

Translating research to products remains a hurdle, say experts

The Hindu, dt: 1.3.2026, pg. no. 9

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Panelists at a webinar on 'The Innovation Bridge - Universities as India's new R&D Powerhouses' examined the roadblocks to translational research, and what industry seeks in order to have durable commercial advantage in research innovations.

"There is an innovation gap. The industry funds mostly the outcomes while academia funds early stages of innovation and research not done by the industry. Both approaches are rational but sometimes misaligned," said Mahesh Ramachandran, the founder of CIGS Tech Innovations and Partner Pontaq Cross Border Innovation Fund, Chennai.

The webinar was organised as part of a series titled 'Future Career Conversations' by the SRM Institute of Science & Tech-



nology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur, in association with *The Hindu*.

Krishnan Naganathan, innovation consultant and founder, Think Horizon Consulting LLP, Chennai, said the ability to convert concepts into commercial applications requires deep tech, and manufacturing and marketing expertise.

The speakers agreed that the conversion of academic research into a useful solution was the bottleneck, even though India was scaling its talent pool with a visible energy behind start-ups.

"India can think global for every sector today. There is no shortage of capable people or funds.

But we need guidance and direction for everyone to move beyond the services sector," Mr. Krishnan said.

University-led IPs (intellectual property) as a strategic asset is what institutions like SRMIST were building, representatives from the institute said.

"The announcement of establishing 100 labs inside academic institutions across the country by the government... is a step forward in that direction," said Shantanu Patil, director of Entrepreneurship & Innovation at SRMIST.

N. Venkata Sastry, director of the career centre at SRMIST, said, "The 100+ Professors of Practice hand-hold our research students, showing them the pathways that can actually lead to a product which can be protected with a patent or copyright," he said. The webinar can be viewed at newsth.live/THSRMTY