

Andhra Pradesh Higher Education Planning Board

- The Collective Wisdom

The experience of being a chairman of APSCHE gave me an opportunity to bring a lot of initiatives into my institutions with the only aim to provide the best quality education to my students. In the journey of implementing multiple initiatives in AP HEIs to enhance quality education, we observed that the Central universities and institutions, State universities, Private and Deemed to be universities are working in isolation in most cases without having formal relationships with other higher education institutions. The HEIs in both the categories have strengths, competencies and tremendous potential to grow and develop. Considering this, we established a higher education planning board to strengthen inter institutional relationships and mutual cooperation among state funded and private Universities established in Andhra Pradesh and to foster qualitative and inclusive growth of higher education institutions in the state.

For the first time in the country, all Higher Education Institutions functioning in the state are brought under one umbrella. The members of the Board are the Vice-Chancellors of all State Universities, Directors of Central Universities/Institutions and Vice-Chancellors of Deemed to be Universities and Private Colleges of Andhra Pradesh.

Promotion of quality standards in all Universities, colleges and institutions offering higher education in the state is possible only with the active involvement and participation of all the Universities and institutions functioning in the State. There were times when the universities didn't know each other's best practices but now with this initiative the doors are open to understand various benefits through collective efforts and bring in new initiatives. We started this board with 30 member institutions and now there are 56 member institutions in the Board. APSCHE conducts Board meetings once in every 4 months in association with any member institution. We created a platform share the best practices, enhance collaborations with each other and bring in several initiatives to benefit our students. The board since its inception in 2021, six meetings of the Board were conducted in Tirupati, Visakhapatnam, Anantapur and twice in Guntur. We divided all the higher education institutions into 05 Regional Cluster Groups (RCGs) in the state involving central and state institutions to work on the possible areas of collaboration and to suggest an action plan for promoting collaborative research in the multi-disciplinary areas.

APSCHE as an advisory and policy making body liaising with all the stakeholders thought about this collective wisdom to make policies, initiated a good number of reforms and received a great response from all the stakeholders. Each meeting revolves around a pertinent theme, generating valuable outcomes poised for policy implementation. The success of these initiatives is attributed to the active participation and contribution of all the members of AP HEPB. This is because when all the academicians are involved in planning an initiative, there is no way that initiative can go wrong. As a result, exchange of the best practices, research collaborations, faculty exchange, are ever increasing in the state HEIs. Today, many states are looking at AP state higher education best practices and taking as a model for quality education.

The APSCHE is actively fostering the advancement of Andhra Pradesh's higher education institutions by facilitating the creation of research proposals. Substantiated proposals stand the chance to secure research funding, with an allocation of 50 lakh rupees annually. This financial support is earmarked for five distinguished research projects, collaboratively devised by a minimum of three participating institutions. Each selected cluster is eligible for a grant of 10 lakh rupees, emphasizing a commitment to merit-based funding.

By providing this seed grant, APSCHE aims to promote interdisciplinary research culture. We received 52 proposals from the member institutions collectively. For example, IIT Tirupati and Agriculture University are working together on drone technology to improve agriculture practices. This transdisciplinary approach opens a platform for technical institution to collaborate with an agriculture university and a health university to collaborate with Horticulture University vice versa for collaborative research.

Another noteworthy initiative to promote research in HEIs is the proposed allocation of Rs.5 crores by APSCHE specifically for research, this signifies our commitment to cultivating a robust research ecosystem within the state's higher education institutions. This investment aims to fuel innovation, encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, and empower researchers to address pressing societal challenges. By providing ample financial support and resources, we aim to foster a culture of inquiry, discovery, and academic excellence, propelling our institutions towards the forefront of knowledge creation and technological advancement. Through strategic allocation of funds, we aspire to nurture a vibrant research community that contributes meaningfully to both local development and global progress.

This collective effort is going to give much needed direction particularly at time when there is a strong need to change Higher education.

----- Sangachadwam, Samvadadwam Samvo Manamsi Janatam -----

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