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NIIST, private firm to tie up for business

T. Nandakumar

The National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST), a constituent laboratory of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) here, is planning to enter into an agreement with CSIR-Tech, a private limited company, to commercialise the technologies developed by the institute in various areas.

Set up in 2011 to promote entrepreneurship among Indian scientists, the company facilitates technology transactions and creates spin-off business by forging partnerships with scientists, inventors, entrepreneurs, business people, and investors.

Under the terms of the proposed agreement, CSIR-Tech will look at the existing technologies and Intellectual Property (IP) opportunities at CSIR-NIIST and identify business opportunities. The company will display the marketable knowhow on its database to attract potential partners and investors. CSIR-Tech will also assist in licensing the technologies and creating start-up enterprises. The company has concluded agreements with 12 CSIR laboratories and is working on eight more deeds.

Amitabh Shrivastava, CEO, CSIR-Tech, told *The Hindu* on Monday that the scheme permitted CSIR laboratories to invest knowledge base as equity in the enterprise or spin-off. He said it facilitated mobility of researchers between industry and the scientific establishment. "As one of the most productive laboratories in the CSIR network, NIIST offers the scope for identifying technologies that can be commercialised," he said.

R.S. Praveen Raj, Scientist (IPR and Technology Transfer) at NIIST, said the agreement would let scientists at the institute have an equity stake in scientific enterprises or spin-offs. This, he said, would empower them to benefit from commercialisation of technologies developed by them. "The mechanism has effectively promoted scientific entrepreneurship in countries like the US," he said.

He said the general memorandum of understanding between NIIST and CSIR-Tech would be signed soon. This, he added, would be followed up by separate agreements once the potential technologies were identified.

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