

PRESS RELEASE

GRAND CHALLENGES EXPLORATIONS INDIA (GCE-India) – Third call for proposals

July 17, 2017, New Delhi: The Program Management Unit (PMU) at Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) in partnership with the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, the IKP Knowledge Park and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation , announced the third call for proposals under the Grand Challenges Explorations (GCE) - India program. GCE-India funds exploratory ideas from within India, which create pathways for drug discovery, vaccine development, advancement in health technologies and delivery systems that can be made available to people from all socio-economic strata.

GCE- India is a unique partnership, seeks to fund ideas that have the potential to change the way we deal with key development issues in the country. The program, which is now in its second year has received a tremendous response from innovators and is synonymous with the vision of DBT, BIRAC, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. For the first time since the launch of the program, we have also expanded our focus to include mental health as a key development challenge," said Dr. Renu Swarup, Senior Advisor, Department of Biotechnology, Government of India and Managing Director, BIRAC.

GCE-India is a search to identify healthcare innovations that will enable the goal of equitable healthcare. The GCE-India initiative mirrors the ‘Grand Challenges Explorations’ program of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to address challenges specific to the Indian healthcare ecosystem.

"GCE-India is a revolutionary program which empowers you with the tools, network, and funds, to help you take your idea to the next stage of realization. This partnership is looking for life changing ideas from talented and motivated professionals whose interventions or ideas will contribute to addressing key health challenges in India and improve the lives as all," said Dr. Shirshendu Mukherjee, Mission Director, PMU-BIRAC.

The program is designed to address issues such as infectious diseases, maternal and child health, family planning, nutrition and mental health. The awardee will be eligible for an award of ₹ 50 Lakh, followed by a prize of ₹ 10 Lakh for completing milestones on schedule.

"GCE-India was created with the goal of fostering entrepreneurship in India. PMU-BIRAC and IKP Knowledge Park will work closely with the chosen candidates to provide them with technical and business strategy advice. The candidates will also gain access to synergistic networks from India and around the world. To be successful, the ideas will have to be novel, sustainable, impactful in society, and accessible and affordable to end users," said Ms. Deepanwita Chattopadhyay, Chairman & CEO at IKP Knowledge Park.

This Call for Proposals is open to anyone from within India across any discipline - from researchers and faculty in colleges, universities, government laboratories and academic institutions, to start-ups and small and medium enterprises as well as non-profit organizations. Proposals submission will close at by **11:59 pm (IST), August 31, 2017**. For information on eligibility, application process and selection criteria, please visit www.gce-india.org.