



## **Director's Report Convocation Address (9<sup>th</sup> Convocation 2020)**

Honorable Chancellor, Mr. Anil Baijal, Chief Guest Prof. Joachim Frank, Mr. Kiran Karnik, Chairman Board of Governors, members of the Senate, members of the faculty and staff, invited guests, our well-wishers, all the graduating students and their family members joining us online. It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the 9<sup>th</sup> Convocation of IIIT-Delhi. I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Joachim Frank for accepting our invitation to be the Chief Guest and kindly agreeing to deliver the Convocation address. Prof. Frank is the 2017 winner of Nobel Prize in Chemistry for developing cryo-electron microscopy for the high-resolution structure determination of biomolecules in solution. I would also like to express my gratitude to Honorable Chancellor for taking out his valuable time and sharing his thoughts on this occasion.

In this convocation, we are proud to confer 237 B.Tech., 203 M.Tech. and 2 M.Tech. Dual Degrees. Along with these, we are also conferring 11 Ph.D. degrees. Congratulations to all the graduates!

This year, we have admitted 222 M.Tech. students in 3 programs with 7 different specializations, and 51 Ph.D. students. Undergraduate admissions are underway.

Our faculty members are among the finest in the country and are internationally recognized. Last year we added 17 regular faculty members and 5 visiting faculty. The Institute has always been sensitive to the importance of gender diversity and I am happy to share that over 33% of the new faculty colleagues are women.

Carrying out cutting-edge research is in the institutional DNA of IIIT-D. Last year, our faculty members and students published 370 research papers, including 138 journal papers, 153 conference papers, 65 workshop papers and 14 books/book chapters. Sponsored projects are critical for augmenting the research culture of the Institute. This year, 35 research projects have been sanctioned with a total approved amount of over 17 crores.

We strongly believe that diversity on campus is important, and the Institute has started its own international admission process for all UG and PG programs. This is in addition to the existing DASA mode of international admissions. To augment our global connect we have signed MOUs with Arctic University of Norway, University of Cape Town, University of Trinity and Central Michigan University. IIIT-D organized an Indo-German Spring School on Algorithms for Big Data aimed to train young researchers. As a proactive step for our students, we have started the Academic Writing Lab which helps students and researchers to deal with challenges at any stage of the academic writing process and also conducts sessions, workshops, and panel discussions on various aspects of research writing.

IIIT-D is a research-led teaching Institute, and I am delighted to share that we have started a new Center of Excellence in Healthcare, funded by Delhi Knowledge Development Foundation (DKDF). The sanctioned amount for the Center is Rs. 12 crores. The Center will catalyze research, education and entrepreneurial activities in the healthcare space.

IIIT-D has always believed in creating and nurturing the spirit of innovation among its faculty and students. I am pleased to share that IIIT-D has been selected for being a host for the Technology Innovation Hub (TiH), under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems supported by DST. The

budget for TiH is approximately Rs. 100 crores for 5 years. The Institute will be spearheading research and innovation under the technology vertical 'Cognitive Computing and Social Sensing'. This project of national importance provides us with a unique opportunity to change the posture of 'research and innovation leading to technology development and entrepreneurship' in the region.

Entrepreneurial thinking is a mindset which goes beyond just starting a business venture. We are happy to share that we have launched a new Minor in Entrepreneurship at IIIT-D which will provide a transformational hands-on experience to our students and instill the entrepreneurial spirit. This is also in line with the 3<sup>rd</sup> mission of Higher Education Institutes and also the National Education Policy 2020. Regarding strengthening the innovation ecosystem, I am happy to share that recently we have received grant of Rs. 3 crores from MEITY for Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs, TIDE 2.0 Center. The Phase II facility of our Incubation Center has added 90 seats and we now have a total of 23,000 sq. ft. of space dedicated to incubation and entrepreneurial activities. Thirteen new startups has been on-boarded as new incubatees in the past year. Among various activities, the second edition of the flagship event 'Pitch Café 2.0', in association with the E-cell and the Institute Innovation Council was organized with the Hon'ble Education Minister & Deputy Chief Minister, Shri Manish Sisodia as the chief guest.

I am delighted to share that IIIT-D hosted the Research Innovation and Incubation Showcase (RIISE) in Jan 2020 as a part of its industry outreach activity. This event was a confluence of thought leaders, researchers and developers, who were passionate about bringing new advances in areas related to the five key themes: Digital Health, Human Centered Design, Information Security, Internet of Things and Sustainability.

Being a state university, IIIT-D is committed to contributing back to the region and be relevant to the community. Three of our faculty colleagues have been inducted as a part of the Technology Innovation Group formed by the Delhi government. IIIT-D has also contributed towards the efforts of the Delhi government for its war-room for COVID-19. The Institute is also engaging with Delhi Jal Board for spatio-temporal analysis and the visualization of grievances. Work of one of our faculty colleagues and team was reported in the Guinness book of world record under 'Largest-ever camera trap wildlife survey'. The work done by our faculty members on the #WashKaro application has helped proactively raise awareness about COVID-19 through bite-sized Hindi audios.

IIIT-D has started the tradition of hosting an annual Conclave with a simple idea: to create a public platform to discuss the use of information technology for sustainable development of the national capital region. Our Conclave held in Dec 2019 had the theme 'IT and Health for All'.

The Institute takes pride in developing strong linkages with industry. Recently, we have signed MoUs with TCS Foundation, IBM, Extramarks Education India Pvt. Ltd., DSCI, Wish Foundation, Wipro Ltd., Omidyar Networks, Spinal Injuries Centre, Delhi Police, Delhi E-Governance Society, ITC Limited, National Health Authority, South Delhi Municipal Corporation etc. to carry out research-driven projects. IIIT-D has also been in sync with the needs of the industry in terms of capacity building. We are planning to start a PG Diploma program in collaboration with industry partners such as IBM.

The Institute's student placement activities are seeing a robust trend - most programs have a 96% to 100% placement record. This placement season, a total of 707 offers were made at the Institute, which comprises of 414 full-time job offers and 293 intern offers. There is a significant growth in A+ offers. I am happy to observe that this year also, a significant number of students have opted for higher education. Our students are going to top overseas universities like University of Sussex, University of Texas at Dallas, CMU,

National University of Singapore, EPFL Switzerland, Max Planck School of Cognition, University of Illinois at Chicago, Charles University Prague, Rutgers University etc.

Our students have won various medals and accolades in different sports events and fests. Our team stood first in ACM ICPC India and appeared in world Finals 2020 in Moscow. IIIT-D team is one of the winners of 'The E-Commerce & Digital Quiz' from Engineering Track at Quiz-a-than 5.0. Our UAV Team - Aurora secured 6<sup>th</sup> rank in the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the international UAV competition held at the US Navy Air Station in Maryland, USA. We also organized the joint sports meet Triquetra in collaboration with DTU and NSUT with over 1200 participants from 60 Institutes. I am proud to share that our students have started a drive for spreading knowledge called 'Project Roshni', which is a social initiative of donating books to government school students. As part of 'Days of Moscow' program organized by Delhi government, Russian Cosmonaut, Sergey Revin (of ROSCOSMOS), who is awarded the title of 'Hero of the Russian Federation' gave a very interactive lecture at the Institute.

QS ranked IIIT-D in 'top 50' in their India Rankings 2020. IIIT-D has been ranked 56 in the engineering category by NIRF Ranking 2020. In the CS Rankings, the Institute currently holds 7<sup>th</sup> overall rank in India. IIIT-D ranked 13<sup>th</sup> in the category 'Top Government Colleges for Engineering in 2020' by India Today. The credit goes to the faculty members, students, staff and well-wishers of the Institute.

Before I conclude my annual report, I personally acknowledge the support and encouragement I have received from our Chairman, Mr. Karnik and all the members of the Board of Governors. I would also like to acknowledge the proactive support received from the Delhi government. I would like to thank the entire IIIT-D community, the students, the faculty and the staff for their indomitable spirit, resilience and their cooperation in the face of this unprecedented situation arising out of the Coronavirus pandemic. Our faculty members and staff have worked very hard to ensure that there is minimum disruption to academics and services during this unprecedented times. I am happy to share that IIIT-D is one of the first Institutes in Delhi to have planned and successfully closed the Winter semester despite the pandemic scenario. We have also gathered feedback from our students which has enabled us to plan the next semester, which is currently underway in a completely online mode. The closure of the semester in a timely manner enabled our final year students to join their jobs or go for the higher studies and our 3<sup>rd</sup> year students to take up their internship offers in time.

Finally, dear graduating students, on behalf of IIIT-Delhi, I congratulate each one of you for your hard work and for your achievements. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the academic year did not end the way it was planned and the coming months are likely to throw more challenges at you. In fact, the pandemic has shown how fragile our world is. The experiences that you have gained today will become a part of who you are and how you face challenges in the future. Please remember, every crisis is also an opportunity, and let these difficult times fuel your creativity rather than dampen it. I encourage you to ride the change using your talent and the skills that you have learnt! I have no doubt that you will continue to impress us with your achievements in the years to come. Today, you enter a world that needs not only your talent, but also your insight, your courage, and your compassion. Plan to invent the future. Our best wishes are with you, and I am sure you will make us and the country proud.

Jai Hind