

**Kusuma School of
Biological Sciences**

- The school was established in 2008
- In December 2012 the official inauguration of the school laboratories took place
- The school hosted the second national annual Bio-world conference on proteins in disease and disorder in 2012



Green Light for Biological Sciences

IITD Approve Foundation Course and Research Fellowship Programme

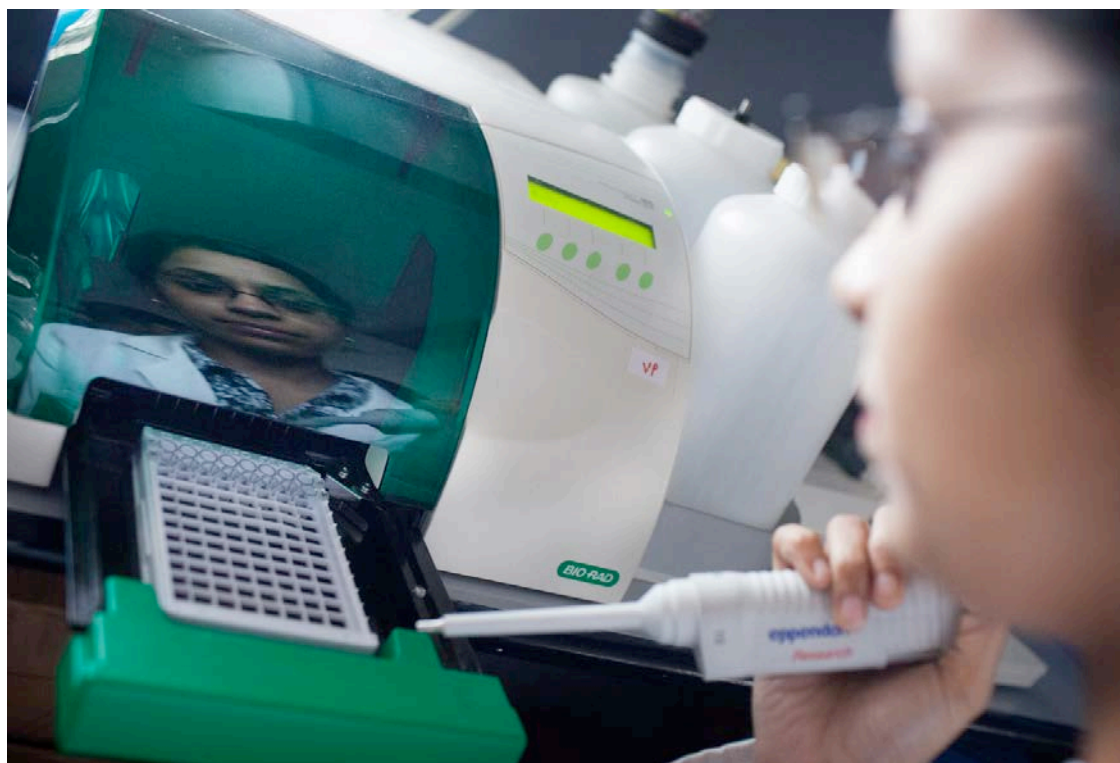
The Kusuma School of Biological Sciences (KSBS)¹ will introduce Biology into the undergraduate curriculum at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) from July 2013. In April, the IITD Senate formally approved a foundation course in Biological Sciences for more than 800 students a year at the School. A brand new fully equipped laboratory is being built to meet the needs of the course curriculum and provide the latest scientific resources for students.

In addition to the foundation course, IITD also approved a Masters Research programme in Biological Sciences at the School. From July 2014, 30 fellowships will be awarded to postgraduate research students in Biological Sciences each year. The programme will focus on diverse subjects such as the genetic make-up and cellular structure of animals, plants and microorganisms, and how they interact in our natural environment. The research programme will last for three years, with a total of 90 scholars completing the programme by 2017.

With funding from The Kusuma Trust (The Trust), IITD has established KSBS which aims to create new teaching and research programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in Biological Sciences.

Professor Jayaram, Coordinator at the Kusuma School of Biological Sciences said *"The school has played a key role in introducing Biological Sciences to undergraduate engineering students at IIT Delhi. We at KSBS are now gearing up our research to create an impact at an international level in the areas of infectious diseases and non-communicable disorders."*

¹ <http://bioschool.iitd.ac.in>



A post-graduate student at the Kusuma School of Biological Sciences at the IITD. Photo: Sam Strickland

Book Bank for Schools

Vigyan Foundation

The 'Parwaaz'² project manages the effective roll out and implementation of the Government's RMSA³ scheme to strengthen the management and governance of schools. With funding from The Trust, The Vigyan Foundation (VF) is delivering the project in Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh, by improving the infrastructure and resources of 40 schools. A needs assessment of infrastructure and educational resources was undertaken in the first cohort of 19 schools. The findings show that school textbooks and class reading materials are in short supply across all schools. As a result, VF organised a book bank in each school to enable graduating students and the local community to donate and share books. The book banks have proved extremely popular with teachers, parents and students and have provided a much-needed resource to freely access reading material and textbooks.

Rallies make a difference to school enrolment

Centre for Youth and Social Development

In Sambalpur, Odisha, the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) aims to improve the quality of secondary education by strengthening school management and reducing the number of out-of-school children. During March and April, a total of 85 School Management Development Committee members, 445 students and 30 Gran Panchayat⁴ representatives participated in rallies and community awareness meetings across the district. Students from local schools carried signs and placards and handed out flyers to parents and out-of-school children in rural communities. The aim was to educate people about the value of education and the importance of regular attendance in school. Parents were provided with enrolment forms for the next school year and were given support in completing the necessary paperwork for their children. A total of 150 out-of-school children were identified as a result of the rallies and their names and addresses recorded. With support from The Trust, CYSD will monitor the 150 children to ensure they enrol in school for the next academic year from July.



Students participating in awareness rallies in Sambalpur, Odisha. Photo: CYSD

Government funding awarded

Agrannee Jana Kalyan Anusthan

A Kusuma funded project that aims to improve the performance of students in Science in 25 secondary schools in the Sambalpur district of Odisha has succeeded in obtaining funds from the State government to support the schools. Agrannee Jana Kalyan Anusthan (AJKA) equips schools with Science laboratories, equipment and consumables. As a result of AJKA's meetings with State education officials and by supporting Head teachers with applications, schools have received additional funds for the laboratories. Equipment such as scientific models, test tubes, chemicals and pipettes to enable students to conduct practical scientific experiments in the classroom have been purchased to enable regular interactive Science lessons in the schools.

Fellows achieve higher grades

Sambalpur Integrated Development Institute

The Kusuma Ratna Fellowship Programme helps bright young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in Sambalpur to complete their senior secondary school and enroll in higher education courses. Recent results have shown that fellows on the programme achieve higher grades in Class 12 Science examinations than other students in the district. The average pass percentage for the district was 73% whereas 83% of the fellows passed the exams. The Sambalpur Integrated Development Institute which administers the fellowship programme on behalf of The Trust, is now supporting the next cohort of fellows with a 5 day programme on examination techniques to improve the pass rate even further.

² Parwaaz means 'to fly'

³ Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is India's national scheme for improving the quality of secondary education

⁴ Panchayats are local assemblies at village, block and district level
