

10 point guide to BIRAC funding for businesses in India

01 August 2012 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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With the mandate to support and tend start-ups in the biotechnology sector and small and medium enterprises, the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council offers funding opportunities to small organizations involved in innovation in the biotech industry. Here is a 10-minute guide on how to get funded by the Department of Biotechnology.

What is BIRAC?

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) is a Not-for-Profit Company of Government of India, registered under India Companies Act 1956, as the Department of Biotechnology's interface agency. It serves as a single window for the emerging biotech industries.

What is the BIG Scheme?

BIRAC has initiated the Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG) in order to support entrepreneurs with an exciting idea that may be in the nascent and planning stage. This scheme is designed to stimulate commercialization of research discoveries by providing very early stage grants for the development and maturation of those discoveries into marketable product or intellectual property (IP). In other words to, to help bridge the gap between discovery and invention.

What does the BIG scheme hope to do?

The BIG scheme is directed towards the scaling up and validation of Proof of Concept ideas. And to encourage researchers to take technology closer to market and importantly to excite interest of potential licensees or investors

How does the BIG scheme intend to do that?

The scheme would be managed by the BIG Partners. The BIG Partners would provide mentoring and hand-holding for activities related to mobilizing resources, IP management, legal and contracts and other business development related activities for the BIG innovators. They will monitor targeted milestone and disbursement of funds and also organize workshops, meeting, travel etc.

Who can apply for the BIG grant?

The target groups for the Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG) scheme include potential entrepreneurs from academia or an Incubatee (PhDs, Medical degree holders or Biomedical Engg. Graduates) who have an exciting idea that can be translated into a product and have an unmet need for mentorship and funding. The Biotechnology Ignition Grant would help to support and nurture these high risk early starters and their ideas.

Important FAQs about this scheme.

BIG scheme supports only up-to proof-of-concept stage. Funding will be in the form of Grant-in-Aid limited up-to Rs 50 lakh. The period for the study would generally not exceed 18 months. The funding to the BIG Innovator by the BIG Partner will always be in the form of Grant-in-Aid. No royalty will be charged on the disbursed fund to the BIG Innovator by the BIG Partner. Funding may also be used for conducting limited market research, patenting costs, working capital during the period, travel, salary etc.

How to apply for the BIG grant?

The proposals are supposed to [submitted online](#). BIRAC would invite proposals for the BIG at least twice a year.