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VIT inks pact with Genotypic Technology

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Talking exclusively to BioSpectrum India, Dr Sudha Rao, co-founder and executive director, Genotypic Technology said, "Having a separate R&D unit developing products and retention of youngsters was important as most of them were master's degree graduates who were leaving for higher studies to acquire skills in Genomic technology. Hence, we considered it a good strategy to retain young talents and as well as to support our R&D programs."VIT has proactively initiated PhD programs in the area of Genomic research. "We were looking at various universities, but there was a lot of bureaucracy. We want to collaborate complimenting our strengths," Dr Sudha added.

Dr Venkatesh Krishnamurthy, research director, Genotypic Technology, expressed that by collaborating and sharing resources and infrastructure, they can complement each other by working together. "As a company we do not have access to certain samples, and this understanding is a simple way of collaborating," he said.

Talking about the terms of the MoU, Dr Sudha Rao added, "It was more to do with relationship building. VIT is growing as a university. They need experts like us to be a part of their workshops and programs and take in students for training and knowledge transfer."

Dr Raja C Mugasimangalam, CEO and founder, Genotypic Technology, said, "We are very pleased and happy to work with a reputed institution like VIT. We look forward to apply cutting-edge Genomic tools to develop intellectual properties and key research publications."

Dr Sudha Rao believes that there is a huge gap between academia and industry. "This MoU will try to fill the gap, where it gets the industry close to academics and vice versa. It is the right mix which can lead to good product developments and publications. Also, there are many ways to utilize what VIT has in to our R&D and products.

"For any kind of good research, you need people who are enthusiastic and well-trained to ensure success. As we are growing big, the challenge is to source these people. The pact will make a significant difference for the R&D programs," she opined.

According to Dr Krishnamurthy, genomics is highly futuristic and it is going to be very important in most fields, from agriculture to medicine. "Through this collaboration, we can conduct joint workshops to popularize this kind of technology among students, faculties or even the general audiences like doctors," he added.

Dr Karthikeyan Sivashanmugam, associate professor, VIT, expressed, "Through this pact, we are going to make students ready for the industry and its demands. Today, students need practical and project-based exposure. Genomics is an area of computational biology and bioinformatics put together. Now our students will get to know what is happening in the industry."

He also said, "Everybody says that there is a big gap between the industry and academia. Through this initiative, students will come out with a lot of hard work and that in itself will be a learning curve, so that they will be equipped to start their own enterprises."

Talking about the company's expectations through this MoU, Dr Sudha added, "We have definite expectations out of this pact. For our company, this MoU means many of our scientists get appropriate training in cross-departmental capabilities. Secondly, we want to carry out research encompassing various domains and not just within Genomics. Lastly, it is also about brand building. Today's students are employees of the future. We try and seek the very best of it."

Through this MoU, Genotypic Technology will also be framing the course work and syllabus for VIT.

When asked about collaborating abroad, Dr Sudha said, "Why not, if things go in the right direction? We have already done research collaborations and service projects for organizations abroad. So we are open to it."

Speaking about this specific partnership with Genotypic Technology, Dr Sivashanmugam said, "Genotypic Technology is a pioneer in this field, and they have made a huge difference in our country and they are the only one in the area of next generation genome sequencing and computational biology."

"Genotypic is going to give a different perspective in terms of handling biological data, and with the amount of work we have, it is going to help them to come out with more outputs. This will give a solid data, which will be much faster and quicker," said Dr Sivashanmugam.

"We also look forward to work with VIT in offering Genomics programs to spread the knowledge of Genomic technology in India," concluded Dr Mugasimangalam.