

TIH-ICS (IIT Palakkad)

Ravi N Banavar (Member Secretary, TIH-ICS)

November 25, 2020

1st Hub Governing Board (HGB) Meeting Minutes

Technology Innovation Hub (TIH) - Intelligent Collaborative Systems (ICS) IIT, Palakkad

Date/Time: November 13, 2020: 1030 - 1200 hrs

The meeting was held online due to the prevailing Covid-19 situation. Following members participated in the meeting:

Prof. Sunil Kumar (SK), Ravi Banavar (RNB), Santha Kumar Mohan (SM), S. Srikant, Abhshek, Vijay Muralidharan
Dr. K. R. Murali Mohan, Mr. A. Karunakaran, Mr. M. S. Unnikrishnan, Dr. P. Sreekumar

The meeting began at 10.30AM with Chairman, Prof. Sunil Kumar welcoming the members.

1. The first item was an overall introduction and perspective of the TIH-ICS, the team members, its intended activities, mandate and management structure by the project Director, RNB.
2. The sanction letter from DST that described the initial installment of Rs. 7.25 crores, and a prescribed tentative budget of Rs. 100 crores for the proposed 5-year tenure of the TIH was also tabled.
3. The Certificate of Incorporation of IPTIF and the licence U/S 8(1) of the Companies Act 2013, the Memorandum and Articles of Association was then tabled. It was also mentioned that a savings bank account had been opened in Canara bank, IIT Palakkad Branch.
4. The two current members of the IPTIF Board are SK and SM. It was proposed to incorporate new Directors to the Board of IPTIF as mandated by the AoA. The new names are:
Dr. P. Sreekumar (Industry)
Dr. M. S. Unnikrishnan (Industry)

Prof. S.Srikant (Academia)
Prof. Abhishek (Academia)
Prof. Vijay Muralidharan (Academia)
Prof. Ravi Banavar (Project Director)

It was mentioned that the HGB would continue to be the apex body for all decisions concerning the TIH. A member requested to be informed about the specific mandates and functional roles of the HGB and the Board. All members without a DIN would be contacted by SM to arrange for this to be procured.

5. It was suggested bringing in a reputed firm since the reputation of the auditors would play a role when the TIH would go out seeking industrial funding and CSR. It was suggested that the auditors be informed to them that this exercise was affiliated to an educational institution, while quoting their rates. In addition, it was mentioned that the auditors must have experience in managing Section 80G - this is emphasized as a crucial point to be checked with the auditors.
6. The Section 8 company would be submitting the audited accounts to the Registrar of Companies (ROC), the quarterly/ annual returns. The latter has to be audited by either the IIT Palakkad auditor or any other certified auditor. DST may carry out its own independent audit. The details of the savings bank account opened are as follows:

Account name: IIT Palakkad Technology IHUB Foundation
Account no. 6174101001432

7. It was mentioned that the GST registration procurement had been put into motion. In response to a query on GST exceptions, the members opined that a section 8 company is not to be treated like a start up and hence it is unlikely to get any exemption. It was reiterated that the HGB was the apex body of the TIH, and that the Board of the Section 8 company could have significant overlap with the HGB composition. However, the notifications for each had to be separate. Going over the issues concerning the TIH so far, Dr. Murali Mohan mentioned that he had received the approval of the tripartite agreement (DST Mission, IIT Palakkad and the TIH) from the Ministry of Legal Affairs, and that it would be sent to the TIH by DST in a few days for signatures. He went on to state that it was recommended that a CEO head the Section 8 company and a faculty member be the Project Director. He moved on to specify that DST would specify the overall targets to be met by the TIH every year, and this would be the Mission's primary concern. To the extent that the TIH could subcontract projects to other institutes, industry and hubs as well, not only in Grant-in-aid mode but consultancy mode as well. TIH will make decisions on appropriations under recurring and non-recurring budget heads. Since each hub would need to be self-sustaining after 5 years, a roadmap towards meeting this objective needs to be drawn up as well.

8. It was recommended that the auditing firm be kept separate from the accounting firm, and recommended outsourcing the entire accounting procedure to a CA firm. It was decided to go slow on recruitment. Till such time, it was advised taking the services of personnel employed at IIT Palakkad for the required tasks, or outsource the work. It was also decided to pay special attention to the way the split up between CapEx and OpEx is made, and it was wise to keep a large OpEx budget and include maintenance into the procurement itself since this would not lead to inability to maintain equipment and infrastructure in the near term.
9. Since IIT Palakkad would have to rent out space, availability of space in BSNL buildings could be looked into. The host institute must also enter the financial details into PFMS and register at the section 8 company in Darpan portal. It was also mentioned that the DPR right now with the Mission Governing Board (MGB) waiting for their approval.
10. Regarding the revenue streams it was pointed out that with the currently projected revenue streams, with more than 20 % revenue from outside, the Section 8 may not be permissible for IT exemption from Gol rules.
11. Different committees to help smooth functioning of the TIH was then presented. As of now, four such committees were being constituted: (a) Academic committee (b) Procurement and infrastructure committee (c) Recruitment committee and (d) MoUs and international collaborations committee. Their composition is as found in the attachment.
12. On procurement and infrastructure, it was discussed if the TIH should follow the HI's norms or evolve its own rules. It was decided that the concerned committee could formulate this set of rules, bring it to the HGB and get it approved. The rules are to be formulated keeping in view that for timely delivery of projects a more flexible procurement process will be required for the TIH. The procurement committee will look into the GFR and see where modifications are required. It was suggested that all committees have atleast one member from the HGB since this would provide transparency in communication between HGB decisions and the deliberations of the committee. With this in view, it was decided to include Santha Kumar Mohan into the Academic Committee and Vijay Muralidharan into the MoUs and International Collaborations committee.
13. The particular mandate of each of the committees and their expected output, could be included in the minutes of this HGB meeting.
14. It was decided that in about a month's time each of the committees would be asked to come up with immediate action plans.
15. It was decided that the minutes of the HGB be prepared within 7 days and circulated to all HGB members, comments invited and then the minutes finalized. Further, a list of action items will be drawn up, which would then be discussed at the next HGB in the form of an action-taken report (ATR). He also suggested making this a regular practice, and recommended that the HGB meets at least once in a quarter.

Ravi N Banavar

Member Secretary, HGB

Project Director (TIH-ICS)

TIH-ICS

(with inputs from Santha Kumar Mohan, Vijay Muralidharan, Sukumar Srikant and Sunil Kumar)

Affiliation of Board Members:

1. Dr. K. R. Murali Mohan, Mission Director, NM-ICPS, Department of Science and Technology.
2. Mr. M. S. Unnikrishnan, CEO, IITB-Monash Academy.
3. Mr. A. G. Karunakaran, President and CEO, Multicoreware Inc.
4. Dr. P. Sreekumar, Satish Dhawan Professor, ISRO HQ.
5. Prof. Abhishek, Associate Professor, IIT Kanpur
6. Prof. S. Srikant, Associate Professor, IIT Bombay
7. Prof. Santha Kumar Mohan, Dean IC&SR, IIT Palakkad
8. Prof. Vijay Muralidharan, Assistant Professor, IIT Palakkad
9. Prof. P. B. Sunil Kumar, Director, IIT Palakkad
10. Prof. Ravi N Banavar, Professor, IIT Bombay (Adjunct Professor, IIT Palakkad)