

Ireland-India Science, Technology & Educational Collaborations: Opportunities, Challenges and Solutions

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CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:

Irish-Indian Universities & Institutes of Technology

PURPOSE

- Catalyst to promote Ireland-India bilateral collaboration in the fields of science, technology, engineering, biomedical and education through interaction among academia, R&D laboratories, industry and government agencies.
- Create awareness through dissemination of information and opportunities towards potential bilateral and multilateral scientific and technological cooperation.
- Explore new areas by supporting contacts between universities, R&D laboratories and career scientists to develop mutual trust, leadership and fraternity in research and development.

Abstract

The Ireland-India systematic science and technology cooperation discussions began during the An Taoiseach's (Irish Prime Minister) India visit in 2006. On 19th January 2006, the Irish Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Indian Minister for Science, Technology and Ocean Development signed an agreement on scientific and technological cooperation between Ireland and India. The Science Foundation of Ireland (SFI) and Indian National Science Academy (INSA) further signed agreements on scientific cooperation.

In pursuance of the agreement, a programme for further cooperation agreed and signed on 13th May 2009 between Ireland and India for the period of 2009-2011. The agreement included the following areas for cooperation:

- Nano science and technology
- Sustainable energy and energy-efficient technologies
- Information and communication technologies
- Medical and health sciences
- Chemical, biochemical/pharmaceutical sciences
- Food and agricultural sciences
- Biotechnology
- Marine sciences

Over the years developments in these areas have been impressive. On 18th December 2009, the Irish Embassy in India commissioned a study on S&T scoping between Ireland and India. On 24th September 2010, Researcher Dr. Praveen Sharma submitted her report to the Irish Embassy at New Delhi. We anticipate this report will provide us with in-depth views and discussion points.

The 1st Ireland-India Science & Technology Forum held in Dublin on February 25th 2010 exerted S&T cooperation and addressed important issues. The office of the Science, Technology & Innovation, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Irish Embassy in New Delhi and Indian Embassy in Dublin played important roles in this Forum. This provided a real opportunity to inform and engage decision makers and stakeholders of both public and private sectors. Insightful presentations were made not only by the scientist/academics but also by policy makers.

The Forum's major objective was to be useful to decision makers, scholars and the interested institutions and people in both countries. It is important that these groups must know about the forum, the information and knowledge it produced, and how this information can be accessed. Successful dissemination of the forum results is as important as success of the forum itself. The first forum was a success and generated many collaboration initiatives between Irish and Indian institutions.

In this, the 2nd S&T Forum, the focus is to identify and implement appropriate cross border (Ireland-India) programme and policies, which is more complicated than doing good scientific research and development. The cross border conditions are more complex and new, with national and geopolitical considerations that are different and hard to adopt. We sincerely hope the results of this forum will contribute to at least some of the better understanding.

Scope:

The opportunities and challenges for Ireland-India science, technology & educational collaborations offers more scope than the first Forum by providing a platform to the stake holders to inform the progress, activities and initiatives in Ireland-India Science, Technology and Educational cooperation.

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