EURAXESS LINKS
INDIA

Contents

1 Briefing I EURAXESS members: The Netherlands ............... 2
2 Hot topics I New co-funding mechanism to promote Indian participation under HORIZON 2020 ........................................ 6
3 In Focus I Meet Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, European Research Council (ERC) President ........................................... 9
4 In case you missed it... ........................................................................ 12
  4.1 From our Flashnotes (April-June) ..................................................... 12
  4.2 Event Outlook (July-October) ......................................................... 13
The Netherlands, often referred to as Holland, was created by the Dutch in the delta where three large rivers flow into the North Sea. Due to its strategic location, the country is known already for centuries for its international traders and the world’s first multinational corporation, which originates from the 17th century. Presently ranked 5th on both Global Innovation Index and Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016, the Netherlands offers a truly innovative and creative environment.

1. Netherlands’ Research, Development & Innovation System

Public Sector research institutions in the Netherlands consist of 14 universities, 18 KNAW Institutes, 6 Netherlands Organization of Scientific Research (NWO) Institutes, 5 Large Technological Institutes (GTIs), 14 TNO Institutes, and a number of other state owned research and advisory centres. All Dutch universities are ranked in the top 200 of Times Higher Education Rankings. Together, these universities and institutes form the backbone of the research and innovation landscape in the country.

In 2014, Dutch institutions published 72,000 publications, ranking 5th in the world. In terms of excellence (share of highly cited publications, top 10%), Clinical Medicine, Biomedical Sciences, Basic Life Sciences and Physics & Material Science were top research areas. The total number of European patents with Dutch origin in 2015 stood at a total of 1998.

1.1 Research Excellence in The Netherlands

The Netherlands is very successful in securing European research funding both from the Marie Sklodowska Marie Funding program (video) and ERC funding (video). In order to promote research excellence, NWO offers two types of funding – ‘Innovation Research Incentive Scheme’ for talented, creative researchers who engage in innovative research, which provides three types of grant (Veni, Vidi, Vici) geared to different stages in a researcher’s career and ‘Spinoza prize’ which is offered yearly to 3 or 4 excellent researchers, who stand out with groundbreaking research conducted in the Netherlands.

1.2. Recruitment Opportunities

The Dutch government follows a top sector approach where nine sectors have been identified as priority areas including Agri-Food, Horticulture, High-Tech, Energy, Logistics, Creative industries, Life Sciences & Health, Chemicals, and Water. The Government, private sector and academia together form a ‘Golden Triangle’ also known as ‘Triple Helix’ model, in which interactions among each other are highly encouraged. In the Netherlands, the private sector is a major contributor to overall R&D expenditure and there exist strong linkages between academia and industry.

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1 So called because KNAW acts as the umbrella organization for these institutes
2 Conducting applied research in aerospace, water management, hydraulic engineering, maritime research and energy research
3 TNO stands for Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research which is an independent organization focusing on applied science
1.2.1 Public Sector Recruitment Opportunities:

The Netherlands offers various recruitment opportunities for international candidates. All university research positions that are open to international researchers, are listed on the job portal [www.euraxess.eu](http://www.euraxess.eu) and [www.academictransfer.org](http://www.academictransfer.org). One can also visit [FOM Research vacancy](http://www.euraxess.nl) page, which lists vacancies available at FOM research institutes. Individual institutes also list such opportunities on their websites, further details can be found [here](http://www.euraxess.nl).

**PhD position**

The Netherlands is a very attractive destination to pursue PhD degree where it is not regarded as study but as serious research and PhD candidates are often paid. A PhD from Dutch university is highly regarded because of high academic standards. The Netherlands has an excellent international ranking for number of publications per researcher (2nd) and for the impact of research publication (4th). Almost all PhD positions are linked to a university, but PhD-candidates may find place at other institutes or even in industry. More information can be found here: [https://www.studyinholland.nl/education-system/degrees/phd](https://www.studyinholland.nl/education-system/degrees/phd).

1.2.2 Private Sector Recruitment Opportunities: (see Note 1)

Many Dutch companies, both large MNCs as well as SMEs, such as Philips, ASML, Xelvin, Cosine and OctoPlus among others are continuously looking for Bachelors, Masters and PhDs with specialist knowledge. To give an example, Cosine, which is high-energy optics specialist, recruits PhDs in physics from time to time. To apply, candidates should hold a PhD degree in physics related to high-energy optics with 3 years of experience in development and testing of high-energy optics during or after his/her PhD. For more information regarding this position, please contact Dipl.-Ing. Max Collon.

1.3 Funding Opportunities (see Note 2)

NWO provides [71 grants](http://www.euraxess.nl) for researchers, from PhD candidate level onward. **Veni** is a very attractive grant for international researchers, which allows those who have recently obtained their PhD to conduct independent research and develop their ideas for a period of three years. KNW has 15 funding instruments amongst which are the NIAS Individual Fellowships. These fellowships are provided to senior scholars with at least three years of post-PhD degree academic experience, who have already made a considerable contribution to their field. The aim is to carry out advanced research in humanities and social sciences through individual projects, lasting one or two semesters at the institute.

1.4 Important information for incoming researchers

The Netherlands belongs to the EURAXESS initiative that provides support to researchers and their families when coming to the Netherlands (in key areas such as visas, housing, schooling, etc.). EP-Nuffic is the national coordinator of the Dutch network. Additional information can be found at [www.euraxess.nl](http://www.euraxess.nl). The Netherlands has easy residence permit procedures (see on next page).

2. Research Cooperation with India

India is an important partner for scientific collaboration for the Netherlands. While access to large markets, availability of scientific and engineering pool and cost reduction opportunities remain the core reasons for India's popularity as an R&D destination, the Netherlands is recognised globally for its knowledge and
expertise in each of the top sectors and offers world class infrastructure to Indian researchers.

There exist strong bilateral ties between the two countries in research and innovation. The NWO runs bilateral calls with Indian funding agencies such as Department of Science & Technology (DST), Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Department of Electronics & Information Technology (DEITY).

### 2.1 Department of Science & Technology

DST is an important stakeholder for the Netherlands in India. So far, there have been three calls for proposals between NWO and DST, themes for which were: New Medical Devices for Affordable Health, Smart Grids and Functional Materials, under which a total of 11 research projects have been funded.

Under the joint call for medical devices, one project is worth mentioning – “An eye tracker perimeter – intuitive tool for affordable glaucoma diagnosis and screening”, where Sankara Nethralaya from Chennai and Erasmus Medical Centre from Rotterdam were granted funds.

The project has led to an improved prototype for fast screening of visual field defects, which can quickly test a visual field, has zero learning curve and is easy to operate by diagnostic personnel. The patient satisfaction has been reported high, both in Europe as well as in India. The success of the collaboration has not gone unnoticed, the Rotterdam – Chennai team has been approached by a multinational European consortium of industry and academia to participate in the development of eye tracker technology for a broader range of clinical applications.

### 2.2 Department of Biotechnology

DBT is another important stakeholder for the Netherlands in India. Apart from the joint call on plant sciences with NWO, where three joint projects were awarded, there exist several other collaborations with DBT in areas such as vaccines, neurosciences and HIV among others.

One innovative example of collaboration with DBT is the recent collaboration between the Dutch Technology Foundation (STW) and DBT on “Water for Health”. The idea is to set up an Indo - Dutch “Water Lab”, which will be a hands-on demonstration project that will help with the development of innovative, scalable, low cost technologies to clean one of the dirtiest drains going into Yamuna River in Delhi. A consortium of experts from academia and industry from India and the Netherlands will come together for this project to look at all aspects of reuse of water in areas such as agriculture, sanitation and healthcare. This is an ideal example of combining the Indian low cost innovation with the Dutch multi-disciplinary approach. For further information, please click [here](http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess).

For information on Indo – Dutch collaborations in Life Sciences & Healthcare space, please click [here](http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess).

### 2.3 Department of Electronics & Information Technology

DEITY and NWO have collaborated together in an interesting manner. The joint call between the two funding agencies on Big Data Analytics and Internet of Things was launched in the year 2013, with participation from industry as a mandatory condition. Under this call, five joint projects were launched in 2015. This is the first time that DEITY has launched a joint call with industry involvement, together with an international partner. The Dutch government is...
looking forward to replicate this model with DEITY and other funding agencies in the future.

3. Important Case Studies

Case Study I: Shell India Pvt. Ltd.
Royal Dutch Shell is one of the largest and most diversified international investors in India's energy sector among all global integrated oil companies. After the company's two R&D centres located in Amsterdam and Houston, it opened its third global R&D centre in Bangalore in India known as Shell Technology Centre Bangalore (STCB). India's large talent pool has been one of the drivers behind Shell’s decision to open its global technology centre in India.

NWO and Shell have come together for a joint fund (a PPP construction) where NWO funds 21 million Euro while Shell funds 24 million Euro. The aim is to attract 75 top students from India to do their PhD on different topics in the field of computational science for energy. NWO invites universities to propose PhD research within this knowledge domain. Shell then offers the graduates a job at their R&D centre in Bangalore. In this way excellent research is focused on actual needs of private companies.

Case Study II: “Developing and Implementing Smart Grids in India”

In 2014 NWO opened a call in the field of responsible innovation to encourage scientific research on topics where ethical and societal issues play a role. “Developing and implementing smart grids in India” is the project that resulted from this call.

Two research institutions, TU Eindhoven from the Netherlands and TERI University from India are working together with Dutch companies Rural Spark and PRE in order to investigate how smart grids can successfully be developed and implemented in rural India. In India, about 400 million people have no access to electricity. One of the measures of the Indian Government to address the energy poverty problem is the implementation of smart grids. While smart grids may not be new, this smart grids project funded by NWO is special: it is an interdisciplinary collaboration of scientists, businesses and societal stakeholders, both in India and the Netherlands. The focus of the project is not a matter of getting only the technology right: social embedding, ethical acceptability and institutional support are at least as important. By bringing the private sector, science and other stakeholders together, the consortium is able to develop innovative solutions which do not only have a business potential and can be commercialised in the future, but also have a high societal relevance.

4. Conclusion
If you are interested to learn about research opportunities or would like to have more information about the R&D landscape in the Netherlands, please contact the Dutch Embassy in India at delhi@nost-india.org.

Article prepared by the Dutch Embassy in India and EURAXESS in the Netherlands.
2 Hot topics | New co-funding mechanism to promote Indian participation under HORIZON 2020

The Indian Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the European Commission (EC) will jointly fund certain India-EU collaborative projects under Horizon 2020.

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly 80 billion Euros of funding available over seven years (2014 to 2020). It is widely open to foreign participation, and a good piece of news for Indian teams is that DBT recently agreed to provide them with co-funding in respect of specific calls for proposals under Horizon 2020.

Thanks to this agreement, Indian researchers, enterprises (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises-MSMEs), research institutions and universities will be able to team up with European partners to participate in collaborative projects under Horizon 2020 and make best use of Europe's excellent opportunities in research and innovation. Through participation in Horizon 2020, research teams can gain great benefits from access to excellent knowledge, access to research data and access and connection to world-leading scientific networks and research teams.

1. EU-India Co-Funding Mechanism for Research and Innovation Cooperation

While Indian participants (teams) are no longer automatically funded by the EC under Horizon 2020, the DBT and the EC have agreed to set up a co-funding mechanism to support joint projects between European and Indian universities, research institutions and companies.

Under this co-funding mechanism (CFM), a maximum of three crore rupees (INR 30,000,000 – i.e. about EUR 400,000) per project will be made available by DBT to successful Indian participants in joint collaborative projects with European partners under Horizon 2020.

In addition to the topics eligible for DBT funding under the CFM, Indian participation is welcomed in all calls for proposals of Horizon 2020, where Indian partners can participate with their own funds, or by relying on other sources of funding. (Exceptional EU funding may however be granted to an Indian team where the Commission considers that its participation is essential for the project.)

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4 This does not apply to individual Indian researchers receiving a Marie Curie fellowship (MSCA) or a grant of the European Research Council (ERC). Individual Indian researchers are eligible for funding under MSCA and ERC.

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2. Calls for proposals concerned

DBT has agreed – subject to their positive evaluation – to fund Indian participants in a number of calls for proposals of mutual interest, identified in a notice published on DBT web site:


Two of these calls were open in May and more will follow in July. The planned closing date for these calls is between October 2016 and February 2017. You don't want to miss visiting this address.

3. How does the co-funding mechanism work?

For a given call for proposals (amongst those identified in the notice), the co-funding mechanism/procedure will work as follows:

- The EU publishes its call for proposals under Horizon 2020 (on the "Participant Portal" – to which clickable links are included in the table included in the notice).
- Proposals are submitted within the applicable deadline; each proposal is submitted simultaneously both (1) to DBT by the Indian participant(s) only, and (2) to the EC on behalf of all participants.
  - The proposal submitted to the EC is a classical, complete Horizon 2020 proposal, fulfilling all Horizon 2020 requirements (it is thus extremely important that Indian participants as well are fully aware of all related administrative, legal and other aspects). The Horizon 2020 proposal has to be submitted online by the project coordinator – usually this role is played by one of the EU participants – on behalf of all participants, including Indian ones.
  - The proposal submitted to DBT must include (1) 'Part B' of the Horizon 2020 proposal and (2) a 'financial plan', i.e. an Excel table identifying the planned expenditures (in Rupees) for all Indian partners involved. This proposal is submitted to DBT,

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5 For instance, each proposal for a collaborative project ("Research and Innovation Action") under Horizon 2020 must be submitted by a consortium including at least 3 legal entities (from the public or private sector) from 3 different EU member states (or countries associated to Horizon 2020, such as Norway), as well as any number of additional participants from the EU or outside the EU, including India. On the DBT side, a key requirement is that funding is only available to public-sector institutions and MSMEs (including start-ups).


7 'Part B' is the research proposal as such, also called "technical annex", describing the scientific work to be conducted – as opposed to 'Part A' which relates to administrative data – see template: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/call_ptef/pt/h2020-call-pt-ria-ja_en.pdf#page=14
The proposals are evaluated by DBT and by the EC. For proposals positively evaluated by both sides, DBT provides research grants to the Indian researchers, while the EU funds the EU participants (under a "grant agreement" signed by all participants, including the Indian ones), enabling the project to start. In some cases, project participants can be required to sign an additional Consortium Agreement before the start of the project.

4. DBT's financial modalities

DBT funding will be granted for a maximum of three years, up to INR 30,000,000 (i.e. about EUR 400,000) per project. Indian applicants must refer and adhere to national/regional regulations and scientific remits as detailed by DBT. They may contact DBT to check their compliance with the national rules. Eligible costs depend on national regulations.

5. Conclusions

This co-funding mechanism represents a major opportunity for Indian research teams, as it financially enables them to participate in a number of Horizon 2020 projects.

A similar mechanism is currently being negotiated with the Indian Department of Science and Technology (DST), potentially extending the range of the calls for proposals concerned.

Articled prepared by the EU Delegation to India
In Focus | Meet Prof. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, European Research Council (ERC) President

Since its creation in 2007, the European Research Council (ERC) has awarded research grants worth nearly EUR 11 billion (INR 82,500 crores) to more than 6,000 scientists and scholars from all over the world, both early-career and senior, carrying out their ambitious research projects in all scientific disciplines. Of these, 33 are Indian researchers working in prestigious institutions across Europe. The ERC encourages more top Indian researchers to join the ranks of ERC grant holders.

Q: Prof. Bourguignon, what has brought you to India this time?

A: The ERC visit to India is part of the awareness raising campaign, "ERC - Open to the World", to promote the ERC to the global scientific community. This has two sides. Firstly, it is to foster relations with the country’s research funding bodies, and I therefore met with officials from Indian Ministries such as the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) and Department of Biotechnology of the Ministry of S&T (DBT) to discuss ways to promote greater scientific exchange between ERC grantees and Indian researchers. Secondly, it is a chance to increase the number of applications to ERC calls from researchers based around the World. I am always very eager to visit universities and research institutions, and talk to researchers about the science they do, but also to inform them directly about the ERC grants. That’s why I will go to the Indian Institute of Science, the National Centre for Biological Sciences and Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research during my week in India. I will also attend a EURAXESS Links India event in Delhi. Finally, I will participate in the meeting of the Global Research Council, a global discussion forum for heads of research funding agencies where we share best practice and learn from each other. At this year’s meeting, the two topics chosen as focal point are “Interdisciplinarity”, and “Equality and Status of Women in Research.”

What does the ERC have to offer researchers outside Europe? Does the international researcher need to be based in Europe to be an ERC grantee?

First and foremost, the ERC grants are appealing because researchers are totally free to propose topics they find the most challenging and to organise their support the way they find the most appropriate. The funding is substantial, both in terms of grant amount - up to EUR 2.5 million, or INR 18.6 crores - and in terms of length - up to five years. They are open to researchers working in all research disciplines. What’s more, the grants are very flexible and give researchers tremendous autonomy to pursue their scientific ideas. By now the "prestige" of the ERC label of excellence makes the grants coveted by
scientists. ERC grantees I meet often underline that the application process is very simple and user-friendly and that red tape is kept to a minimum. We want scientists to focus on what they are best at – doing science!

Researchers of any nationality, regardless of their current place of work, can apply for ERC funding, provided that they have a contractual relation with an institution based in Europe and are ready to spend at least 50% of their working time there. This means that – after being awarded an ERC grant - they can keep the affiliation with their research organisation in their country of origin, if they so wish, for the rest of the time. Several ERC grantees who moved to Europe have testified that leaving their country does not mean leaving their networks behind or burning bridges.

There are also other incentives for international researchers to apply for ERC funding, such as additional funds to cover start-up costs for those moving to Europe, amounting to up to EUR 1 million extra. What is also worth noting is that team members taking part in an ERC-funded project can be based in non-EU countries as long as it is justifiable and well explained in the candidate's application.

How important is it to the ERC to engage researchers working outside Europe in its funding schemes?

It is part of the ERC's mission to attract the best scientists from outside Europe. Top research is an intrinsically international endeavour. We know that bright minds exchange ideas across borders and continents, so we should let them collaborate freely to progress and to make ground-breaking discoveries. The ERC encourages such “brain circulation” and ultimately also aims to make Europe a prime location for top talent globally.

Does the ERC give priority to younger researchers? If so, how is this done?

Yes, the ERC is serious about early-career researchers. Two thirds of the overall ERC budget go to the most promising young minds. They should be empowered early in their careers and be given maximum scientific freedom. Top scientists with as little as two years of experience after their PhD are already eligible to apply for ERC grants.

Let me also point out that, on average, each ERC grant holder employs around six team members, of which many are post docs and PhD students. In this way, the ERC also supports a new generation of researchers. An estimate shows that around 17%, or some 6,500, of these team members are nationals of countries outside Europe. Nearly 1,000 of them are Indian nationals.

Participation of women as ERC grantees: Which percentage of the total ERC grantees (2007-2015) are female principal investigators? What is the ERC doing to attract promising female researchers to become grantees?

The ERC Scientific Council takes the view that women and men are equally able to perform excellent frontier research. Currently, around 21% of grantees are women; this lower share of women mirrors the overall situation in science in
Europe. It has created a dedicated Working Group on gender balance in 2008 to work towards closing the gap, without deviating from the principle of having scientific quality as its sole criterion for selection. The Working Group focuses on counteracting gender bias and encouraging more female scientists to apply for ERC grants. For example, to help female scientists who are mothers, the ERC allows them to have their eligibility window extended by 18 months per child, when applying for ERC funding. So for example, if a scientist has one child, and she obtained her PhD eight years earlier, she can still apply for a grant in the category of the youngest researchers (although the general rule is that only those who received their PhD between two to seven years are eligible).

Is it possible for researchers who do not hold an ERC grant to be associated with an ERC grantee’s team?

Yes, the ERC wants to encourage its grantees to engage even more with fellow scientists in the global research community and motivate international talent to take part in ERC-funded projects in Europe, in particular young researchers. As said, we believe in “brain circulation”. To inspire such global scientific exchange, the ERC has already a number of agreements (so called “implementing arrangements”) in place with renowned research funding agencies outside Europe to provide opportunities for early-career scientists to temporarily join research teams run by ERC grant holders. In 2012, the ERC launched the first of such initiatives with the US National Science Foundation (NSF). By now, agencies in another six countries on four continents have signed such agreements, namely South Korea, Argentina, Japan, China, South Africa and Mexico. And there are more countries lined up, so stay tuned!

Before we close this interview, do you have any tips for potential ERC grant applicants?

Plan it well in advance. Competition is tough, so take the time to carve out the best possible application. You also need to show in your proposal that your research project will push the frontiers of knowledge, and that it is not just incremental research. Before applying, ask yourself “what is it that is innovative about my project?”. I would also advise applicants to try to speak to ERC grantees in the same field of research who can share their experience and provide advice. Lastly, the researcher needs to apply with a host institution in Europe, so it is crucial to establish contacts and find one early on before applying for ERC funding.

Thank You Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon!
4 In case you missed it...

4.1 From our Flashnotes (April-June)
(click on the respective link for more details)

- Open Call: EU-India Joint S&T Call on Biobased energy
- Open Call: EU-India Joint Innovation Call on Bioeconomy
- Call Open: MSCA Individual Fellowships
- Webinar on “Research Fellowships in Europe” (MSCA Individual Fellowship)
- Survivor’s Guide to MSCA (IF)
- MSCA-IF Host Institutions in the Valencia Region (Spain)
- MSCA IF HI offer I Centre for Marine and Environmental Research (CIMA), Portugal
- Open Call: ERC Advanced Grants 2016
- New ERC video: Bringing great ideas to life
- Ikerbasque Research Professors: 10 positions for Senior Researchers
- 1st newsletter of the ‘EU Technical Cooperation for Environment in India’ project
- Save the date: EU-India STI Cooperation Days: Bioeconomy, 21-22 September 2016
- Falling Walls Lab India 2016 - Call for Applications now open
- Baillet Latour Health Prize 2017 - Neurological Diseases
- EURAXESS Science Slam India 2016 | COMING SOON!
- Two events (VSI & SEIS) by Startup Europe India Network in October 2016 (India)
- Startup Europe’s matchmaking services: ePlus – talent
- Zone Startups India
- MSCA-IF Host Institution offers in Bulgaria
- MSCA-IF Host Institution offer in Spain (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)
- Mobilitas Pluss mobility grants by Estonian Research Council
### Event Outlook (July-October)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event (click on event title for more details)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date (2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.1 Europe</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Events announced under Horizon 2020 website</td>
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<td>European Commission and Brokerage events</td>
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<td><strong>ESOF 2016</strong></td>
<td>Manchester, UK</td>
<td>22-27 July</td>
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<td><strong>6.2 India</strong></td>
<td>On-line</td>
<td>13, 14, 15, 16 July &amp; September (tbc)</td>
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<td>European Higher Education Virtual Fair India and South Asia - 2016</td>
<td>On-line</td>
<td>July-September</td>
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<td>EURAXESS Links India will be there</td>
<td>Banglore, India</td>
<td>30-31 July</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EURAXESS Science Slam India 2016</strong></td>
<td>CSIR-NIO, Goa</td>
<td>21-22 September</td>
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<td>Pre-selection</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EU-India STI Cooperation Days, Focus : Bioeconomy EURAXESS Links India will be there</strong></td>
<td>New Delhi and Bengaluru</td>
<td>17-20 October</td>
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<td><strong>European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) India 2016 EURAXESS Links India will be there</strong></td>
<td>Bengaluru</td>
<td>20 October</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Startup Europe India Network: Visit Startup India (&quot;VSI&quot;)</strong></td>
<td>Bengaluru</td>
<td>22 October (tbc)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Startup Europe India Network: Startup EU-India Summit (&quot;SEIS&quot;)</strong></td>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
<td>5 November (tbc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Communicating Science out of the Lab (EURAXESS event)</td>
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<td><strong>EURAXESS Science Slam India 2016</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Live finals</td>
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