

Recent development for BeST cluster

BeST has received seed funding from the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to India (OPSA). This will enable BeST to:

- Set up a section 8 entity through which it can enhance its scale of operations over the coming months.
- Hire a dedicated team through which it can support the various cluster activities like raising funds for various programs envisioned by the themes, improving outreach, ensure compliance of the programs to the legal framework in India for implementation of such programs, etc. Request all theme leads and other recipients of this newsletter to share references of current or ex-team members who would be a good fit to the various roles which the cluster is trying to staff currently. The details for these roles are available on the BeST website and can also be shared on request.
- The seed funding includes funding for three specific projects in Digital Health, One Health, and Precision Agriculture.

The BeST office is currently implementing the processes required to disburse the funds for the above programs and to create the operating infrastructure to support the various cluster activities.

Meeting with OpSa



Dr. Siuli Mitra, Dr. Vivek Kumar, and Mr. Chagun Basha from the PSA office recently participated in a meeting with the team members and Theme Leads of the BeST Office. This was an introductory meeting between the OPSA and BeST after disbursement of the first tranche of the seed funding to plan.

The BeST office was represented by – Prof. Ambarish Ghosh, Dr. Taslim Arif, Dr. Sreeparna Samanta, Mr. Krishna Kumar, Prof. Uma Ramakrishnan, Prof. Jaywant Arakeri, Prof. Gondi Kondaiah Ananthasuresh, Prof. Joseph Mathew, Prof. Akshay Naik, Prof. Abdul Rawoof Pinjari, Prof. Bobji, Prof. Apoorva Patel, Prof. Prosenjit Sen.

One Health Mission Meeting



As recommended by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC), the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India is coordinating the 'One Health Mission' as the 10th Mission under the PM-STIAC. The proposed Mission will require extensive coordination of the many initiatives currently underway in various ministries, viz., DBT, DST, ICMR, NCDC, DAHD, ICAR, MoEF & CC, and NDMA, in addition to initiatives by multiple private organizations in India, State Governments, and a range of global organizations. The objective of this Mission would be to synergize the One Health initiatives in the country and identify gaps where applicable. In this regard, the Bengaluru Cluster team and its One Health project team met (virtually) with Dr. Sindura Ganapati, PSA Fellow from PSA Office, and his team on 13th October 2022. And there were wide-ranging discussions on the efforts of the BeST One Health initiatives that can eventually align with the National Mission. The BeST One Health team was represented by Prof. Uma Ramakrishnan, Dr. Ravi Chellam, and Dr. Farah Ishtiaq.

Announcement

Finally, we are happy to announce that we have a plan to launch the BeST cluster formally at the Bengaluru Tech Summit 2022, scheduled between November 16th to 18th. We believe this would be the ideal platform for BeST to initiate an outreach to multiple stakeholders, national and international. Through this interaction, BeST can communicate its objectives to a broader audience and expand its reach.