger at IITH.

“Our commitment remains firm to enable and empower our researchers, streamline processes, and nurture innovation that addresses national and global challenges”

Prof G Narahari Sastry
Dean - Sponsored Research & Consultancy
Professor, Dept of BioTechnology