

# Projects, solutions borne out of collaboration

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Representative image

COIMBATORE: Collaborations between industry and institutions have resulted in projects ranging from storage systems to smart pumps. Representatives of technical institutions in the city say industry collaborations have helped them in working on varied and diverse projects, as industries seek solutions for specific problems they encounter.

N R Alamelu, principal of Ramakrishna Engineering College, says industries approach them with problem statements, to which student groups, guided by faculty, try to find solutions. One such project was for Craftsmen Automation, where students had to design software for an automated vertical storage unit for shop floor. "The company took care of the hardware fabrication, while faculty and students from the college took up the software integration for the product, which is in the market now," she says.

Similarly, students from the Karunya Institute of Technology and Sciences have been working on developing a sensor to detect the presence of ground water for Salzer Electronics, said T V Christy, director of industry-academia collaboration of the university.

The Southern India Engineering Manufacturers' Association (SIEMA) has tied-up with PSG College of Technology to develop a smart pump. "The project cost is Rs 8.4 crore, of which 80% is given by the government and 20% is contributed by the industry. The institution would do the research and the end product would be tested and commercialised by SIEMA," said K V Karthik, vice president of SIEMA. Kumaraguru College of Technology (KCT) has also tied-up with SIEMA to work on a developing high-volume pump.

Several institutions also sign MoUs with industries to work on their projects. The nature of these MoUs is varied. "While many MoUs deal with research-cum-consultancy work, a few are related to knowledge transfer and transfer of technology for commercialising a product," says A Balachandran, deputy director of corporate relations, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham. He adds that the institution has around 50 active MoUs. "Most MoUs are related to sponsored research and providing solutions for industry problems and technical solutions in niche areas," he says.

Institutions are also working on projects of government bodies. Amrita has received several research projects from different entities of the Government of India, says Balakrishnan. "One project involves the Ministry of Defence (MoD), an industry giant and Amrita, under the Technology Development Fund Scheme (TDFS). It is aimed at providing solutions to a problem faced by para-military and armed forces," he says.

KCT, through its Kumaraguru Centre for Industrial Research and Innovation, has been carrying out advanced research projects for finite element method (FEM) simulation of spinning and deep drawing process, design of wind tunnel setting chamber and development of seeker head gimbal unit for DRDO, Hyderabad, says Ravi Kandasamy, head of program management office at the institution.