

# FRIENDSHIP 2.0 PROJECT NEWSLETTER Vol.1 June 2022

Project for Future Researchers at IITH to Enhance Network Development with Scholarship of Japan, Phase 2

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## 1. Launched the Project

In December 2021, the second phase of the project that supports the collaboration between Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IITH) and Japan, which has been successful to date, was launched. In the first phase, more than 130 IITH graduates were awarded scholarships to study master's and doctoral programs in Japan, and seven joint research grants with Japanese universities were funded. This led to collaborative activities between IITH and various Japanese universities and companies. Phase 2 aims to build on these achievements by supporting the Japan Desk established at IITH to build a platform for ongoing collaborative activities between IITH and Japanese universities and research institutions and companies.

### 1) IITH Project Team Members

 Prof. Murty B. S., Director of IITH <b>Project Director</b>	 Prof. Panda Tarun Kanti, Dean of International Relations <b>Project Manager</b>	 Prof. C Krishna Mohan, Dean of Public and Corporate Relations <b>Facilitator</b>
 Prof. Saptarshi Majumdar, Dean of Academic <b>Facilitator</b>	 Prof. Kiran Kumar Kuchi, Dean of Research and Development <b>Facilitator</b>	 Prof. K. V. L. Subramaniam, Dean of Planning <b>Facilitator</b>
 Prof. Mudrika Khandelwal, Dean of Alumni Relations <b>Facilitator</b>	 Ms. Pranitha Avvaru <b>Japan Desk Officer</b>	

## 2) JICA Project Team Members

 <p>Mr. SAITO Kunitoshi <b>Chief Advisor</b></p>	 <p>Ms. KASAI Chikako <b>Deputy Chief Advisor</b></p>	 <p>Dr. NAKANO Kyoko <b>Expert, Higher Education</b> (President, Human Link Inc.)</p>	 <p>Prof. MIKI Chitoshi <b>Expert, Engineering &amp; Higher Education</b> (President, Tokyo City University )</p>
 <p>Dr. SANO Hiroshi <b>Expert, Engineering Education</b> (Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation)</p>	 <p>Ms. OHARA Rieko <b>Expert, Japan Desk Operation</b></p>	 <p>Mr. NOGUCHI Shuhei <b>Expert, Japan Desk Operation</b></p>	 <p>Ms. OKAWA Serena <b>Expert, Japan Desk Operation</b></p>
 <p>Dr. Sai Chandra Teja R. <b>Project Consultant</b></p>	 <p>Ms. Sangeeta <b>Project Administrator</b></p>		

## 2. Held an Online Kick-Off Meeting

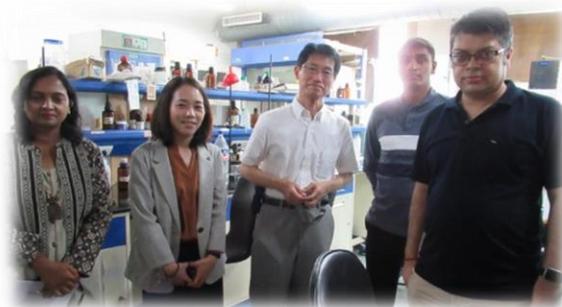
While Japanese experts were unable to travel to India due to the COVID-19 circumstance, a kick-off meeting was held online on January 19, 2022, with Japanese experts, counterpart members, and JICA officials. All members of the project team, as well as officials from JICA Headquarters and the JICA India Office, participated in the meeting, sharing information and exchanging opinions on the project outline and future activity strategy, and confirming the commitment of the members.

## 3. Selected FRIENDSHIP 2.0 Scholarship Students for the First Batch

Continuing on from Phase 1, the Project provides scholarships for IITH graduates to study doctoral programs at Japanese universities in Phase 2. 14 students applied for the scholarship program in FY2022, and after screening all applications and conducting online interviews on February 21 and 22, the final 10 students were selected. Nine of the successful applicants expect to enroll in October 2022, and one in April 2023. Some students will enroll in the doctoral course after six months as research students, while others will directly enroll in the doctoral course to begin their research. We hope that all of them will successfully pass the entrance exam and start their research in Japan.

#### 4. Started 12 Joint Research Projects for the First Batch

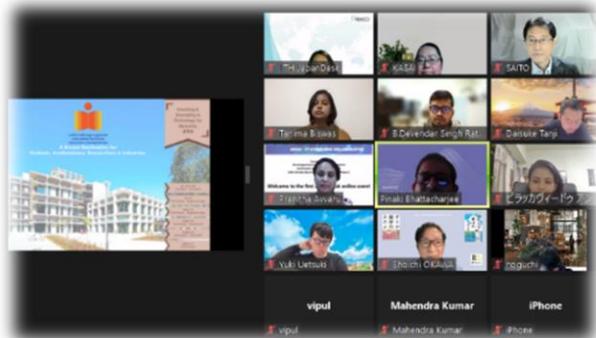
Continuing on from Phase 1, the Project provides grants for joint research between IITH faculty members and Japanese universities and companies. 12 applications from IITH were received for FY2022. All 12 applications were accepted, and research activities began in April. It is expected that this program will encourage IITH students to study in the partner institution's laboratory in Japan by actively involving students and co-supervising them with Japanese faculty members.



#### 5. Implemented Monitoring of Phase 1 FRIENDSHIP Scholarship Students

The Project is focusing on monitoring the progress toward degree acquisition, especially for the 19 students who are scheduled to complete their studies this September among the 42 students currently studying in Japan as Phase 1 students. We are interviewing students and their supervisors to check the status of their research delays due to the COVID-19 effect, and providing advice if there are any issues. We sincerely hope that all of the scholarship students will successfully complete their degrees and will fly out into the world with good memories of their studies.

#### 6. Conducted First Japan Desk Event



The first event of Japan Desk, which is expected to serve as a platform for sustainable Japan-India collaboration, was held online on April 30. With the cooperation of Mr. TANJI Daisuke, an activist who is involved in various activities connecting India and Japan, and with Mr. OKAWA Shoichi, Managing Director of Ryugaku Sommelier Inc. which produces study abroad programs in Japan, as the main guest, the event promoted Japanese students to study abroad at IITH. Ms. Pranitha, the Japan Desk staff, moderated the event, which was attended by faculty members from IITH, alumni who studied in Japan, and alumni from

Japan who studied at IITH, promoting the advantages of IITH and its learning and living environment and encouraging students from Japan to study at IITH.

## 7. Japanese Experts Visited IITH for the 1<sup>st</sup> time

From April 3 to 14, 2022, two Japanese experts traveled to India and visited IITH for the first time since the project started and conducted the following activities at IITH. Many buildings were under construction, and the development of the university could be felt, with an active campus with many students coming and going!

- ✓ Check the status of the IITH campus and
- ✓ Meet with FRINEDSHIP 2.0 Scholars and their supervisors, confirm status, explain purpose of the program
- ✓ Conduct interviews with joint research PIs, confirm status, explain purpose of Japan Desk
- ✓ Startup the Japan Desk physically and discuss the Japan Desk operation plan
- ✓ Conduct interviews with IITH-related departments, promote collaboration, and introduce projects



## 8. Support for Matching IITH with Shimane Univ. for Joint Research Partners

The Japan Desk met online with Prof. Hemanth Noothalapati (from India), Assistant Professor of the Major in Agricultural and Life Sciences, Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology of the Shimane University, who is conducting research on live cell imaging analysis by Raman spectroscopy and the development of a new medical diagnostic method. Raman spectroscopy was developed in 1928 by Dr. Raman, an Indian researcher who won the Nobel Prize in Physics, and is now one of the most important methods for analyzing materials, widely used in various fields of research. After confirming Dr. Hemanth's research interests and wishes and soliciting interested researchers through IITH, Prof. Shourya Dutta Gupta expressed interest, and the Japan Desk held an online meeting between the two professors on May 2. We believe that helping young researchers find partners between India and Japan will contribute greatly to the development of science and technology. Japan Desk will continue to actively support the matching of partners for joint research and other collaborative activities between IITH and Japan.



## Upcoming Activities

Various activities to promote India-Japan collaboration, including Japan Desk events, will be carried out with the support of the JICA project team. The main activities planned are as follows. We would appreciate your cooperation and support.

- Baseline survey (May 2022-)
- Japan Desk Collaboration events with Japanese companies

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