

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2827
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17/12/2025

Establishment of Rural Science Outreach & Innovation Labs in Odisha

2827. Smt. Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has assessed the need for dedicated Rural Science Outreach & Innovation Labs in aspirational and educationally underserved districts of Odisha including Balangir and Sonepur;**
- (b) the details of any proposals received from Odisha for setting up Atal Tinkering Labs., mobile science vans, or rural STEM incubation centres during the financial Years 2023–24 and 2024–25;**
- (c) whether funding support has been sanctioned for improving scientific temperament among school children in rural regions of Western Odisha and if so, the details thereof; and**
- (d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to expand community-based innovation programmes to enhance scientific literacy at grassroots level?**

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (CSIR-IMMT), Bhubaneswar, one of the constituent laboratories of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) which is an autonomous organization with Department of Scientific and Industrial Research is contributing effectively towards the S&T interventions of Nabrangpur aspirational district in Odisha.

(b) No proposal was received from Odisha for setting up Atal Tinkering Labs during FY 2023–24 and 2024–25 under Atal Innovation Mission of Niti Aayog.

(c) CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (CSIR-IMMT) is engaged in connecting school students with scientists through CSIR's "Jigyasa" (student-scientist connect) program across the State of Odisha. National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC) division of Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) is popularizing science, technology and innovation (STI) among school students in the age group of 10-17 years to inculcate scientific temper and introduce them to methods of research and innovation through its flagship program National Children Science Congress (NCSC), which is organized at district, state and national level. Atal

Innovation Mission (AIM) of Niti Aayog has setup 331 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) across the state of Odisha for improving scientific temperament among school children. A total fund of Rs. 43.36 crores has been disbursed to setup ATLs in the state of Odisha.

(d) The Technology Development and Utilization Programme for Women (TDUPW), a component under the Access to Knowledge for Technology Development and Dissemination (A2k+) scheme of Department of Scientific and Industrial Research aims to promote and support the adoption of new technologies, awareness creation and training of women at the grassroot level for deployment of technologies that reduce drudgery, improve their operational efficiency and empower them. The scheme supports technology upgradation in women-run MSMEs, SHGs and women entrepreneurs and facilitates showcasing and demonstration of technologies developed by scientific institutions. DSIR has set up Common Research and Technology Development Hub (CRTDH) under BIRD crf scheme at CSIR- Institute of Minerals & Materials Technology, (IMMT) Bhubaneswar and the lab is pursuing activities related to metal crafting to train artisans and provide technological interventions for smoke less brass melting furnace, improvement in melting, casting process of brass metal etc. A dedicated metal craft facility centre has been setup to provide support to artisans. CSIR-IMMT is also contributing to innovation ecosystem of Odisha through Startup Odisha recognized incubation center: Innovative Technology Enabling Centre (InTEC). Further, CSIR is running a program “Integrated Skill Initiative” at various levels across different CSIR

Laboratories, under which CSIR-IMMT has recently conducted skill development training programs on “bakery products preparation and its packaging” at Umerkote, Nabarangpur, Odisha and “Training in Earthenware & Terracotta Sintering” at Ratneswari Terracotta SHG located in Tondaguda village, Papdahandi block, Nabarangpur, Odisha. CSIR-IMMT also participated in the "VIKSIT ODISHA 2025"- Mega Exhibition held at Rairangpur, Odisha and showcased its innovative technologies & ongoing R&D activities to the local students & visitors.

Department of Science and Technology (DST) is undertaking programs to enhance scientific literacy at grassroot level for community viz. low-cost teaching aid workshops, Demystification of science, STEM demonstration activities, folk media programs for STEM awareness, industry visits and Samvaad program through mentor and mentee extended to teachers, students and general public. The fund disbursement details for FY 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 are given in Appendix 1.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog has setup Atal Community Innovation Centers (ACICs) to serve the unserved and underserved regions. These centers focus on "frugal innovation" and provide infrastructure, mentorship and community-oriented problem-solving spaces. Currently, 14 ACICs are fully operationalized across the country, with 01 in Odisha at GIET University Foundation. A total of Rs. 62.60 lakhs have been disbursed to GIET University Foundation. Further, in collaboration with UNDP India, AIM launched the

Community Innovator Fellowship to facilitate knowledge building and provide a platform for aspiring community innovators. This fellowship offers financial support and mentorship to youth to develop community-centric solutions.

Appendix - 1

Sl. No.	Project Details	PI/ Organization Name	Amount Sanctioned (in Rs)	F.Y.
1	Training of Teachers Through Low-Cost hands-on innovative methods of science teaching in physics to promote innovation amongst students of Odisha	Samanta Chandrashekhar Vigyan Club Balasore, Orissa	3551000	2023-24
2	Project proposal to exploring the science among tribal people to stop witch craft, Black Magic, Fire Burn Treatment of new born babies and sorcery practice through folk media drama and pala among tribals of Harichandanpur and Champua Blocks of Keonjhar District of Odisha	Society for Humanitarian Advancement with Key Technological Initiative (SHAKTI) Balasore, Orissa	3068000	2023-24
3	Project proposal for organization science drama festival to campaign for water conservation and rain water harvesting through folk media among the tribal & rural mass in the aspirational district as kalahandi in Odisha	ESWAR, Orissa	3230000	2023-24

4	Science awareness programs for social issues eradication through folk media in aspirational and underdeveloped district of Odisha	Socio Cultural Development Centre Jagatsinghapur, Orissa	2479500	2023-24
5	"Industrial Tour- A Recognition to Science and Technology for Students of under develop District (Angul, Mayurbhanj, Malkangiri, Gajapati, Rayagada & Kalahandi) of Odisha"	Socio Cultural Development Centre Jagatsinghapur, Orissa	3026400	2023-24
6	Project proposal for organizing folk media-based science drama festivals to campaign against major tribal health issues as malaria, TB and Malnutrition among the tribal population of Naupada, as Aspirational District in Odisha	Bihang Welfare Association Kalahandi, Orissa	3067200	2023-24
7	Science Awareness cum advocacy campaign among students and SC/ST community in scheduled areas for recent advancement in science technology	Development Action Society Foundation Balia, Orissa	2496000	2023-24

8	District and State Level Children Science Congress 2023 for Odisha	Dr. Ransing Nirmalendu Bharat Jan Gyan Vigyan Samiti Bhubneshwar, Orissa	1226500	2024-25
9	Project Proposal towards Implementing Samvaad Initiatives for the students to campaign for Developing safe drinking water habits so as to avoid diseases	Mrs. Shruti Singh ESWAR Kodapala, Orissa	3361920	2025-26