



IISc Alumni

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Panel Discussion on “Entrepreneurship or Employment - What governs the choice?”

The IISc Alumni Association (IIScAA), in collaboration with Students Council, IISc and Entrepreneurship and Innovation in IISc (EntIISc) on 9th April 2016, organized a Panel discussion at the Faculty Hall, Main building, IISc, Bangalore.



The five panelists were - **1. Ms. Shradha Sharma** - Founder and Chief Editor, YourStory.com, **2. Mr. Abhinay Choudhari** - Co-founder and Head of New Initiatives, Bigbasket.com, **3. Prof. Swami Manohar** - Senior Researcher, Microsoft Research Center (MSR) India, **4. Mr. Pavan Sriram** - Founder and CEO, ITTIGE Learning and **5. Ms. Vandana Suri** - CEO and Founder, TaxShe.

The session was moderated by: Mr. C. S. Murali, Chairman, Entrepreneurship Cell, IISc, Bangalore.

Specialty of the panelists is that they have either undergone a transition from employment to entrepreneurship (Ms. Shradha Sharma, Mr. Pavan Sriram and Ms. Vandana Suri), or from entrepreneurship to employment (Prof. Swami Manohar) or were serial entrepreneurs (Mr. Abhinay Choudhari). The two-hour scintillating session was an eye-opener for the audience with below topics.

1. When is it the right time to become an entrepreneur?

As per Panelists, it is today. They seem to believe that individuals who decide to become entrepreneurs

need to take a leap and must not keep thinking of the consequences. ‘Don’t Think!’ is what Mr. Pavan Sriram emphasized. Ms. Vandana Suri believed that the calling will come from one’s heart.



2. Which is the right idea to start a business?

‘Your idea should not be influenced by the division of blue collar or white collar jobs!’ was the view of Ms. Vandana Suri who started her venture by driving taxis for women herself and continues to do so. She also propagated the notion that ideas originate by listening. In Prof. Swami Manohar’s opinion, India lacked technology companies; however India was a leader in technology-enabled companies. And entrepreneurs can contribute by building deep capabilities to solve problems of larger communities.

He speaks from his background of founding technology companies, Strand LifeSciences and PicoPeta Simputers which are by Indians for Indians. He emphasized that IIScians have several advantages that include opportunities to understand deep technologies, opportunities to employ them to solve large and complex problems facing the country and the support of the Alma mater. Systems exist to facilitate implementation of their ideas.

From the Editorial Committee

Dear readers,

Bringing heterogeneous group of researchers together in harmony is essential for healthy future. This newsletter presents events in this direction in the form of panel discussion and celebrating Women's day, involving eminent scientists and industrialists from various fields. Topic of Entrepreneurship or Employment has been discussed to the core and well analysed in the panel, the conclusions of which were well conveyed to the audience. Women achievers from different career paths from Biocon to Infosys were involved in the Women's day activity. Plan for conducting TEDx@

IISc event is chalked out, which targets students and enthusiasts to enable self development. Search for Distinguished Alumnus as well as Honoring Gurus is on and selection process has started. In view of knowledge sharing, a few more expert talks will be arranged in the next quarter.

Please feel free to express your views about our newsletter by email to: iiscaanlg@yahoo.com.

H Sarojadevi, H K Anasuya Devi, S Ramachandra

(Panel discussion contd.)

Vandana Suri believed that the ideas keep evolving whereas change is constant. To evolve ideas and create business, Prof. Manohar's view point is that interactions among individuals who had deep knowledge of their respective disciplines, could help.

3. How should you fund your ideas?

All the panelists voiced that the true investment is through the idea. Prof. Manohar emphasized the use of grants instead of self - financing options so that entrepreneurs do not have to dilute their own stakes.

4. Is it that the inventors could be innovators or vice versa?

Neither the knowledge of Technology nor the knowledge of Economics nor the knowledge of Management can create enterprises. The ability to be sensitive to problems and the inclination to solve problems for others are the two most important pre-requisites for entrepreneurs.

5. When do you decide to quit?

Quoting Steve Jobs 'Make a dent in the universe', Prof. Manohar said when you think you have made a dent in the universe, you can quit. Abhinay was of the opinion that quitting is an individual prerogative- some individuals want to quit if it is profitable to start another business.

6. How do you select between the options of entrepreneurship or employment?

Ms. Vandana Suri very passionately said, " You need to listen to your heart - if it says employment: do it; if it says entrepreneurship: do it, and if it says shift: do that too". Continuing on the dent angle, Prof. Swami Manohar says if an employee or entrepreneur believes that making dent is possible, it must be done. Mr. Abhinay Choudhari says if you think you have an efficient solution to a problem and have the facilitating ecosystem to implement it in a system, then you should proceed. According to him, there is very little difference between entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs.



Conclusion: The moderator, Mr. C. S. Murali concluded the session on a positive note. Many more sessions of this kind need to be organized to dig deeper into various topics to capture the experiences of entrepreneurs.

WiSER Conclave

The IISc Alumni Association and IISc Family and Friends Forum under the able guidance of Prof. Rohini Godbole came together to celebrate 'Women in Science, Engineering and Research' in IISc. The first WiSER Conclave, organised on 2nd April, 2016 at Faculty Hall, Main Building IISc, brought together the women faculty, women students & alumni of IISc along with eminent women from both industry and academia. The intent of this conclave was to bring together achievers from women community, identify concerns on campus, deliberate on possible solutions and provide a roadmap for the future WiSER events. The idea was to awaken the society and impact policy changes at the institutional level.

Dr. Madhurima Das, Joint Secretary, IIScAA gave the welcome address. Prof. Rohini Godbole highlighted the thought behind WiSER and its mission. Prof. Anurag Kumar, Director of IISc and Patron of IIScAA delivered the opening remarks and introduced the Chief Guest & Key note speaker for the day, Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Chairperson and MD, BIOCON. Following this, there were two panel discussions.

The first Panel discussion was general in nature, moderated by Ms. Maya Sharma, Bureau Chief, NDTV. The panelists were as follows.

- **Dr. Meenakshi Bharath**, Renowned Gynaecologist
- **Ms. Geetha Kannan**, India Head and Managing



Director of Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology, ex- VP Infosys

- **Prof. P. K. Das**, Chairman, Division of Chemical Sciences
- **Prof. Sandhya Visweswaraiah**, IISc
- **Ms. Anuradha TK**, Programme Director, GEOSAT, ISRO Satellite Centre
- **Prof. Vijaylakshmi Ravindranath**, IISc
- **Ms. Richa Jani**, Student, IISc

This session highlighted the role of social perceptions impacting gender roles and how it is essential that girls come forward and become assertive in both their home and work environment. It was reiterated that it is essential to have women in 'real' decision making positions both in universities and organizations, not just adhere to 'token' representation, but giving importance to gender parity.



The second panel discussion was on Women in Science and Engineering. This was moderated by Prof. Kusala Rajendran, IISc. The participants in this were: Prof. Usha Vijayraghavan, IISc, Prof. Narayan Sundaram, IISc, Prof. Yogesh Simmhan, IISc, Prof. Nagasuma Chandra, IISc, Ms. Geetha Manjunath, IISc Alumni, Research Lab Manager at Xerox Research Lab India, and Dr. YVS Lakshmi, IISc Alumni, Head Marketing, CDOT.

In this discussion, the panelists shared their personal anecdotes. One of the points highlighted was that similar to the way a

man's identity is related to his work, it is essential that we give rightful place to woman's work identity. The aspect of the 'two body problem' was also discussed, where, spouses may find it difficult to work together in the same location and organizations may find difficulty in providing the right support in minimizing these issues.



Post lunch, a special session on 'Mantras for Success' was organized, where young women faculty from IISc and Young women from industry shared their ideas and experiences of success. This session was moderated by Ms. Kalpana Margabandhu, IISc Alumni, Director, ISL, IBM India (Retd). The participants in this were: Dr. Prerna Sharma, IISc, Dr. Vaishnavi Ananthanarayanan, Inspire Fellow, IISc, Ms. Suparna Bhattacharya, IISc Alumni & Distinguished Technologist, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, R&D Lab, and Ms. Manjula Kuri, IISc Alumni, Managing Director, Beyond Antibody, and Principal Investigator, Mazumdar Shaw Center for Translational Research.

The participants shared their successful moments in life and one of them succinctly put it, saying that she feels successful every moment of the day, with every action taken and every decision made.

The final session of the day was a Round table discussion where various challenges for women were discussed. The participants included IISc alumni, students, faculty, guests and IFF members. The round tables were on the following

topics - Work-life Balance, Women health, Gender bias at the workplace, Gender Parity, Women in Leadership and Gender Harassment.

While the various challenges pertaining to the above topics were deliberated upon, the solutions primarily focused on the below mentioned aspects:

- Create a mentoring system for women students
- Ensure regular health check-ups and regulate work with hazardous chemicals
- Provide day-care/crèche facilities on campus
- Provide a counselling cell and set up support groups across departments
- Ensure gender sensitization at all levels
- Equal involvement of men and women in decision making bodies
- Evaluation has to consider individual merit and unique skills that women bring with them
- Provide time-flexibility at labs, especially for women students with children. Provide work from home facilities.
- Provide healthy food at workplace

The session came to a closure with Ms. Pamela Kumar, Advisor, IFF summarizing the happenings of the day and Prof. Rohini Godbole announcing the WiSER Core group and the way ahead.



TEDx@IISc.

The IIScAA has always been at the forefront of organizing innovative events to connect the alumni of IISc Bengaluru with academics, entrepreneurs, practitioners and renowned thinkers. Continuing with this trend, IIScAA plans to organize the first ever independently organized TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) event at IISc Bengaluru called 'TEDx@IISc.' on the theme of Science to Society, which is tentatively scheduled to be held either in the month of November or December 2016. Considering the scientific nature of mind that every IISc.ian nurtures, IIScAA plans to bring together a vibrant mix of speakers who will share the stories of the challenges they encountered and of their inspiring achievements as part of TEDx@IISc. It features the contributions and experiences of scientists whose work and innovations had a positive impact on the larger community.

Fresh Initiatives for Life Membership of Graduating Students

During the convocation held on 25th June 2016 at the J. N. Tata Auditorium, IIScAA put up a stall. It was heartening to see the enthusiasm of parents and near relations of the graduating students at the grand finale. Mr.Veeranna Kammar, Assistant Registrar and staff from Academic Section, Mr. Sushant and student volunteers of the Students' Council all lent a helping hand to IIScAA in its effort by distributing the registration forms at the auditorium. They also exhibited a brilliant gesture in allowing Mr. Sivakumar Narayanaswamy,

our Executive Committee Member, to make a special appeal requesting students to provide contact details by signing-up the registration form.

Prof. Narahari's enthusiasm and keenness to check out on the success of IIScAA efforts were extremely encouraging and served as a great morale booster.

Dr. L. N. Satapathy, President, Mr. Mukunda, General Secretary, Mr. Sivakumar Narayanaswamy and Dr. Gnanamurthy were there all through to see that efforts of Mr. Satish, Ms. Gowri and Mr. Manjunatha, staff members of IIScAA, were well complimented. In short, the entire team put their very best, the result was spot registration of 72 students and 56 additional students signing-up the IIScAA Membership Form for enrollment as Life Members.

IIScAA acknowledges with profound gratitude and thanks Mr. Veeranna Kammar, Prof. Narahari, Dr. Ram Turaga, Mr. Sushant and student volunteers who helped us to make this effort a great success.

IIScAA heartily welcomes all the new registrants and looks forward to get all those who graduated at the Convocation to enroll themselves for Life Membership and thus stay connected with the Alma mater.

Announcements

The IIScAA new website with Payment Gateway integration is likely to become operational by the end of July 2016.

Upcoming Events

1. Science Forum Lecture Series

Speaker : **Prof. Tarun Khanna**, Harvard Business School, USA
Date : July 23, 2016
Time : 4.00 p.m.
Venue : Faculty Hall, IISc

2. Honouring Senior Gurus in September 2016

3. AGBM and Presentation of Distinguished Alumnus Awards on September 25, 2016

Appeal to Members and Membership Drive

Dear Friends,

IIScAA has grown over the years to its present status with the active help, co-operation and engagement of its distinguished alumni. A big thanks to all of you for making this possible.

Today, we have a Registered Membership of around 10,000 out of a possible 25,000 pass-outs. We require to create a “Master Alumni Database” of all the students graduated over the last 40-50 years. The IIScAA is actively pursuing a massive membership drive to double its registered strength. We firmly believe that it is a win-win situation once you decide to contribute and engage with alumni affairs.

The basic issue is that we are missing out on the contact details of a large number of alumni who are unable to register for Life Membership due to this disconnect. The advantages of having all alumni enrolled are numerous, particularly, in matters relating to :

- ❖ Student-centric affairs viz., Placement, Internship, Mentorship, Entrepreneurship, Industry related projects, Admission to R&D Organisations and Universities etc.
- ❖ Identification of Experts, Top-notch Professionals, Top- MNCs, Industries and R&D related Industries.
- ❖ Access to IISc facilities, library, guest house & more.

You all will be of immense help and value when we engage and interact on a continuous basis. It is in this context, that the IIScAA Committee strongly feels to connect to all of you.

We shall be grateful if you could help :

1. By enrolling as Alumni Association Members
2. By providing contact details viz., Mail ID, Address, Telephone Number, Location and Membership Status of your Batchmates from your Department and persuading them also to become alumni members on our behalf.

Our strength and activities centre around interaction amongst - Student, Alumni, Departments – Interface. We shall then connect all stake holders and act as facilitators. Dr K Gnanamurthy of our executive committee is leading the membership initiative.

So Friends, we hereby appeal to you to :

1. Become lifetime Alumni Association Members
2. Share with us contact details of your Batchmates
3. Tell us how you would like to participate in Alumni Activities

We will share the link of the updated IIScAA website. We request your help to serve you better.

The membership details are available at the link: <http://iiscalumni.com/about-us/membership.html>

We eagerly look forward to your kind action.

Dear friends, We appeal to all alumni to join hands with IIScAA, contribute liberally (even a 1% of your gross earning could help us to give a great thrust to this initiative). Please register your interest with the Alumni Association Office by sending an e-mail to: alumni@admin.iisc.ernet.in

We thank you for your gesture.

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