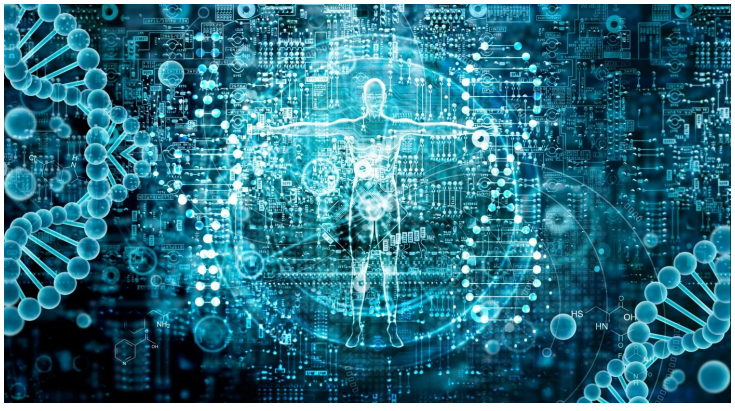
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GSK India, RCB mark milestone of academia-industry initiative

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Completes 1 year of â??Trust in Scienceâ?? academia-industry initiative



GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (GSK Pharmaceutical Ltd.) in collaboration with the Regional Centre for Biotechnology (RCB) has completed the first year of its Trust in Science Program and is marking it by hosting a six part 'Trust in Science' webinar series.

Like the program, these webinars are also an academia-industry collaboration in which experts from the private sector and scientific community will provide insights on trends in bioinformatics and biostatistics and the future outlook of this valuable skill set. The Trust in Science program offers full PhD courses in Biostatistics and Bioinformatics to equip Indian students for a career in a data and AI-driven pharma research ecosystem.

Commenting on the progress of the program, Prof. Sudhanshu Vrati, Executive Director, Regional Centre for Biotechnology, said, "*Biostatistics and bioinformatics are rapidly emerging fields in biology and are set to change the way we approach scientific R&D. In the first year of this program, we got a good response from aspiring PhD candidates eager to explore scientific careers in these fields. Now, through our webinar series, we hope to reach out to even more Indian students and faculty to make them aware of the potential that lies in these fields and to realize the value of the Trust in Science PhD program*."

In the keynote address of the first webinar, HE Jan Thompson, Acting British High Commissioner to India, said that the Trust in Science initiative is a great example of public-private-partnership. She added, *"It is my hope that the Trust in Science initiative will give young researchers an opportunity to explore high-end expertise in drug discovery and the program becomes a spring-board for them to transition into a full-fledged pharma career in the future. The UK and Indian governments continue to work together in healthcare, exploring opportunities for some of the best UK companies to offer their products and services for improved healthcare delivery in India*."

Dr. Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Government of India said, *"It is great to see that this RCB-GSK collaboration is more than a research budget collaboration between academia and industry, but one that looks to create a human resource foundation for new technology. I would like to see this partnership scaled up, with more partners included so that it becomes a national network for the country. I believe this webinar series can reach out to more people and draw in more institutes to see the value of this partnership."*.

Sridhar Venkatesh, Managing Director, GSK Pharmaceuticals Limited (India) said, *"The ongoing pandemic has highlighted the value of biostatistics and bioinformatics tools and methodologies to significantly reduce the time taken for a medicine to be brought from lab to market. This is the future of pharmaceuticals research and we believe that the Trust in Science programme is contributing to prepare a workforce that is future ready. We hope the webinar series will help aspiring PhD students to get a primer on the likely future of pharma research*."

The launch webinar concluded with a learning session by Prof Partha Mazumdar, Distinguished Professor, National Institute of Biomedical Genomics, who said, *"A confluence of statistical science and data science is the enabler of rapid and robust inferences in biology and medicine*." He also spoke of the critical value of biostatistics and bioinformatics during the ongoing pandemic by referring to the study on the diversity and evolution of the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 through the analysis of RNA sequences collected from 3636 infected patients across 55 countries. *"This is an exciting time in modern biology and medicine* ," he added, referring to the coming together of statics and big data analysis.

GSK Pharmaceutical Ltd.'s "Trust in Science" initiative is a novel public-private partnership model to build R&D capacity for development and discovery in science. The pillars of this initiative are: scientific excellence, trust and talent development in line with GSK's Science, Technology and Culture values. The initiative was launched in 2011 initially to engage with leading researchers and institutions in Latin America, focused on Brazil and Argentina. GSK Pharmaceutical Ltd. is pleased to expand this initiative beyond Latin America to other emerging markets such as India.