

## **Minutes of the IRDC Meeting held on May 6, 2013.**

### *List of members present:*

*Dr.A.K.Chaturvedi (DoRD, Chair), Dr.Y.M.Joshi, Dr. Anandh Subramaniam, Dr. K. Subramaniam, Dr.Pratik Sen, Dr.Rajesh Hegde, Dr.Anirban Mukherjee, Dr.Sumit Basu, Dr.Anjan Gupta, Dr. Rajeev Gupta, Dr.S.Panda, Dr.Sameer Khandekar, Dr.Tarun Gupta, Dr. Malay Banerjee, Dr.D.P.Mishra, Dr. M.S.Kalra (for Dr.P.Munshi), Dr. R.Vijaya (Convener).*

### **1. Announcements by DoRD:**

i) DoRD mentioned the issues he had shared with the Board members during his presentation to the BoG earlier in the morning. They were related to general R&D administration, need for more and specialized technical manpower, possibility of admission of project staff to PG degree programmes, and initiatives towards better industry interaction.

ii) DoRD brought up the Kakodkar Committee recommendation calling upon the IITs to provide the nation technology leadership in selected areas. For this to happen, there is a need to identify areas where IITK can take up leadership at the national level. Given the importance of the subject, DORD requested the IRDC to discuss it in this meeting itself, as the first technical agenda item.

### **2. Minutes circulated for the previous meeting were confirmed without any modifications.**

### **3. Discussion on areas where IITK can take up technology leadership at the national level.**

We need to identify technology areas where IITK is strong in research and hence, with appropriate institutional support, the institute could be in a position to provide leadership to national endeavours for eg. in space, defense, atomic energy or even to public sector and private companies working in these technologies. The two key issues are the process or the parameters which can help us identify such groups and the steps the institute can take to fortify or nurture the groups identified. Suggestions received for the first issue ranged from looking for multi-member groups, theme-based groups and selections based on publications / patents etc. For the second issue, one suggestion was to encourage the identified groups to seek larger funding from sponsors, with IITK committing some fraction, say 10-20%, of the external support sought. Members discussed it at length but given the complexity of the issues, it was not possible to arrive at a clear set of recommendations. A sub-committee was formed with Dr. Sumit Basu, Dr.Anjan Gupta, Convener IRDC and DoRD to recommend procedures for identifying such groups and suggest policy measures to support these groups.

### **4. Discussion on revising the CARE guidelines**

DoRD said that the CARE scheme has provided funding for the last several years for specialized research infrastructure. In the past there have been complaints about non-availability to other users, irregular maintenance of the equipment etc. Some complaints voiced by the members during the meeting included the requirement for matching grant from sponsored projects, higher-than-nominal charges for some services, and at times the non-availability of a transparent management system after the equipment is installed. It was pointed out that even though the LDA mechanism does address these issues, there is a need to strengthen the culture of sharing equipment.

The CARE funding is decided in Oct-Nov but often there are situations where additional funding becomes available in Feb-Mar. So, DoRD suggested that apart from CARE, a Standing Committee can be formed every year to look at proposals periodically, throughout the year, and make recommendations. Once recommended, the equipment may receive funding whenever a funding opportunity is available from the institute. In this context, several suggestions were received from members. Some of these were longer periods for the validity of the Standing Committee recommendations and more encouragement to the purchase of indigenously-built equipment. No final decision was taken on this agenda.

#### 5. Discussion on the Design Brief for the Research Complex.

DoRD informed that 21 firms had responded to the Call for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Architectural and Engineering Design Services for the Research Complex (RC). Out of these, 11 firms have been short-listed by the Scrutiny Committee. The short-listed firms will be provided the Request for Proposal (RFP) document. A draft RFP has been prepared by a consultant appointed by IITK for this purpose. It will be approved by the Users' Committee. An essential part of the RFP is the Design Brief. A draft of the Design Brief as prepared by the DoRD and the Convener was presented to the IRDC by the Convener. In the ensuing discussion, several suggestions were made regarding service areas, safe storage and transport of equipment within the building, handling of hazardous and non-hazardous materials, work areas requiring vibration isolation and shielding from electromagnetic interference, and freight elevators. These suggestions were incorporated in the Design Brief. The final Design Brief as approved by the Users' Committee later is attached. It was also decided that some IRDC members can visit a few of the specialized research establishments in India in order to provide better inputs to the selected firm.

The meeting ended with a Vote of thanks to the Chair.