

Knowledge cluster to take up projects on ecology, health in region gets underway

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Pic for representation



Leading institutions will collaborate

Pune: The Pune Knowledge Cluster (PKC) will embark on several centrally funded projects that will be milestone-based to help mitigate problems in Pune city and the region.

This is among the first city-wide clusters approved on August 5 by the office of the principal scientific advisor to the Union government. Similar clusters for Hyderabad and Jodhpur were approved.

The projects will have a turnaround deadline of three years, but there will be six-monthly and yearly reviews to assess their progress. The goal is to connect organisations with a high-level of expertise in diverse domains such as science and technology, innovation and entrepreneurship, in and around Pune.

These include universities and colleges, research laboratories and national and state-level research and development establishments in Pune, and the leading industries based here.

Some areas that several leading institutions in Pune will collaborate on include en-

vironment management, health, electric mobility, among others.

Plans are to create a water grid for Pune. Similarly, there are plans to create an epidemiological database of Maharashtra to respond to Covid-19 like pandemic challenges.

"There will be newness in approach and focus," Ajit Kembhavi, principal investigator of PKC, said. The focus will be on short- and long-term innovative projects, development of policy framework and vision.

"Some projects will be to better reflect the local ecology. For example, Pune has a lot of trees, almost one every person but there is need to improve quality. There is need to focus on native trees," L S Sashidhara, co-principal investigator, PKC, said.

IUCAA has been designated to facilitate the project, and the funding will be dealt with by the office of the its director.