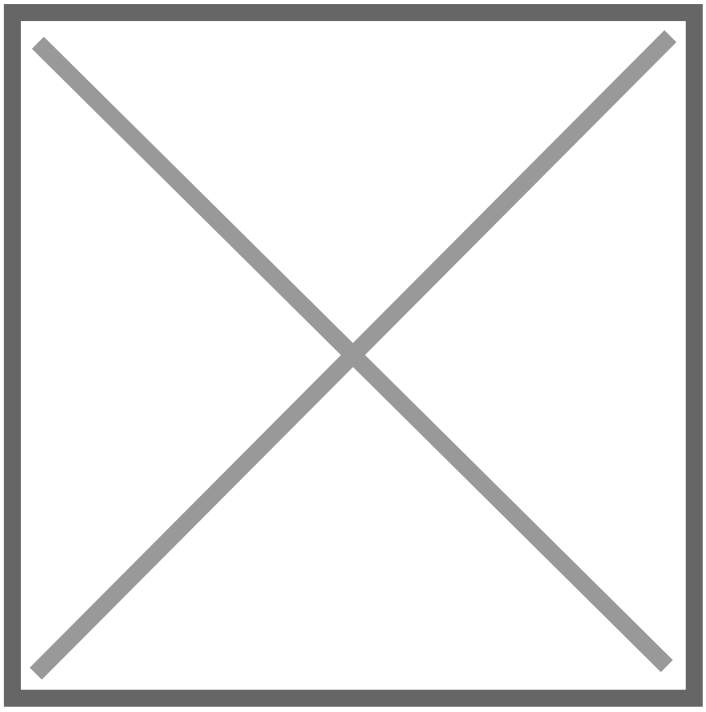
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Karnataka preps-up talent pool

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BT Finishing Schools get a go ahead

With the recent approvals for 12 BT Finishing Schools, Karnataka is all set to overcome the limitation in industry-ready talent pool

Focus Areas
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Fermentation and bioprocessing
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Cellular and molecular diagnostics
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Protein expression and scale up
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Biosensors and medical devices
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Nutraceuticals and food processing
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Plant genetic transformation, genome, seed and marker analysis
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Bioinformatics and rational drug design
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Clinical trials and biostatistics
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ Plant tissue culture and metabolite analysis
Ã¢â?¬Â¢ IPR and patent analysis

Mandatory subjects in all options
Documentation/data management and communication skills
Any other latest research pertaining to nanotechnology and clinical research

The fast growing bioteh sector in Karnataka has been facing severe shortage of industry-ready graduates and post-graduates for a long time. In a bid to fulfill the need of the industry, the Karnataka government has initiated several rounds of discussion with industry representatives, Association of Biotechnology-Led Enterprises (ABLE), and members of the Biotech Vision Group to develop a mechanism to groom talent as per the industry requirement.

In the Millennium Biotech Policy-II, the Government of Karnataka has announced that, as an initiative in this regard, 10 BT Finishing Schools will be established in the State with appropriate course content and duration to equip graduates and post-graduates with necessary employable skills to make them industry ready.Â A Selection Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Prof. Padmanabhan, professor Emeritus, IISC and member, Vision Group of Biotechnology, to finalize the eligibility criteria, course content, duration, selection procedure, and university affiliation for setting up of BT Finishing Schools.

Out of the 25 applications received, the selection committee has accorded approvals for establishment of BT Finishing Schools to 12 institutes listed below:
1.Â Manipal Life Sciences Center, Mangalore

2.Â Dayanand Sagar Institution, BangaloreÂ
3.Â Siddaganga Institute of Technology, Bangalore
4.Â Probiosys Marketing Office, Bangalore
5.Â PES Institute of Technology, Bangalore
6.Â JSS College of Arts, Commerce and Science, Mysore
7.Â St. Aloysius College, Mangalore
8.Â Padmashree Institute of Management and Sciences, Bangalore
9.Â The Oxford College of Science, Bangalore
10. Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni College for Women, Bangalore
11. MM Arts and Science College, Uttara Kannada
12. Vishweshwariah College of Applied Sciences, Gulbarga

The duration of course is 12 months, of which six months are allotted for course work and another six months for internship. The BT Finishing Schools will be recognized by ABLE and will have accreditation from a recognized university. The Finishing School admits students who have acquired BSc in biotechnology, MSc in biotechnology and bioscience or BE/BTech in chemical engineering, biotechnology or biomedical. Fees for the program will not exceed $1100 (50,000) per student.Â Â Â Â

ABLE will monitor the functioning of the BT Finishing School and it will evaluate and assess the competency of the Finishing School to deliver industry-ready students on a regular basis (once every two years). ABLE will also ensure employment in the relevant biotechnology industry to those who have completed the course, to the maximum extent, in India and abroad.

Government of Karnataka will provide financial support to the Finishing Schools for setting up necessary lab instruments and other technology-related gadgets and equipments required to train the students. State support will be limited to 25 percent of the cost, subject to a maximum of $200,000 (1 crore) per BT Finishing School.

With this novel initiative, Karnataka has taken a step ahead to strengthen its stronghold in biotech sector.Â

Pradeep Kumar in Bangalore