

F.No.13-52/2018-ICC-Part(1)
Govt. of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Higher Education
(IC Cell)

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated the 9th November, 2023

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Minutes of the Apex Committee Meeting of SPARC.

The undersigned is directed to forward herewith a copy of the Record of Discussion of the Apex Committee Meeting of SPARC held on 1st November, 2023 under the chairmanship of Secretary, Higher Education (HE) for information and necessary action.

2. This issues with the approval of Secretary, HE.


(Rajeev Kumar Sinha)
Under Secretary (ICC)
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To:

- i) Shri Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Foreign Secretary (psfs@mea.gov.in)
- ii) Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, DST (dstsec@nic.in)
- iii) Dr Rajesh S Gokhale, Secretary, DBT (secy.dbt@nic.in)
- iv) Shri Govind Mohan, Secretary, Ministry of Culture (secy-culture@nic.in)
- v) Prof M Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman UGC (cm.ugc@nic.in)
- vi) Prof T G Sitharam, Chairman AICTE (chairman@aicte-india.org)
- vii) Shri Sanjog Kapoor, Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor, MoE (jsfa-moe@gov.in)
- viii) Prof. V.K.Tiwari, Director, IIT Kharagpur (director@iitkgp.ac.in)
- ix) Prof. Budaraju Srinivasa Murty, Director, IIT Hyderabad (director@iith.ac.in)
- x) Prof. Rabibrata Mukherjee, National Coordinator (SPARC), IIT Kharagpur (rabibrata@che.iitkgp.ac.in)
- xi) Prof. Debalay Chakrabarti, Assoc Dean R&D, IIT Kharagpur (debalay@metal.iitkgp.ac.in)
- xii) Prof. Siva Rama Krishna Vanjari, IIT Hyderabad (svanjari@ee.iith.ac.in)
- xiii) Prof. Indranil Manna, Professor, IIT Kharagpur (on lien as VC, BIT, Mesra) (vc@bitmesra.ac.in, imanna@metal.iitkgp.ernet.in)
- xiv) Prof. Virander S. Chauhan (viranderschauhan@gmail.com)
- xv) Dr. S. Vaidhyasubramaniam, Dean, Planning & Development, SASTRA University (vaidhya@sastra.edu)

Copy to:

- i) Ms. Saumya Gupta, Joint Secretary (TE), MoE
- ii) PPS to Secretary (Higher Education), MoE
- iii) PPS to JS (ICC), MoE


9.11.2023

Minutes of the Apex Committee Meeting of SPARC

The Apex Committee meeting for the Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) was held on 01.11.2023 at 11:00 A.M. in Hybrid mode under the chairmanship of Secretary (HE). The list of participants is at **Annexure-I**.

2. In his introductory remarks, Secretary (HE) outlined that the guidelines on Phase III of SPARC have been worked with core focus for cooperation on critical and emerging technologies, sustainability and other priorities outlined under G20 Education Working Group with selected countries, to be worked out on the existing model of the Indo – US Global Challenge Institute.

3. Subsequently a short presentation was made by Director IITKGP and Prof Rabibrata Mukherjee regarding reworked SPARC Guidelines for initiating Phase III. It was decided that status update of Phase I Projects (which ended in September 2023) and Phase II Projects will be taken up in a separate meeting. Change of PI or Co-PI in case of PI or Co-PI's superannuation or change of the institutions under Phase-II in case of selected projects will be finalized on merit by IIT KGP.

3. During the meeting, the following decisions were taken:

- i. Eight themes including Innovation (Critical and Emerging Technologies); Semiconductor Technology; Rare earth materials, mineral & mining; Defence & Space Technology; Agriculture & Food Security; Digital Services, AI & Data Sciences, Communication & Public Infrastructure; Energy Science & Green Technology and Advanced & personalized Healthcare were finalized for further consideration.
- ii. W.r.t overlapping in some of the sub-themes highlighted by the participants in the meeting, it was decided that Empowered Committee for Industry Collaboration and Internationalisation will rework the sub-themes to ensure removal of the discrepancies. Apex Committee members can provide suggestions on subthemes to Empowered Committee.
- iii. For strong collaboration between Empowered Committee for Industry Collaboration and Internationalisation & SPARC Working Committee, it has been



decided that Empowered Committee will invite Prof. Prof Rabibrata Mukherjee, National Coordinator (SPARC) as special invitee.

- iv. Empowered Committee for Industry Collaboration and Internationalisation will identify eight Nodal Institute/Sectoral Chair based on the strength of the Institute and available faculty on the respective eight themes. Nodal Institute will solicit proposal from identified countries bilaterally by building on earlier bilateral initiatives in the respective domain. Subsequently, theme wise proposals will be submitted by Nodal Institute/Sectoral Chair to the Empowered Committee, Empowered Committee will examine the proposal and see if it fulfils our expectations. After this scrutiny the proposals will come to Apex Committee for approval. For funding the project will go to IIT Kharagpur, Central Nodal Agency of the Scheme.
- v. All Nodal Institutes/Empowered Committee was requested to expedite proposals in view of the short time span available.

The meeting ended with thanks to the chair and participants.



List of Participants

S.No.	Participants
1.	Shri K Sanjay Murthy, Secretary (HE), Ministry of Education, Chairman
2.	Ms. Neeta Prasad, Joint Secretary(ICC), Ministry of Education, Member Secretary
3.	Shri Sanjog Kapoor, JS & FA, Ministry of Education, Member
4.	Prof. M Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman UGC, Member
5.	Dr Abhay Jere, Vice Chairman AICTE, Member
6.	Dr. Namita Gupta, Head, INSPIRE , Nominee of Secretary DST, Member
7.	Shri Rishi Pal, Under Secretary (Coordination), Nominee of Secretary MEA, Member
8.	Prof. V.K. Tewari, Director, Director, National Coordinating (NC) Institution, Member
9.	Prof. Budaraju Srinivasa Murty, Director, IIT Hyderabad(Special Invitee)
10.	Prof. Indranil Manna, Vice-chancellor of the Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Nominated Member(Reputed Academician from Public Sector)
11.	Prof. Virander S. Chauhan, Arturo Falaschi Emeritus Scientist, ICGEB. Distinguished Visiting Professor, University of Delhi, Nominated Member(Reputed Academician from Public Sector)
12.	Dr. S. Vaidhyasubramaniam, Dean - Planning and Development, SASTRA University, Thanjavur, Nominated Member(Reputed Academician from Private Sector)
13.	Prof. Rabibrata Mukherjee, National Coordinator (SPARC), IIT Kharagpur (Special Invitee)
14.	Prof. Siva Rama Krishna Vanjari, IIT Hyderabad(Special Invitee)
15.	Shri Rajeev Kumar Sinha, Under Secretary (ICC), Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education.
16.	Shri Aayush Verma, ASO, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education.
17.	Shri Atul Juyal, Liaison Officer(SPARC), Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education.