25 PhD scholars from 18 Indian institutions win research fellowships to Purdue University

Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) is partnering with Purdue University, USA in the first-ever overseas visiting doctoral fellowship programme

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SHUTTERSTOCK

As many as 25 PhD scholars from 18 Indian higher education institutions including the IITS, Indian Institute of Science, Central University of Kerala, Manipal College of Pharmaceutical Sciences, will head to Purdue University, US in January 2019, through the university's partnership with India's Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB).

The researchers will contribute to research projects they jointly proposed through a competitive application process. Nineteen departments at Purdue will host the scholars in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. SERB is investing approximately $30,000 per student for a total annual commitment of $750,000 a year for the 12-month programme.

"SERB and Purdue collaborated on an open and public call for applications for the new Overseas Visiting Doctoral Fellows (OVDF) programme. The final projects represent research topics across 19 departments – from cancer research to virology to analyse tropical cyclones and extreme weather. The scholars at the university will have access to cutting-edge equipment and facilities such as those located in Purdue's Discovery Park," says Suresh Garimella, the university's executive vice president for research and partnerships. On why the majority of the scholars under the programme are from the IITs, Rajiv Kumar Tayal, secretary, SERB, says, "Collaborative research is the focal element of the programme and in that, many of the IITs have recognised research engagements with Purdue faculty, which explains why IITians have benefitted a little more." Praveenkumar S, scientist, Science & Engineering Research Council, Department of Science & Technology, who is overseeing the programme, says, "The first batch of 25 scholars are engaged in interdisciplinary research, in areas such as Aeronautics and Astronautics, Agricultural and Biological Engineering, Basic Medical Sciences and Cancer Pharmacology, etc which is expected to benefit both their careers and the country.

SCHOLAR TALK

Scholar Speak

- We are working in collaboration with Purdue University to develop a thermal management system using smart polymers through our Microscale Transport Processes Laboratory at IIT Kharagpur. Our aim is to apply our design towards cooling of hot-spots in electronic systems, such as computers, mobile phones etc.
— Sri Ganesh Subramanian, IIT Kharagpur

- I am working on gas and granular flows in aerospace engineering. At Purdue, I hope to develop a solver to ensure gas and granular flow in reference to planetary landings.
— Arunkumar Chinnappan, IIT Kanpur

- My work in virology focusses on replication of complexes of viruses like chikungunya and dengue. I hope to develop anti-viral therapeutics for which I will study the viral structural complexes through cryoEM (advanced microscopy technique) in the US.
— Vedita Anand Singh, IIT Roorkee