

PRESS NOTE

Subject: Hat trick of Gold Medals bagged by IISER Tirupati team and only Indian team in history of iGEM to be nominated for seven awards.

The iGEM 2021 team of IISER Tirupati has bagged a **Gold Medal** in the International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) competition for the third consecutive year making it a **hat trick** of gold medals in this competition.

The project, “**OviCloak: A Novel Contraceptive for Uterus Owners**” was also nominated for seven Track awards, the highest number of nominations for any Indian team in the history of iGEM; and the nominations were in the following categories:

1. **Best New Application**
2. **Best Safety and Security**
3. **Best Wiki**
4. **Best Education**
5. **Best Inclusivity**
6. **Best Integrated Human Practices**
7. **Best Sustainability**

The OviCloak is not just a project for competition but a vision to bring about a change in the society through concerted efforts. The project aimed to genetically modify the commensal bacteria of the fallopian tubes to produce an ovum-specific contraceptive molecule in a regulated manner. This is a non-hormonal approach to the spectrum of Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptives. The Institute will continue spreading the acquired knowledge to make this society a better place to live-in.

The iGEM team of 15 students from the Biology, Physics and Chemistry streams of BSMS 2018 & 2019 batches were mentored by Dr. Raju Mukherjee, Assistant Professor, Prof. G. Ambika, Professor, and Prof. B. J. Rao, Professor who has taken over charge subsequently as Vice-Chancellor, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

IISER Tirupati is proud of its students for this commendable achievement which involved deep commitment, hard work besides overcoming the challenges posed by the pandemic. IISER Tirupati in just its sixth year of being set up in 2015 has been able to attract some of the brightest young minds, who are leading this relentless quest for excellence in science.

The iGEM team gratefully acknowledges the invaluable guidance and support reposed in this young team of IISER Tirupati and also appreciated constant support, encouragement provided by Prof. K. N. Ganesh, Director, IISER Tirupati, and all faculty of IISER Tirupati.

Congratulations to the team IISER Tirupati for winning Gold Medal for the third consecutive time and making the Nation proud at the prestigious Global Competition iGEM 2021, for their synthetic Biology project on women’s health and empowerment highlighting inclusivity from all sections of the Society.