

## IIT-M to Forge a Pact with US Biotech Hub

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**Chennai:** In a first of its kind collaborative effort, researchers from IIT Madras may soon be working shoulder to shoulder with experts from leading biotechnology conglomerates and Google-funded startups in South San Francisco city. The city is known as a global biotech hub that houses companies like Genentech, Merck and Johnson & Johnson.

The city council of South San Francisco city represented by IIT-M alumnus Dr Pradeep Gupta has proposed a collaboration between the Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre (HTIC), a multi-disciplinary research and development centre at IIT-M, and life sciences firms in South San Francisco involved in cutting edge research in disciplines ranging from oncology to neurodegenerative diseases. The collaboration would be between three categories of companies and the university — startups, mid-sized companies looking to outsource R&D projects and bigger companies which require a fresh pipeline of drugs and technology.

“Once they zero-in on the companies based on the status of development in various projects, I will be able to present these companies with the collaboration opportunities on offer and we will start a dialogue.” Dr Pradeep Gupta, who served as the Mayor of South San Francisco city in 2017 is also keen for HTIC to sign MoUs

### HAND IN HAND



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with early-stage Google-funded startups like Verily and Calico, apart from traditional drug manufacturers looking to revive their product lines.

The head of HTIC at IIT-M, Dr Mohanasankar Sivaprakasam, said the centre is looking forward to the collaboration with global biotech giants specifically in the medical devices and technology space.

“There is a heavy density of companies in medical technologies in the Bay Area and also a large IIT alumni network so HTIC is really looking forward to forge this collaboration.”

There is currently some 11,000-member strong IIT alumni network around the Bay Area including advisors, angels and venture capitalists.