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DST sets up COVID-19 task force

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To fund nearly market-ready solutions in the area of diagnostics, testing, health care delivery solutions, equipment supplies



The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is coordinating an effort to upscale appropriate technologies and manufacturing available in India for addressing a plethora of issues related to COVID-19, as well as scout for new and developing solutions more relevant to the country to help prepare the country for exigencies arising out of COVID-19 pandemic.

DST has set up a COVID 19 Task force for mapping of technologies from R&D labs, academic institutions, startups, and MSMEs to fund nearly market-ready solutions in the area of diagnostics, testing, health care delivery solutions, equipment supplies. Some of these solutions include masks and other protective gear, sanitizers, affordable kits for screening, ventilators and oxygenators, data analytics for tracking, monitoring, and controlling the spread of outbreak through AI and IOT based solutions, to name a few.

The capacity mapping group consists of representatives from DST, Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Startup India and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The Task Force is to identify the most promising startups that are close to scale up, who may need financial or other help or connects or projected demand to rapidly scale up.

Nodal officers of concerned Ministries and Departments have been requested to personally expedite the process of obtaining information on startups and other entities supported by them that have technology solutions for any important aspect of COVID-19.

As part of the mechanisms being used for rapid development, manufacturing, and deployment of relevant technology options, DST has already invited two separate sets of proposals, one each under Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB) and Technology Development Board (TDB), to support scientific solutions and commercial manufacturing of both new and existing solutions.