



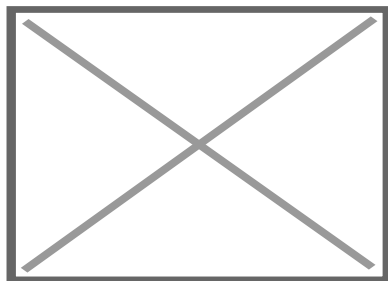
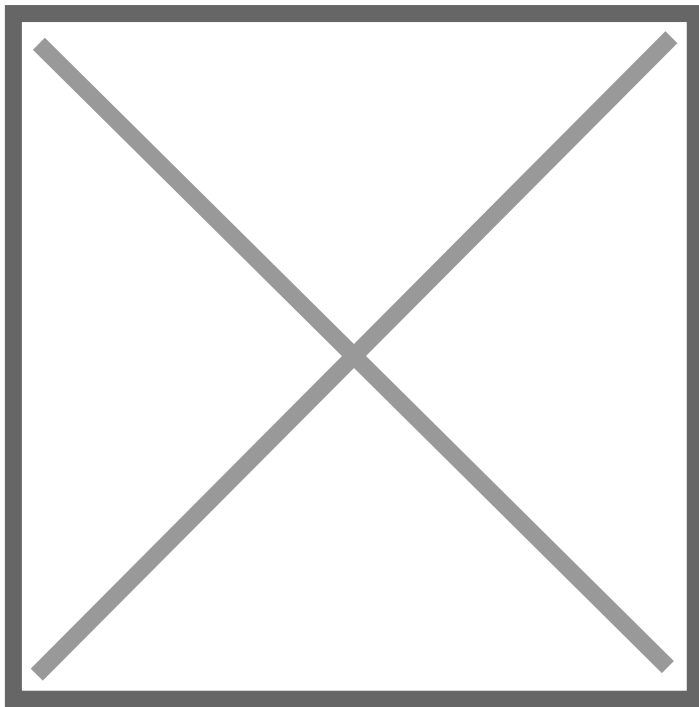
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NCBS: Research hub of modern biology

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The National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) has two academic programs leading to PhD degrees. Students with a masters in any basic science course or a basic degree in any applied science such as medicine or engineering are eligible for the PhD program. The fellowship for initial graduate students in the Ph.D program is Rs 8000 per month. They undertake coursework and a research project leading to a thesis to be submitted to the university for evaluation. Doctoral students have to clear a qualifying examination during their second year in order to be eligible to submit a thesis which they are expected to submit after about four years of work. Upon clearing the qualifying examination, the fellowship is enhanced to Rs 9,500 per month. Integrated PhD students undertake a rigorous coursework program while undergoing three rotations of 3 months apiece. They

then choose the groups that they will work in for their PhD. Their initial fellowship is Rs 6000 per month. They too face a qualifying examination towards the end of their second year. On clearing this examination, they undertake a research program leading to a PhD. thesis to be submitted to the university for evaluation. Similar to students of the PhD program, their fellowship is enhanced to Rs 9,500 per month after clearing the qualifying exam. Students at the Centre can register for their degrees with the TIFR Deemed University.

Applications for both programs are screened initially through an All India written test. The test is extremely basic and cover topics in biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics. There is no specified syllabus, nor are sample question papers given out. Those who do well in the written test are sent application forms from which a few candidates are called for a written test and interview. The basis for short listing the candidates are: past academic performance, letters of recommendation from current/former teachers and individual write- ups in the applications. All invited candidates are taken through a preliminary interview and the best performers at this stage are asked to return for final interviews in the following two days.

Advertisements for applications to both programs appear in leading national newspapers in August/September each year.

Details about the current research programs can be had by visiting the NCBS web site accessible at www.ncbs.res.in

IOB focused on global biocomputational research

The Institute of Bioinformatics (IOB) is an international research institute carrying out research in bioinformatics and molecular biology. Dr Akhilesh Pandey, chief scientific advisor, Institute of Bioinformatics, elaborates about the research activities going on in the institute.

The Institute of Bioinformatics focuses on internationally competitive research. Though, a number of our students have applied to PhD programs to two universities that we are currently affiliated with – Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) and Kuvempu University. We encourage our students to carry out thesis research on a competitive topic and prove their merit by publication in the world's topmost journals. In this way we are also generating a future generation of interdisciplinary scientists: those who are proficient in biology as well as computation. We have scientific collaborations with certain laboratories at the National Centre of Biological Sciences (NCBS) and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc.), both in Bangalore. In addition, we carry out our research collaboratively with the group of Dr Akhilesh Pandey at Johns Hopkins University. As a result of this exchange program, several of our PhD students are working in Dr Pandey's laboratory at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, USA.

For entry into the institute, we consider students with a masters degree in biology or related area for positions as Research Trainee. This is done through a competitive written examination and interviews of the selected applicants.

The candidates can contact the director, Dr Krishna Deshpande, by e-mail: ksdeshpande@ibioinformatics.org