TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION IN KERALA

KEY INITIATIVES

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
GOVERNEMNT OF KERALA

THE KERALA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL

Dr. R. Bindu
Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education and Social Justice,
Government of Kerala

The Government of Kerala is committed to transforming higher education to meet global standards while ensuring accessibility, inclusivity, and excellence. Through strategic interventions, we have prioritized curriculum reforms, research advancements, and industry-academia linkages, equipping our students and institutions to navigate an evolving knowledge landscape.

A significant milestone in this journey is the implementation of the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP), which introduces interdisciplinary, flexible, and competency-based learning. KSHEC has played a crucial role in developing the FYUGP curriculum and regulations, conducting extensive faculty training, and streamlining university policies for its effective implementation.

We have also taken a major step forward by establishing seven Centers of Excellence, as recommended by the Syam Menon Commission, including the Kerala Institute for Science, Technology and Innovation, Kerala Institute for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities, and the Kerala Language Network. These centers will position Kerala as a leader in research, innovation, and knowledge.

Recognizing the importance of research and innovation, the government has launched the Kerala Network for Research Support in Higher Education (KNRSHE) and proposed Central Instrumentation and Research Laboratories (CIRL) across institutions. These initiatives, along with the Chief Minister's Navakerala Post-Doctoral Fellowships and emphasis on translational research, aim to foster a robust research ecosystem.

Bridging the gap between academia and industry is another priority. Initiatives like Connect Career to Campus, Technology Business Incubators, and Campus Industrial Parks are strengthening skill development, employability, and entrepreneurship. Ensuring equity in education, the Vidyatheeram scholarship for coastal students, targeted support for tribal communities, and the Scheme for Her Empowerment in Engineering Education (SHE) are enabling marginalized groups to pursue higher education, including international opportunities.

With Kerala's institutions excelling in national and international rankings, we are committed to strengthening faculty recruitment, infrastructure development, and digital learning. The Study in Kerala initiative will further enhance the global appeal of our universities. With unwavering dedication, we aim to build a knowledge-driven, globally competitive, and socially inclusive higher education ecosystem.

Prof. Rajan Gurukkal
Vice Chairman, Kerala State Higher Education Council

Kerala has long been recognised for its robust and inclusive higher education system which has played a crucial role in shaping the intellectual and socio-economic fabric of the state. In recent years, with a strong commitment to excellence, Kerala's universities and colleges have continued to make remarkable progress. Institutions from the state have secured commendable positions in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) and the various international rankings, further affirming the state's commitment to quality education.

The State's higher education sector has witnessed transformative reforms spearheaded by the Department of Higher Education, State Universities/ Colleges in academic collaboration with the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC). These initiatives are designed to enhance academic flexibility, research innovation, internationalisation, and institutional quality. These initiatives, under the guidance of a strong policy framework, are propelling Kerala's higher education sector toward a future that is inclusive, globally competitive, and research-driven. By fostering an environment that encourages academic excellence, innovation, and international collaboration, Kerala is setting a benchmark for higher education reforms in India.

KERALA'S HIGHER EDUCATION REFORMS

SCHOLARS AND EXPERT PANELS FOR ACADEMIC, EXAMINATION, AND GOVERNANCE REFORMS

The Government of Kerala has taken a significant step toward restructuring the higher education sector by appointing three expert commissions to recommend reforms in key areas. These commissions aim to enhance the quality, efficiency, and governance of higher education institutions, ensuring that Kerala remains at the forefront of academic excellence.

The Prof. Shyam B. Menon Commission has been tasked with suggesting comprehensive reforms in higher education, focusing on improving academic standards, research quality, and institutional development. This commission will evaluate current policies and propose strategies to modernize higher education in alignment with global best practices.

To address the need for examination reforms, the Prof. C.T. Aravindh Kumar Commission has been appointed to review and recommend improvements in assessment and evaluation systems. The commission will work on making examinations more transparent, student-friendly, and competency-based, ensuring that they accurately reflect students' knowledge and skills.

Recognizing the importance of effective university governance, the Prof. N.K. Jayakumar Commission has been established to reform university administration. The focus will be on streamlining governance structures, improving transparency, and enhancing institutional autonomy while maintaining accountability.

Additionally, the government has appointed a Curriculum Committee chaired by Prof. Suresh Das to suggest curriculum reforms. This committee will work on modernizing and updating academic programs to make them more interdisciplinary, skill-oriented, and aligned with contemporary global trends.

These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to holistic higher education reform, ensuring that Kerala's universities and colleges remain dynamic, innovative, and responsive to the evolving educational landscape.

INTRODUCTION OF FOUR YEAR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM (FYUGP)

ENHANCING HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH FLEXIBLE, MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND INDUSTRY-READY PROGRAMS

The Four-Year Undergraduate Program (FYUGP) introduced by the Kerala government represents a significant reform in the higher education system of the state. This new academic framework aims to provide a more flexible and comprehensive approach to undergraduate education, enhancing the learning experience for students and aligning with global standards. Designed to offer a deeper understanding of subjects, the FYUGP allows students to complete their degree in four years, with the flexibility to exit the programme after three years with a Bachelor's degree or continue to pursue an Honours degree by completing the fourth year.

The FYUGP incorporates a multidisciplinary approach, offering students opportunities to explore a broad range of subjects beyond their core discipline. It also emphasizes the integration of skills development, critical thinking, research, and digital literacy, aiming to produce graduates who are well-rounded and industry-ready. The programme focuses on enhancing employability through a curriculum that blends academic learning with practical training, internships, and work-integrated learning.

One of the key features of the FYUGP is the introduction of credit-based modules, where students can accumulate credits through courses, research projects, and experiential learning opportunities. This ensures a more personalized and self-directed learning experience, allowing students to tailor their education to their interests and career aspirations.

Additionally, the FYUGP fosters a student-centric approach to teaching and learning, with the use of digital tools and resources to enhance accessibility and engagement. By focusing on innovation in pedagogy and incorporating industry-relevant skills, the Kerala government's FYUGP initiative aims to transform higher education, making it more dynamic, inclusive, and aligned with the evolving demands of the global workforce.

WORK-INTEGRATED AND APPRENTICESHIP-EMBEDDED VOCATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS

REVISED B.VOC. PROGRAMS ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH PRACTICAL TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIPS

The three-year B.Voc degree programs in Kerala is being revised to align with the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP), offering students the flexibility to complete a B.Voc degree in three years or pursue a work-integrated or apprenticeship-embedded Honours degree in the fourth year. This restructuring enhances the employability of graduates by placing greater emphasis on on-the-job training and industry collaboration.

The curriculum of these programs prioritizes practical learning, with a significant portion dedicated to hands-on training, internships, and apprenticeships. This approach ensures that students gain real-world experience, making them industry-ready upon graduation. Higher education institutions are encouraged to establish incubation centers and startup companies within their campuses in collaboration with industries. These centers will serve as hubs for innovation, entrepreneurship, and skill application, fostering a culture of problem-solving and enterprise development among students.

By embedding vocational skills into a structured degree framework, this initiative aims to bridge the gap between education and industry requirements. The integration of apprenticeship-based learning will provide students with job-ready skills, positioning them for better career opportunities in diverse sectors. This reform reflects Kerala's commitment to a dynamic, skill-oriented higher education system, ensuring that vocational graduates are not only employable but also equipped to lead in innovation and entrepreneurship.

K-REAP: TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE IN KERALA

REVOLUTIONIZING HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE THROUGH INTEGRATED K-REAP SYSTEM IN KERALA

The Kerala Resources for Education Administration and Planning (K-REAP) project is a pioneering initiative by the Department of Higher Education, Government of Kerala, aimed at revolutionizing governance in universities and colleges through a comprehensive ERP-based system. Entrusted to the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) for implementation, K-REAP is set to streamline academic and administrative processes across higher education institutions in the state.

K-REAP provides a unified and integrated technology solution to enhance efficiency, transparency, and digital governance. The software features dedicated modules for key functions, including admissions, examinations, student lifecycle management, financial administration, and academic planning. By enabling seamless communication and real-time data access, K-REAP ensures improved decision-making and institutional coordination.

A core objective of the project is to facilitate a paperless, automated, and data-driven administrative framework, reducing redundancy and enhancing service delivery. With its user-friendly interface and customizable features, the platform is designed to cater to the unique needs of Kerala's diverse higher education landscape.

K-REAP also aligns with the broader vision of digital transformation in education, reinforcing Kerala's commitment to adopting modern governance practices in higher education. By standardizing workflows and ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks, it enhances institutional efficiency while supporting faculty, students, and administrative personnel. As the first of its kind in Kerala, K-REAP is a strategic step towards a technology-driven, transparent, and accountable higher education ecosystem, setting a benchmark for other states to follow.

SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH SUPPORT SCHEMES IN KERALA

KERALA'S SCHOLARSHIPS & RESEARCH SUPPORT: EMPOWERING STUDENTS AND FACULTY

The Government of Kerala has introduced several scholarship and research support schemes to promote academic excellence, encourage research, and provide financial assistance to students and faculty. These initiatives aim to strengthen higher education, research, and global academic collaborations.

1.International Travel Fellowship Scheme

To support faculty members and researchers in gaining global exposure, the International Travel Fellowship Scheme provides financial assistance for short-term research assignments at foreign universities. This initiative facilitates knowledge exchange, fosters international collaborations, and enhances the research capabilities of scholars from Kerala.

2. Research Grant for Engineering College Faculty

Recognizing the need to strengthen research and innovation in engineering education, the government has introduced a ₹2 lakh research grant for engineering college teachers. This funding will support research projects, technological advancements, and capacity building in engineering disciplines, enabling faculty members to contribute to cutting-edge developments in their fields.

2.Chief Minister's Vidhyarthi Prathibha Puraskaram

To encourage academic excellence among undergraduate students, the Chief Minister's Vidhyarthi Prathibha Puraskaram provides ₹1 lakh per year to 1,000 meritorious degree students. This initiative ensures that talented students receive financial support to pursue their studies without economic constraints, motivating them to achieve academic distinction.

3. Research Fellowship for Non-Funded Scholars

To assist research students who are not receiving any other fellowship, the government is offering a monthly fellowship of ₹10,000. This initiative ensures that research scholars can focus on their academic and research pursuits without financial difficulties, thereby enhancing Kerala's research ecosystem.

These scholarship and research support schemes demonstrate the government's commitment to fostering academic excellence, strengthening research, and creating a globally competitive higher education system. Through these initiatives, Kerala aims to empower students, researchers, and faculty, paving the way for a knowledge-driven and innovation-led future.

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS EMPOWER STUDENTS BY ENSURING FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND INCLUSIVITY

The Higher Education Scholarship Scheme, launched on January 3, 2010, aims to promote equity and excellence in higher education by providing financial assistance to students pursuing non-professional courses in universities and government/aided colleges across Kerala, ensuring that deserving students receive the necessary support to complete their undergraduate and postgraduate studies without financial barriers. Every year, the scheme disburses 3,000 scholarships for undergraduate studies and 1,200 scholarships for postgraduate studies, with 1,000 fresh scholarships awarded annually to first-year undergraduate students enrolled in full-time aided UG programmes in government/aided colleges and university departments, allowing eligible students to renew the scholarship annually up to the second year of postgraduate studies, ensuring continued financial support throughout their academic journey.

The number of scholarships allocated to each university is determined based on the sanctioned student strength across various disciplines, and the selection process is conducted online, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and accessibility in scholarship distribution. To promote social inclusivity, the scheme follows a reservation policy, with 50% of scholarships allocated to the general category, 27% to Other Backward Classes (OBC) below the creamy layer, 10% to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST), 10% to students from Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, and 3% to Persons with Disabilities (PC), ensuring that students from disadvantaged backgrounds receive adequate support to pursue higher education.

For undergraduate students, the first-year UG students receive ₹12,000 (₹15,000 for PH students), second-year UG students receive ₹18,000 (₹22,500 for PH students), and third-year UG students receive ₹24,000 (₹30,000 for PH students). At the postgraduate level, 600 scholarships are awarded each year, with first-year PG students receiving ₹40,000 (₹50,000 for PH students) and second-year PG students receiving ₹60,000 (₹75,000 for PH students).

By providing financial assistance and fostering equal educational opportunities, the Higher Education Scholarship Scheme plays a crucial role in enhancing access to higher education, reducing dropout rates, and promoting academic excellence, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder the educational aspirations of talented students across Kerala.

CHIEF MINISTER'S NAVAKERALA POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH IDEAS ON DEVELOPMENT GOALS OF THE STATE

The Chief Minister's Navakerala Post-Doctoral Fellowships were established to promote innovative research in key development sectors crucial to Kerala's future. These sectors include eco-diversity, agriculture, digital technology, genetics, climate change, and the preservation of Kerala's indigenous culture. The fellowships aim to support post-doctoral researchers by providing financial assistance ranging from ₹50,000 to ₹1,00,000 per month for two years. The initiative is designed to foster research that aligns with Kerala's growth strategies and long-term development goals.

The selection process is carried out through two modes. In Mode I, research centers of excellence shortlist candidates based on the demand for critical research areas in these centers. In Mode II, the Kerala State Council issues notifications inviting applications from eligible researchers. To streamline the application process, an online portal was developed, enabling easier submission of research proposals. Detailed guidelines were also published to help applicants understand the selection criteria. A selection committee, comprising subject matter experts, evaluates the proposals and conducts initial screenings to ensure that only the most promising projects are considered for further review.

The selection process involves preliminary screening by subject experts to assess the quality and relevance of each application. Shortlisted proposals are evaluated by expert panels based on merit, followed by interviews and project presentations to finalize the selection. The chosen post-doctoral fellows are tasked with research projects that directly contribute to Kerala's development priorities.

The expected outcomes of the fellowship are significant. The primary goal is to select high-quality research proposals that align with Kerala's long-term development strategy. These fellowships are intended to promote innovation in key sectors, ensuring Kerala remains at the forefront of research and development, driving sustainable growth and contributing to the state's overall progress.

KAIRALI RESEARCH AWARDS

AWARDS TO THE EMINENT SCHOLARS (KERALITE ORIGIN) WHO EXCEL IN THEIR RESEARCH WORK

The Kairali Research Awards, initiated by the Government of Kerala, aim to recognize and encourage outstanding research scholars and educators of Keralite origin in the state and abroad. Established in 2018, these awards are managed by the Kerala State Higher Education Council, which serves as the secretariat. The awards are divided into four categories: Gaveshaka Puraskaram, Gaveshana Puraskaram, Kairali Lifetime Achievement Award, and Kairali Global Lifetime Achievement Prize.

The Gaveshaka Puraskaram (₹5 lakhs) is awarded to doctoral students from Kerala who demonstrate innovative research potential in fields like Chemical Sciences, Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Social Sciences, and Arts & Humanities. The Gaveshana Puraskaram (₹25 lakhs) is for faculty members in Kerala's universities and colleges who excel in cutting-edge research. The Kairali Lifetime Achievement Award (₹2.5 lakhs) honors scholars within Kerala for their lifelong contributions, while the Global Lifetime Achievement Prize (₹5 lakhs) recognizes Kerala-origin scholars, both in India and abroad, for their significant work in Sciences, Social Sciences, and Arts & Humanities.

Since its inception, the awards have been distributed four times, with a total of 43 awards given to eminent scholars, scientists, and researchers. Recipients of the Gaveshana and Gaveshaka Puraskarams are also eligible for additional funding to support their research projects.

The selection committee comprises distinguished academics, including Dr. P. Balaram (Chairman), Dr. Prabhat Patnaik, Dr. E.D. Jemmis, and Prof. Satchidanandan, ensuring a rigorous and fair selection process. The awards are presented by the Hon. Chief Minister of Kerala in a ceremony organized by the Council, highlighting the state's commitment to fostering academic excellence and innovation.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The "Institutional Strengthening and Quality Assurance" initiative focuses on improving the overall academic standards of Kerala's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Key ongoing projects include the establishment of the State Assessment and Accreditation Centre (SAAC), which works towards continuous quality assessment. The "Brain Gain Database" aims to connect Kerala's academic diaspora, facilitating collaboration with global scholars. The "Cluster of Colleges Scheme" promotes networking among nearby colleges, enhancing academic exchange. Additionally, the "Erudite-Scholar in Residence" programme brings eminent scholars to collaborate with local institutions. The total expenditure for these projects is ₹21 Crores.

INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

TRANSFORMING KERALA'S HIGHER EDUCATION WITH WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

The Government of Kerala is making significant investments to enhance the infrastructure of higher education institutions, ensuring world-class facilities for students and faculty. Through the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB), ₹1,844 crore has been allocated for infrastructure development across various institutions. Additionally, under the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), 158 projects worth ₹532 crore are being implemented to modernize campuses.

These initiatives include the construction of academic blocks, libraries, laboratories, and international hostels, providing students with state-of-the-art learning environments. The development of advanced research facilities and technology-enabled classrooms further strengthens Kerala's position as a hub for quality higher education and research.

By prioritizing infrastructural growth, the government is ensuring that higher education institutions in Kerala meet global standards, fostering academic excellence, research innovation, and student success.

DIGITISATION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES & DEVELOPMENT OF KERALA ACADEMIC LIBRARY NETWORK (KALNET)
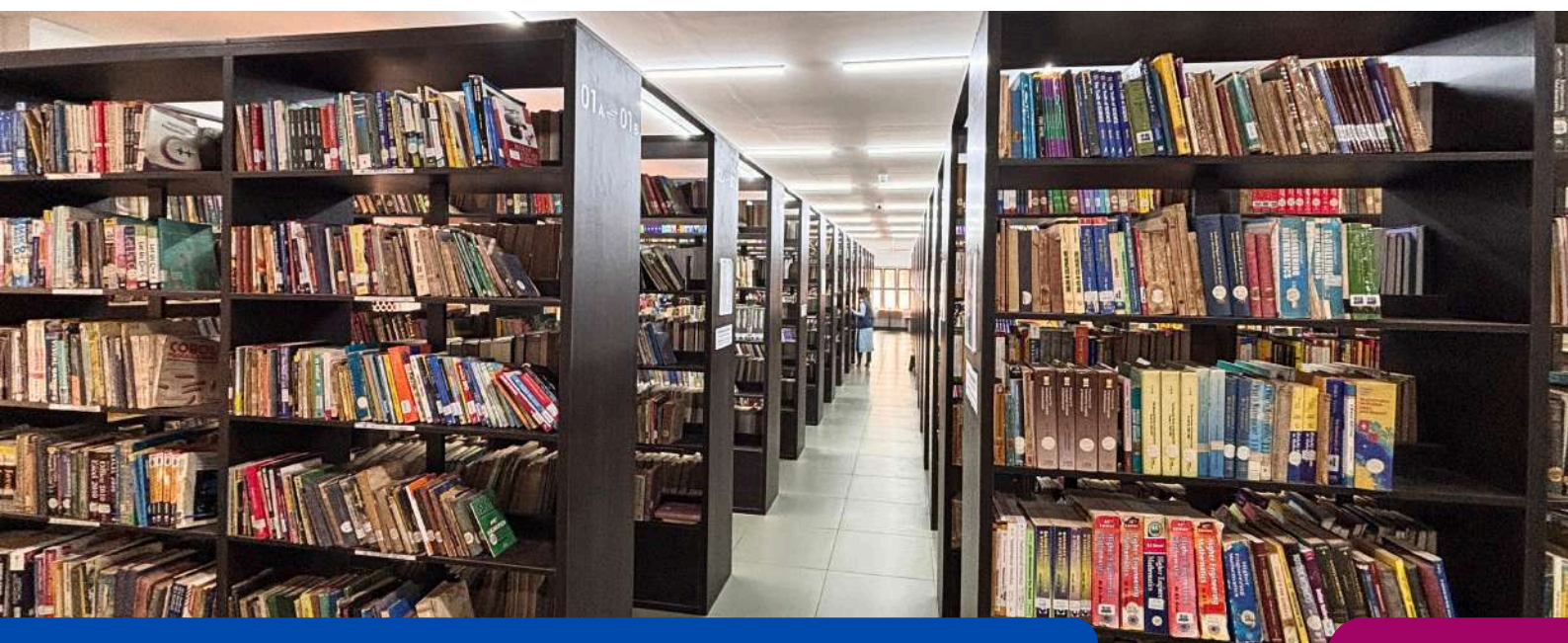
SEARCH INTERFACE FOR LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR THE STAKEHOLDERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The "Project for Digitisation of Library Resources & Development of Kerala Academic Library Network (KALNET)" aims to enhance the sharing and accessibility of educational resources across academic libraries in Kerala. It focuses on the collaboration of university and college libraries through a state-of-the-art digital interface.

The project is divided into phases, with Phase I focusing on laying the foundation for KALNET. A portal has been created on the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) website, which hosts the KALNET data on the state's data center. The participation of 14 universities and a networking effort involving 140 libraries has been completed. The project has also ensured that over 15 lakh collections are digitized. The committee of Vice Chancellors and Librarians has been involved in consultations.

The primary goal for Phase II includes extending the network to over 50 colleges, including major research institutions. The target also focuses on digitizing library resources and improving accessibility. During this phase, software and hardware installations, along with technical expertise, will be enhanced.

The project's outcomes are notable, including networking 200 libraries across Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and adding a vast library resource collection of over 20 lakh books. The initiative also promotes better resource utilization, enabling students and faculty to access valuable educational materials. Moreover, rare collections, manuscripts, and special collections are being digitized and preserved.

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN (EYL)

EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH WORK, LEARNING, AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

The "Earn While You Learn" initiative by the Higher Education Department Government of Kerala represents a pioneering effort aimed at fostering a value-conscious educational community and equipping students with vocational skills essential for financial self-reliance. Rooted in a cyclical model of integrating work and learning, the programmenot only promotes economic self-sufficiency but also catalyzes financial growth within society.

At its core, this initiative seeks to transform Kerala from a knowledge society into a dynamic knowledge economy. By encouraging students to engage in practical work alongside their studies, it not only enhances their academic journey but also nurtures their latent talents, paving the way for a secure future. This approach is particularly significant in Kerala, known for its high literacy rates but facing challenges such as unemployment.

Central to the success of "Earn While You Learn" is the discovery and cultivation of individual student talents. Through collaborations with experts in business administration and marketing, students are empowered to explore diverse career paths and entrepreneurial ventures. This exposure not only instills a sense of self-entrepreneurship but also imbues students with the skills needed to navigate the complexities of the modern economy.

However, implementing such a comprehensive programme is not without its challenges. Balancing the demands of work and study requires careful coordination between students, employers, and educational institutions to optimize learning outcomes without compromising academic standards. Moreover, securing sustainable funding and garnering support from faculty members are critical for the program's long-term viability and success.

Despite these challenges, the "Earn While You Learn" initiative stands as a beacon of innovation in education, demonstrating Kerala's commitment to holistic student development and economic empowerment. By fostering a culture of learning through practical experience and entrepreneurial spirit, it not only prepares students for the challenges of today but also equips them to shape the future of Kerala's economy with confidence and resilience.

E-JOURNAL CONSORTIUM

ACCESS TO E- JOURNALS FOR UNIVERSITIES & OTHER HEI'S

The "E-Journal Consortium" is an initiative aimed at enhancing access to e-journals for universities and other Higher Education Institutions in Kerala. The goal is to enrich the knowledge base and improve research output by facilitating access to e-journals from internationally recognized publishers.

In Phase I, consultations were conducted with Vice Chancellors, librarians, and key stakeholders to assess the e-journal requirements across various universities. The consortium's initial preparations included collecting and consolidating e-journal needs from universities, engaging with leading publishers, and establishing a tentative list of journals based on the requirements.

Phase II is focusing on negotiations with librarians and publishers to make the consortium functional. This phase aims to expand the consortium to include more publishers and e-resources, thereby increasing the number of journals available. It also focuses on extending access to colleges and other institutions, ensuring a broader reach and increased academic participation.

The expected outcomes of this initiative include improved access to e-journals and academic databases, which will significantly enhance the research capabilities of faculty and students. The increased availability of resources is expected to lead to better research output, thereby boosting the ranking of universities and institutions globally.

DIGICOL - DIGITAL ENABLEMENT OF HEIS IN KERALA

MOODLE-LMS IN INSTITUTIONS BY PROVIDING FREE CENTRALISED SERVER SPACE IN ASSOCIATION WITH DIGITAL UNIVERSITY OF KERALA

The "DIGICOL – Digital Enablement of HEIs in Kerala" project is a part of the "Let's Go Digital Scheme" aimed at implementing the Moodle-LMS (Learning Management System) across Higher Education Institutions in Kerala. The objective is to provide centralized server space to HEIs in collaboration with the Digital University of Kerala, enabling them to embrace digital learning tools and technologies.

In Phase I, the Digital Platform DIGICOL was developed for colleges, providing the initial infrastructure needed to support Moodle-LMS. Over 5500 faculty members from various university departments and colleges were trained as part of the Kerala Higher Education Development Centre (KHEDC) initiative. Additionally, server space for 23 colleges was provided at the Digital University of Kerala (DUK). Faculty members from 110 colleges were also trained under Institutional Training, and regular support to the enrolled colleges in order to align the goals of the programme.

The target for Phase II is to expand the server space to provide centralized facilities for 500 colleges and Moodle based LMS. Additionally, further acquisition of space at the State Data Centre is planned. The key objectives for Phase II include facilitating online education, improving faculty training, and boosting access to a wide array of resources, including virtual labs and open educational resources like MOOCs, edX, and Udacity.

The expected outcomes include improved blended learning, flipped classrooms, and enhanced online teaching and learning evaluation. The project also aims to bridge the digital divide and facilitate access to online resources. The Council provides both hands-on-training to the faculty members and LMS to the colleges.

ALL KERALA HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY

DATABASE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE STATE

THE KERALA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

ALL KERALA HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY (AKHES) REPORT 2021-22

March 2024

The All Kerala Higher Education Survey (AKHES) project aims to develop a comprehensive database of higher education institutions in the state. This database will include key parameters to evaluate and review the performance of the education sector across Kerala. The initiative aligns with the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), and the information collected will assist in policy-making and better institutional planning.

Phase I of the project included significant preparatory work, including the creation of state-specific features and a dedicated portal on the Kerala State Higher Education Council website. The online method for data collection was developed, and nodal officers were assigned in HEIs across the state. A detailed report on the All Kerala Higher Education Survey 2020 was also published as part of Phase I. The features developed during this phase allow for seamless data submission and retrieval.

Phase II includes several key activities aimed at enhancing the data collection process and expanding the scope of the survey. The targets include publishing the annual report for the All Kerala Higher Education Survey, focusing on the IT infrastructure, and structural facilities of HEIs in the state. Additional reports will cover online learning effectiveness, digital divide issues, and an IT survey for the government. This phase also aims to facilitate institutional planning for HEIs and ensure that the data is used for state-level educational development. The All Kerala Higher Education Survey report 2022 was also released by the Honourable Chief Minister of Kerala Shri. Pinarayi Vijayan.

The primary outcomes will include detailed reports on the effectiveness of online learning, IT infrastructure, and overall institutional planning in Kerala.

KERALA INSTITUTIONAL RANKING FRAMEWORK (KIRF)

A MORE REALISTIC RANKING FRAMEWORK OF HEIS IN THE STATE

The Kerala Institutional Ranking Framework (KIRF) is a structured ranking system designed to assess the quality of higher education institutions in Kerala. It aims to evaluate institutional performance, promote sustainability, and ensure equal access to education for all eligible individuals. Additionally, KIRF identifies potential institutional collaborations and helps improve rankings at both national and state levels. Developed on the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) model, KIRF ranks institutions across 12 categories, including Universities, Colleges, Engineering, Management, Architecture, Medical, Dental, Pharmacy, Nursing, Law, Teacher Education, and Agriculture & Allied Sectors.

An Oversight Committee, chaired by Prof. Gangan Pratap, Former Director of CSIR and Former Vice-Chancellor of Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), was formed to guide KIRF. The framework was officially launched on May 3rd, 2023, by Dr. R. Bindu, Minister for Higher Education and Social Justice, at C.V. Raman Hall, CLIF, University of Kerala, Kariavattom. A dedicated KIRF portal was also developed to streamline institutional data submission.

In its first edition, KIRF ranked institutions across six key categories: Universities, Colleges, Engineering, Nursing, Teacher Education, and Agriculture & Allied Sectors. KIRF' is committed to transparency, accuracy, and credibility in its ranking process. The framework ensures reliable insights for students, educators, and policymakers. Moving forward, KIRF aims to expand participation and enhance inclusivity, fostering continuous improvement in Kerala's higher education landscape.

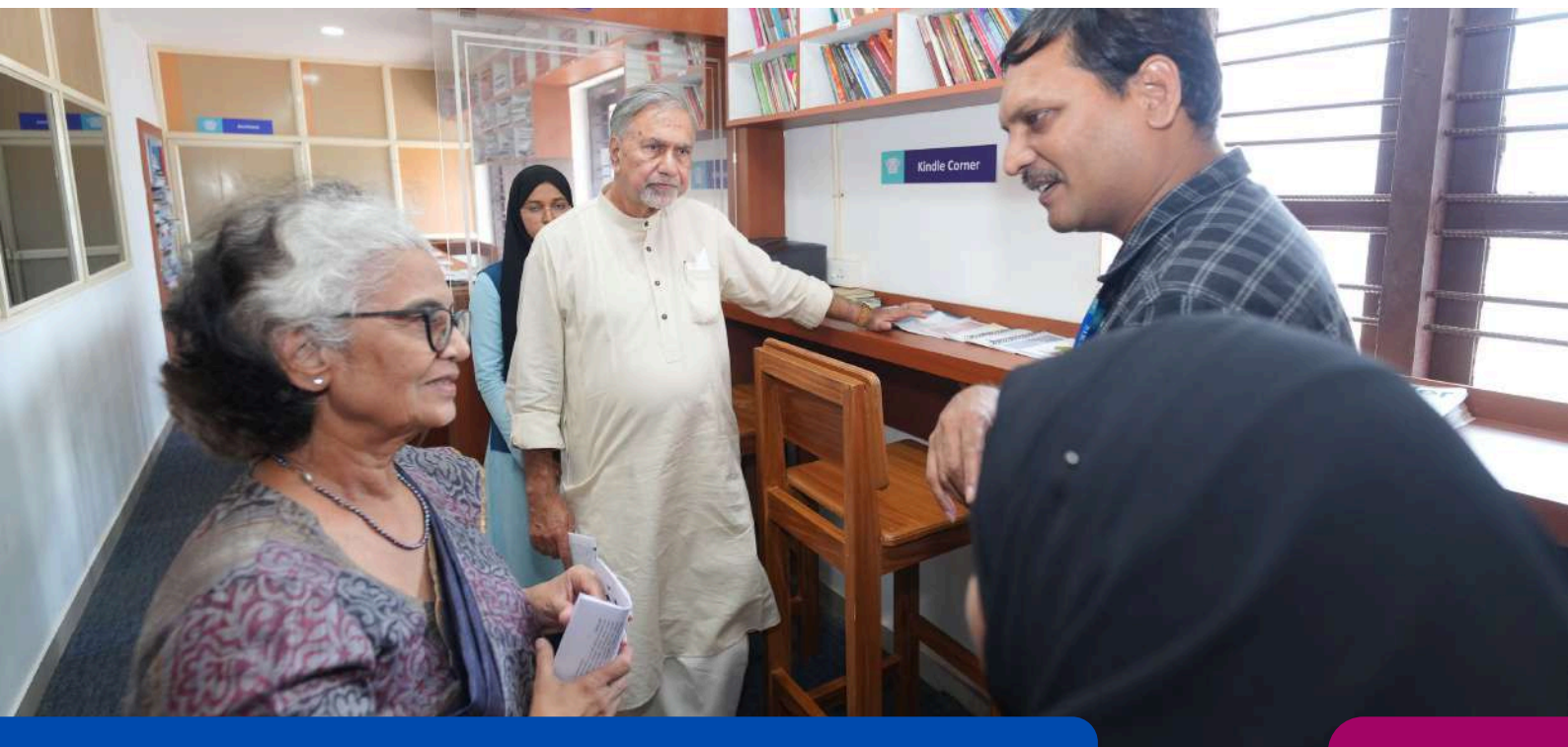# STATE ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION CENTRE (SAAC)

ENSURING LEVELS OF QUALITY THROUGH CONTINUOUS EVALUATION OF HEIS OF THE STATE

Kerala has become the first state in India to establish a State-Level Accreditation Centre (SAAC), similar to NAAC, to assess and grade higher education institutions (HEIs) based on state-specific criteria. This initiative aims to enhance the quality and performance of educational institutions by incorporating key state-specific metrics into their evaluation.

Phase I of the project focused on the development of state-specific criteria for assessment, ensuring that the local context and needs of Kerala's HEIs were addressed. An online portal for the SAAC was created, which is maintained and updated regularly. The peer team was constituted, and the first assessment was successfully completed, with grades awarded to the assessed institutions. Additionally, a comprehensive SAAC manual was prepared, setting guidelines and procedures for future assessments.

A key component of Phase II is the implementation of the PATH (Promoting Aspirant HEIs) scheme, which mentors institutions that have received a NAAC grade point of 2.5 or less. These institutions will be provided guidance and support through the Institutional Development Plan (IDP) process, aiming to enhance their quality. Furthermore, workshops for colleges will be conducted to assist them in preparing their IDPs.

The expected outcomes include the successful completion of the assessments for colleges, with an emphasis on institutional development and continuous quality improvement. Institutions will benefit from increased visibility, improved performance, and the development of a clear roadmap for quality enhancement.

BRAIN GAIN SCHEME

DATABASE ON KERALITE-ACADEMIC DIASPORA AROUND THE GLOBE

The Brain Gain initiative aims to establish a comprehensive database of Keralite academics, including scientists, social scientists, humanities experts, medical professionals, technocrats, and other specialists. These individuals, currently working in prestigious universities and research institutions worldwide, specialize in emerging fields of knowledge. The database will facilitate the utilization of their expertise for the benefit of Kerala's academic and research community.

An online registration portal facility was created on the KSHEC website, allowing scholars from around the world to register. A comprehensive database was developed, compiling details of Keralite academics working internationally in various fields. Additionally, a report was prepared to document the progress and structure of the database.

Initial phase of this was completed by 2022, focuses on further development and utilization of the database. The primary objectives of this phase was to include linking Keralite scholars with the "Erudite Scholars in Residence" program, arranging visits of scholars to state universities and colleges, and organizing online lectures or courses conducted by NRK (Non-Resident Keralite) scholars. The database will also be regularly updated and maintained, with the goal of establishing strong academic linkages between Keralite scholars and educational institutions in Kerala.

The anticipated outcomes of this initiative include the establishment of robust academic and research linkages between universities and Keralite scholars working abroad. This collaboration has brought many scholars from abroad and implemented academic and research activities in the Universities and selected research institutions in the State.

STUDY IN KERALA

ENHANCING GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Study in Kerala initiative aims to position Kerala as a globally recognized knowledge. This initiative seeks to enhance campus diversity across universities and colleges in the state while equipping local students with the skills necessary to thrive in a globalized academic and professional environment.

Key Focus Areas
- Efforts are being undertaken to enhance Kerala's presence as an international education destination.
- Strengthening academic programmes, research opportunities, and industry collaborations remains a priority to enhance Kerala's appeal to international students.
- Universities and colleges are encouraged to align their curricula with global standards.
- Comprehensive support mechanisms at the institutional level are being developed to improve the overall experience of international students.
- Collaborative initiatives with international universities, agencies, and governments are being pursued to facilitate student mobility, exchange programmes, and research collaborations.

The Study in Kerala initiative underscores the importance of a holistic approach that combines academic excellence, cultural engagement, and international collaboration. By strengthening these pillars, Kerala aims to emerge as a leading destination for higher education.

EXPANDING HORIZONS THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

TRANSFORMING KERALA'S HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH GLOBAL COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION

The International Conclave on Next-Generation Higher Education, held at the Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) on January 14-15, 2025, emerged as a pivotal platform for discussing transformative changes in Kerala's higher education landscape. The event attracted representatives from foreign universities, the World Bank, and OECD, alongside delegates from different parts of the country.

The sessions of the conclave focused on critical themes such as curriculum modernization, AI-driven education, increasing industry participation to enhance internship opportunities for students, prioritizing international study programs and research collaborations to ensure global learning experiences, training faculty in innovative teaching methodologies, and expanding international research collaborations, among others. Discussions emphasized fostering entrepreneurial skills, prioritizing international study programmes, and strengthening public-private partnerships to advance higher education.

As Kerala aims to position itself as a global player in higher education, the conclave's discussions and subsequent initiatives mark a significant step toward achieving this vision.

CLUSTER OF COLLEGES SCHEME

SHARING OF INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES AMONG NEARBY COLLEGES

The Cluster of Colleges Scheme is an initiative aimed at fostering collaboration and sharing of institutional resources among nearby colleges in Kerala. This scheme is designed to improve academic infrastructure and enhance educational outcomes by facilitating the exchange of resources between students and faculty from partner institutions. It aligns with UGC's vision of transforming clusters into semi-autonomous units that function like universities, thereby improving the overall educational ecosystem.

The Cluster of Colleges Scheme has successfully established three clusters in key locations: Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, and Kozhikode, in first phase. Various activities have been organized within these clusters, allowing the sharing of resources between the partnering colleges. These activities were aimed at improving the teaching and learning environment across the region. Additionally, a comprehensive handbook outlining the objectives and guidelines for the cluster scheme was released.

Second Phase, aims to expand the scheme by forming three additional clusters in different districts: Kannur Cluster with Government Brennen College as the lead college, Kasaragod Cluster with Government College Kasaragod as the lead college, and Palakkad Cluster with Government Victoria College as the lead college. Additionally, the Phase II objectives include establishing a common instrumentation facility and creating inclusive learning facilities across the three clusters.

Furthermore, there are plans to form a special cluster in the aspirational district of Wayanad, ensuring that resource sharing reaches even the most underserved areas.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The "Faculty Development Projects in HEIs" initiative focuses on enhancing the capabilities of faculty members across Kerala's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Key projects include induction training for newly recruited faculty, discipline-specific training aligned with the National Graduate Programme (NGP), and the redesigning of courses using Outcome-Based Education (OBE) principles. Additionally, short-term faculty development programs are organized to upskill educators. With a total expenditure of ₹8 Crores, these initiatives aim to improve teaching standards, encourage academic growth, and ensure the efficient delivery of modern educational practices across the state's institutions.

PROJECT ON OUTCOME BASED EDUCATION (OBE)

REDESIGNING OF COURSES OF UG/ PG PROGRAMS

The Redesigning of UG/PG Courses initiative aims to incorporate Outcome-Based Education (OBE) into the curriculum design and implementation in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Kerala. This approach focuses on defining clear learning outcomes for each program, ensuring that educational objectives are met and aligned with the Graduate Attributes required by accreditation bodies like NAAC, UGC, NBA, and AICTE.

In Phase I, training was provided to various Boards of Studies (BoS) across State universities and autonomous colleges in Kerala. The training aimed to familiarize academic staff with the principles of OBE and how it should be integrated into curriculum design. Additionally, institution-specific training was carried out in large number affiliated colleges, and a comprehensive handbook on Outcome-Based Education for Engineering and General Education programmes have been published to guide institutions through the process.

Phase II includes further training for faculty in universities and colleges, focusing on the creation of a taxonomy-based question bank for effective assessment particularly in the context of introduction of Four Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) in the State. The implementation of OBE will be encouraged at both UG and PG levels, with a specific focus on interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary studies. The universities have declared the Graduate Attributes or Programme Outcomes and integrate them into their curricula, along with the development of OBE software. Additionally, this phase will promote the adoption of activity-oriented learning opportunities, enhancing both teaching and learning experiences through various pedagogical approaches for experiential learning.

The expected outcomes of this initiative include the successful revamping of curricula at the UG/PG levels integrating FYUGP. The development of OBE software as part of the K-REAP and the implementation of OBE methodologies in teaching, learning, and evaluation processes.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (FDP)

SHORT-TERM TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR FACULTY

The Short-Term Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) initiative aims to provide faculty members with specialized training that enhances their teaching skills, pedagogical expertise, and knowledge in emerging academic areas. These programs, designed for university and college teachers, focus on areas such as online education, research methodology, and technical writing. The initiative is also aligned with the Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) for faculty promotions.

FDPs are being conducted by the Council with a total of 2500 faculty members trained. The topics covered in these programs included online education, philosophy of science, and the latest trends in teaching and research, bridging the disciplines etc. Eminent scholars and academicians led the sessions, ensuring the training was of high quality. These short-term courses, which lasted five working days, are recognized by most universities as equivalent to the UGC-prescribed FDPs for faculty promotion under the CAS scheme.

Trainings are focused on conducting various hand-son workshops for teaching faculty and education administrators. The objective is to expand the outreach of the FDPs and enhance the knowledge of faculty members in key areas such as ICT technology, research methodologies, and the integration of technology into teaching practices. Universities and colleges across Kerala will be encouraged to conduct these programs to further enhance the skills of their educators.

The expected outcome of this initiative is the successful delivery of high-quality FDPs, which will improve teaching standards and foster professional growth among faculty. The initiative will also contribute to enhancing the overall quality of education at Kerala's HEIs.

EXTENSIVE TRAINING AND ORIENTATION ON THE FOUR-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM (FYUGP)

KSHEC LEADS TRAINING FOR SMOOTH TRANSITION TO FYUGP CURRICULUM

The Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) has launched an extensive training and orientation initiative to ensure a smooth transition to the newly introduced Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) curriculum. This initiative aims to familiarize faculty members, university authorities, and higher secondary students with the revised academic framework, enabling them to effectively adapt to the interdisciplinary, flexible, and competency-based learning approach.

Over the past year, KSHEC has conducted numerous training sessions and workshops across universities and district headquarters. These sessions have played a crucial role in preparing educators for the structural and pedagogical shifts introduced by the FYUGP. Around 6,000 faculty members have already been trained, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement the reformed curriculum effectively. The workshops have also facilitated discussions on best practices, assessment strategies, and the integration of innovative teaching methodologies that align with the objectives of the FYUGP.

This large-scale capacity-building effort underscores KSHEC's commitment to academic excellence and policy implementation. By proactively engaging with educators and students, the council ensures that the transition to the new curriculum is seamless and beneficial for all stakeholders. The FYUGP's focus on interdisciplinary learning, research opportunities, and skill development will enhance the overall quality of higher education in Kerala, aligning it with global academic standards.

Through this initiative, KSHEC is fostering a robust academic ecosystem that empowers faculty and students to embrace transformative changes in higher education. By prioritizing faculty preparedness and student awareness, the council is laying a strong foundation for the successful execution of the FYUGP, ultimately contributing to the advancement of Kerala's higher education landscape.

ERUDITE-SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

PROMOTING GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE THROUGH ERUDITE SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

The Erudite - Scholar in Residence Program aims to bring eminent scholars, including Nobel Laureates, to interact with young researchers and students in Higher Education Institutions. This initiative fosters international academic collaboration, facilitates research excellence, and provides exposure to emerging global knowledge domains. The scholars across various disciplines have been invited to share their knowledge, leading to the establishment of academic collaborations with foreign universities. These engagements have generated significant research output, further strengthening Kerala's higher education landscape.

The program has been integrated with the Brain Gain Scheme, enhancing institutional linkages with the global academic diaspora. As part of this effort, the scholars of Keralite origin will be invited along with the international scholars for knowledge exchange.

The expected outcomes of this initiative include visits of many eminent scholars to state universities and colleges, where they will offer mentorship and deliver lectures. Research collaborations will be strengthened through active linkages with the Brain Gain Scheme, fostering meaningful academic partnerships. Furthermore, faculty members and students will benefit from enhanced international exposure and interdisciplinary research opportunities.

By fostering global knowledge exchange, elevating research standards, and encouraging institutional collaborations, the Erudite - Scholar in Residence Programme plays a crucial role in positioning Kerala's HEIs on the global academic map. This initiative not only enriches the local academic community but also ensures that Kerala remains at the forefront of cutting-edge research and higher education advancements.

CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN HIGH-DEMAND FIELDS

A Center of Excellence (CoE) is an autonomous institution established under the Department of Higher Education to enhance the quality of research and knowledge management in a specific sector. Each CoE focuses on a particular field of study, research, or practice and serves as a hub of expertise, innovation, and collaboration. By bringing together faculty members, researchers, students, and industry partners, the CoE fosters the advancement of knowledge, cutting-edge research, and the development of specialized education and training programs. It significantly contributes to the academic and professional activity of the state.

CoEs are expected to house top-tier human resources who will conduct high-level research while collaborating with university faculty and students, providing opportunities for collaboration and sustained guidance. They will create advanced facilities for experimental, observational, and computational work, accessible to faculty and students across the state. These facilities will support research in previously inaccessible areas and promote collaboration among institutions.

Additionally, CoEs will organize workshops, conferences, and other academic activities, fostering the development of human resources, curriculum innovation, and the creation of new facilities in universities and colleges. CoEs will also host sophisticated instrumentation and computational facilities, sharing these resources among institutions in a cost-effective manner, in line with international best practices.

Centre of Excellence for Teaching Learning and Training (CETLT)-KSHEC-CETLT

The Centre of Excellence for Teaching, Learning, and Training (TLT) aims to be a premier institution empowering educators and learners through innovative practices, enhancing higher education quality for sustainable development. It will promote excellence through professional development, foster research in pedagogical innovation, and facilitate collaboration among academia, industry, and global partners. The centre will support curriculum redesign to integrate critical thinking, research, and digital literacy. Additionally, it will generate insights to improve educational outcomes and establish partnerships with national and international institutions to share best practices in teaching, learning, and training, advancing educational standards worldwide.

Kerala Network For Research Support In Higher Education (KNRSHE)-KSHEC-KNRSHE

The newly launched KNRSHE will support teachers and researchers in securing research funds from various agencies, including private sources, to develop research infrastructure. It will provide research support, including grants for equipment maintenance, and offer state-level infrastructure through a networking/cluster model. KNRSHE will house shared, professionally managed services and advanced science and technology research facilities. Envisioned as an umbrella institute, it will connect multiple sub-centres across universities, colleges, and research labs. Any research centre or department with potential research facilities can be recognized as a KNRSHE associate sub-centre, fostering collaboration and innovation in research.

Central Network of Research Facilities (CNRF)

The Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) has launched the Kerala Network for Research Support in Higher Education (KNRSHE) to foster research and innovation. As part of this initiative, a Central Instrumentation and Research Laboratory (CIRL) will be established at the Government College for Women, Thiruvananthapuram, as a sub-centre of KNRSHE. The initiative will also integrate existing Centralized Common Instrumentation Facilities (CCIF) and facilities from nearby higher education institutions willing to associate with KNRSHE as nodal centres. Through an electronic network, the Central Network of Research Facilities (CNRF) will promote resource sharing, optimized infrastructure utilization, and enhanced access to advanced research facilities for the academic community.

Kerala Language Network (KLN)

The Kerala Language Network (KLN) aims to establish Kerala as a globally recognized hub for linguistic excellence, promoting multilingualism, cultural diversity, and innovation in language education and research. The Centre of Excellence for Languages, headquartered at the Malayalam University Campus, will serve as a key institution for enhancing the teaching and learning of Kerala's regional languages, along with other Indian and global languages. It will utilize innovative methods, state-of-the-art technologies, and interdisciplinary research to advance language education. The project envisions Kerala as a leader in linguistic excellence, contributing to the preservation of cultural heritage. The network will have sub-centers in Ponnani, Kannur, and Thiruvananthapuram, further extending its reach and impact across the state.

Kerala Institute for Gender Equality (KIGE)

The Kerala Institute for Gender Equality (KIGE), established at Sree Sankaracharya University, Kaladi, aims to make gender equality a reality through research, data, and best practices. Its goal is to redress inequalities in policies, services, and public interventions. KIGE will create a platform for gender mainstreaming, offering step-by-step guidance for integrating a gender equality perspective across the policy-making cycle, including areas like procurement and budgeting. The institute will share its research-driven knowledge and online resources, supporting state institutions, other states, and stakeholders in addressing gender inequalities within India and beyond.

Central Instrumentation and Research Laboratory (CIRL)

The Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) has launched the Kerala Network for Research Support in Higher Education (KNRSHE) to strengthen research and innovation. As part of this initiative, a Central Instrumentation and Research Laboratory (CIRL) will be established at Swami Anandatheertha Campus, Payyanur, Kannur University, providing state-of-the-art research infrastructure for faculty, researchers, and students. CIRL will serve Kannur University and other academic institutions, industries, startups, and R&D organizations, offering round-the-clock access to advanced analytical services. It will be integrated into a Central Network of Research Facilities (CNRF), fostering resource sharing and interdisciplinary collaboration, strengthening Kerala's research ecosystem.

Kerala Institute for Science, Technology, and Innovation (KISTI)

The Kerala Institute for Science, Technology, and Innovation (KISTI) will be established as an autonomous Centre of Excellence under the Department of Higher Education at Mahatma Gandhi University Campus. KISTI aims to enhance the research ecosystem and knowledge management in advanced scientific research and technology development. The CoE will serve as a hub for expertise, innovation, and collaboration, bringing together faculty, researchers, students, and industry partners. It will focus on cutting-edge research, specialized education, and training, contributing to the academic and professional advancement of Kerala's scientific and technological landscape.

Centre for Indigenous People's Education (CIPE)

The Centre for Indigenous People's Education (CIPE), established in collaboration with Calicut University, will be a transformative institution in Wayanad, Kerala, dedicated to addressing the educational, cultural, and socio-economic needs of the indigenous communities in the region. Wayanad, home to various tribal groups, has a rich cultural heritage, yet these communities face challenges in accessing quality education that respects their language, traditions, and worldview. CIPE aims to bridge this gap by offering inclusive and culturally relevant education, empowering indigenous populations and fostering a deeper understanding of their heritage while promoting sustainable development.

Kerala Institute of Advanced Studies (KIAS)

The Kerala Institute of Advanced Studies (KIAS) will be established as an autonomous Centre of Excellence, aimed at pioneering new directions in social sciences, humanities, languages, and arts. Designed to be a hub of expertise, innovation, and collaboration, KIAS will bring together faculty, researchers, students, and industry partners to advance knowledge and foster cutting-edge research. The institute will provide specialized education and training, contributing significantly to the academic and professional landscape of the state. By encouraging interdisciplinary approaches and collaboration, KIAS will become a key player in the intellectual growth of Kerala.

Kerala Centre for Analytical Services (KCAS)

The Kerala Centre for Analytical Services (KCAS) will be an advanced facility providing 24x7 instrumental analysis for industries, startups, researchers, and academic institutions. Two centres will house high-end analytical instruments, supporting research and innovation in scientific and industrial domains. While primarily serving Kerala, they may extend services to other states. KCAS will operate on a self-sustaining model, generating revenue to maintain and upgrade its capabilities. Over time, it aims to become a premier analytical hub, fostering research, industry collaboration, and entrepreneurship while advancing scientific and technological progress in Kerala.

Kerala Institute for Policy Studies (KIPS)

The Shyam B. Menon Commission proposes establishing the Kerala Institute for Policy Studies (KIPS) to promote research-based policymaking. KIPS will serve as a policy research hub, conducting in-depth studies on various policy issues while engaging in policy formulation and evaluation. It will generate evidence-based insights, focusing on Kerala's socio-economic and governance challenges. The institute will foster collaboration among academics, policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society to develop data-driven solutions. KIPS aims to create a policy ecosystem through interdisciplinary research, public discourse, and stakeholder engagement, ultimately becoming a center of excellence influencing state and national decision-making for sustainable development.

Kerala Knowledge Consortium (KKC) Centres

The Kerala Knowledge Consortium (KKC) Centres are envisioned as autonomous research and innovation hubs established within existing universities and colleges to address Kerala's pressing challenges through high-impact research and innovation. These centres will foster interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together academics, researchers, and innovators to drive knowledge-driven solutions for societal and developmental issues.

KKC Centres will be established only in institutions where a critical mass of quality academics and innovators is available in a specific domain. This ensures that the centres are built on strong research foundations and have the potential to make meaningful contributions. Over a five-year period, these centres will evolve into independent research entities, gaining recognition for their expertise and output.

A key aspect of the initiative is its sustainability model. Each KKC Centre will undergo a comprehensive evaluation after ten years to assess its ability to operate independently. The focus will be on research impact, innovation outcomes, industry collaboration, and financial viability.

By establishing KKC Centres, Kerala aims to build a network of specialized research hubs, strengthening its knowledge economy and ensuring that research efforts translate into tangible benefits for society and industry.

CENTRE FOR E-LEARNING AND E-CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

EMPOWERING EDUCATION THROUGH DIGITAL LEARNING

As part of the Kerala Digital Learning and Knowledge Network (KDLKN), the Centre for e-Learning and e-Content Development is being established in select universities to create a high-quality digital repository and offer credit-linked online courses for students. This initiative aims to support the newly implemented Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) in Kerala by ensuring that students have access to curriculum-aligned courses and high-quality digital learning resources.

The Centre will develop and curate engaging, accessible, and standardized digital content, making it available through a dedicated online portal. This portal will serve as a one-stop platform for students and teachers to access, download, and utilize e-learning materials.

In addition to content creation, the Centre will also focus on faculty training, equipping teachers with the skills to develop and integrate digital resources into their teaching. By fostering innovation in pedagogy, it aims to enhance blended and online learning experiences.

This initiative represents a significant step toward digital transformation in higher education, ensuring equitable access to quality education and empowering students and educators across Kerala with modern learning tools.

CENTRE FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSES AND CAREER PLANNING (CSDCCP)

PIONEERING HOLISTIC EDUCATION THROUGH SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN THE FYUGP AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH DIVERSE INSTITUTIONS

The Government of Kerala has mandated the establishment of Centres for Skill Development Courses and Career Planning (CSDCCP) in all higher education institutions, in collaboration with skilling agencies empanelled by the Kerala State Higher Education Council. These centers are designed to integrate skill development into the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP), ensuring that students receive industry-relevant training alongside their academic curriculum.

CSDCCPs will assist institutions in designing National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)-aligned skill courses by mapping them to appropriate Qualification Packs (QPs) and National Occupational Standards (NOS). They will provide access to certified trainers and assessors, ensuring high-quality skill training, assessment, and certification. This initiative will bridge the gap between education and employability, equipping students with the necessary skills for the evolving job market.

A key function of CSDCCPs is to facilitate faculty accreditation, enabling college faculty to become certified trainers and assessors within relevant Sector Skill Councils (SSCs). To achieve this, the centers will organize Training of Trainers (TOT) and Training of Assessors (TOA) programs in collaboration with SSCs. These programs will enhance faculty competency, ensuring that colleges have in-house trainers and assessors for various skill-based courses.
By embedding skill-based learning and career planning into the undergraduate education framework, CSDCCPs aim to create a structured pathway for students to acquire industry certifications, improve their employability, and explore entrepreneurial opportunities. This initiative will contribute to a skilled workforce, aligning Kerala's higher education system with national and global industry standards.

RESEARCH PARK

The Research Park is a state-sponsored initiative designed to harness the talent and expertise of universities and academic institutions. It provides a platform for research-focused companies to establish a base, fostering collaboration between corporate R&D, faculty, and students to drive innovation. By encouraging technology development and commercialization, the park creates research and educational opportunities while bridging the gap between academia and industry. It supports startups, facilitates knowledge transfer, and accelerates advancements in various fields. This dynamic ecosystem enhances the probability of successful innovations, ensuring that academic research translates into real-world applications and contributes to economic and technological growth.
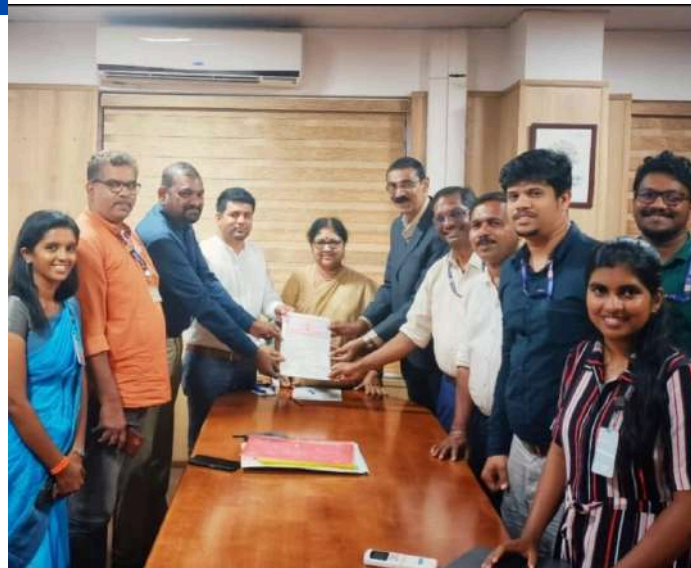

CONNECT CAREER TO CAMPUS

Connect Career to Campus (CCC) is a campaign that promotes the concept of 'Right Job @ Right Time' by raising awareness about new-age jobs, changes in global job markets, the importance of skilling, and encouraging students to find the right career. It intends to reach out to higher-educational institutions, ensuring that aspirants receive curative measures such as skilling and grooming, as well as access to suitable career opportunities.

INDUSTRY ON CAMPUS

Industry on Campus is a flagship programme of the Government which set up as per AICTE norms and implemented in Polytechnic Colleges across the State and fosters collaboration between industries and academic institutions. The initiative is intended to instil the spirit of industry dynamics, drive technology and business innovation among the students. Introduction of the concept of IOC in technical institutes and hand holding them to initiate various industry relevant activities were done effectively by Additional Skill Acquisition Programme (ASAP) and later by Directorate of Technical Education.

The primary objective is to encourage the practical application of theoretical aspects and instil entrepreneurship and product innovation among students. This is achieved by exposing them to the real industry atmosphere within the institution, fostering the spirit of 'Earn while you Learn' and 'Learning through Experience.

PERFORMANCE OF KERALA'S HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS

KERALA'S UNIVERSITIES EXCEL IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC RANKINGS

Kerala's higher education institutions have consistently demonstrated academic excellence in national and international rankings, reflecting the state's commitment to quality education and research.

Two of our leading universities, University of Kerala and Mahatma Gandhi University, have achieved the prestigious A++ grade from NAAC, while Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), and Calicut University hold an A+ grade. Kerala also boasts 42 colleges ranked among the top 200 in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). Additionally, our universities have consistently been positioned in the top 10 among state universities in NIRF rankings.

Kerala's universities have also performed competitively in international rankings, further establishing the state as a hub for quality higher education and research. These achievements underscore our unwavering focus on academic excellence, faculty development, and student success on a global scale.

JOURNAL HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

ADVANCING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION PRACTICES

The SAGE journal "Higher Education for the Future," published by the Kerala State Higher Education Council, serves as a pivotal platform in the academic landscape, focusing on the dynamic evolution and challenges within higher education. This scholarly journal is dedicated to fostering critical discourse and advancing research in education policies, pedagogical practices, and institutional frameworks relevant to both local and global contexts.

With a commitment to excellence and innovation, "Higher Education for the Future" explores a wide array of topics crucial to the advancement of higher education. These include but are not limited to, educational technology integration, curriculum development, assessment methodologies, faculty development, and student engagement strategies. The journal embraces interdisciplinary perspectives, encouraging contributions from scholars, educators, policymakers, and practitioners worldwide. Each issue of the journal features peer-reviewed articles that present cutting-edge research, theoretical insights, and empirical studies. It aims to provoke thought, stimulate debate, and offer practical solutions to the multifaceted challenges facing higher education institutions today. By showcasing diverse perspectives and methodologies, the journal contributes to the continuous improvement and adaptation of educational practices in a rapidly changing global landscape.

Furthermore, "Higher Education for the Future" maintains a high standard of academic rigor and relevance, ensuring that published content meets the criteria of scholarly excellence. It serves as a valuable resource for academics seeking to stay informed about emerging trends, innovative practices, and policy developments shaping the future of higher education both locally in Kerala and beyond. The journal is put under Q-1 category and it is the top in the country in Humanities and Social Sciences sector. The journal plays a pivotal role in advancing the frontiers of knowledge in higher education, promoting collaboration and exchange of ideas among stakeholders committed to enhancing educational outcomes and societal impact.

TOP SCOPUS QUARTILE 1 RANKING

MAGAZINE- HIGHER EDUCATION MATTERS

A MAGAZINE SHOWCASES THE UPDATES AND DEVELOPMENTS OF STATE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR AS WELL AS THE GLOBAL TRENDS AND INNOVATIONS IN THIS SECTOR

The Kerala State Higher Education Council has launched a a monthly magazine 'Higher Education Matters', dedicated to exploring the dynamic and evolving world of higher education in Kerala. This publication aims to be a trusted platform for insightful analysis, in-depth reporting, and expert perspectives on the policies, innovations, and challenges shaping the sector.

Higher education is a cornerstone of societal progress, fostering knowledge, skills, and leadership. The policies governing this sector have far-reaching implications, affecting not only students and educators but also Kerala's economic and cultural development. Through this magazine, we strive to shed light on critical issues, providing a balanced, fact-based perspective on the evolving educational landscape.

Each issue will feature comprehensive articles on key topics such as policy reforms, funding mechanisms, curriculum innovations, and technological advancements. Our team of experts and contributors will present diverse viewpoints, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of both challenges and opportunities in higher education.

Beyond being an informational resource, Higher Education Matters serves as a platform for dialogue and engagement. We will feature interviews with policymakers, educators, and students, amplifying the voices of those shaping the future of higher education. Opinion pieces will foster debate on pressing issues, encouraging a community of informed and engaged readers. The road ahead presents challenges, from budget constraints to evolving job market demands. Our mission is to equip readers with strategic insights and practical solutions to navigate these complexities effectively.

Annual subscription charge is Rs.1000/ for 12 issues and Rs.100/- as cover price.

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NITI Aayog

EDUCATION ACROSS INDIA

State-wise Higher Education Enrollment 2021-22

KEY INSIGHTS

GER National Average 28.4%

Top Performers

- Tamil Nadu
- Himachal Pradesh
- Uttarakhand
- Kerala
- Telangana

Map values:
- Ladakh 11.5
- Jammu & Kashmir 24.3(22.8)
- Himachal Pradesh 43.1(24.8)
- Chandigarh 64.9(42.2)
- Punjab 27.4(23)
- Uttarakhand 41.8(31.1)
- Haryana 33.3(28)
- Delhi 49(38.9)
- Arunachal Pradesh 36.5(21.3)
- Sikkim 38.6(28.2)
- Rajasthan 28.6(18.2)
- Uttar Pradesh 24.1(17.4)
- Bihar 17.1(12.5)
- Assam 16.9(14.7)
- Nagaland 18.8(15.8)
- Meghalaya 25.4(17.4)
- Manipur 35.4(30.2)
- Gujarat 24(16.5)
- Madhya Pradesh 28.9(18.5)
- Jharkhand 18.6(9.9)
- West Bengal 26.3(13.6)
- Tripura 20.7(12.4)
- Mizoram 32.3(19)
- Chhattisgarh 11.8(10.4)
- Odisha 22.1(16.6)
- Dadra & Nagar Haveli Daman & Diu 11.2(6.4)
- Maharashtra 35.3(26.3)
- Telangana 40
- Goa 35.8(23.5)
- Andhra Pradesh 36.5(29.9)
- Andaman & Nicobar Islands 22.6 (12.3)
- Karnataka 36.2(23.8)
- Lakshadweep 1.1(11.5)
- Tamil Nadu 47(40)
- Puducherry 61.5(38.3)
- Kerala 41.3(21.8)
- 40
- 24.8(22.8)

Source: AISHE 2011-12 & 2021-22

Follow **'NITI Aayog'** Channel for more updates

Kerala among highest spenders on higher education per youth, says NITI Aayog report

It acknowledges the State's Gross Enrolment Ratio of 41.3%, well above the national average of 28.4%. The policy document on *Expanding Quality Higher Education through States and State Public Universities* also lauds State's digital-learning initiatives, including *Let's Go Digital*

Sarath Babu George
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala continues to be among the highest spenders on higher education per youth, according to a recent NITI Aayog report on the state of higher education in India. The State's innovative digital-learning initiatives have been singled out as the report's sole 'State good practice.'

The policy document on *Expanding Quality Higher Education through States and State Public Universities* highlights a concerning trend on education funding.

Despite the 14th Finance Commission's recommendation to increase tax devolution to States from 32% to 42%, this rise has not led to a corresponding increase in education spending. Moreover, the report points to a decline in both the growth of expenditure on higher education and the share of education spending by States between 2005-06 and 2019-20.

However, the report notes a positive trend in the average spending on higher education per youth, which rose from ₹2,174 to ₹4,921 during the period. It cites a 2022 report by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, which notes that Telangana and Kerala spent the highest amounts on higher education per

What the **report says**

- Kerala and Telangana spent highest amounts on higher education per youth in the 18 to 23 age group
- Kerala allocates 3.46% of its Gross State Domestic Product to education, with 0.53% specifically directed towards higher education
- Tamil Nadu leads with Gross Enrolment Ratio of 47%
- Decline in both growth of expenditure on higher education and share of education spending by States between 2005-06 and 2019-20
- Kerala has highest Gender Parity Index in country—1.4

youth in the 18 to 23 age group, followed by other South Indian States, including Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

In terms of overall investment, Kerala allocates 3.46% of its Gross State Domestic Product to education, with 0.53% specifically directed towards higher education.

The NITI Aayog report also acknowledges Kerala's impressive Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 41.3%, well above the national average of 28.4%. Tamil Nadu

leads with a GER of 47%. The report also emphasises that increasing the number of universities alone does not guarantee higher student enrolment, thereby highlighting the importance of utilising existing resources effectively.

Gender parity

Besides, Kerala has the highest Gender Parity Index (GPI) in the country—1.44, which the report stated, reflects a strong gender balance with more female students than male. The national GPI stood at 1.01. States such as Kerala, Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh have higher female enrolment rates than males, serving as "models of success for

greater access to higher education for women."

Digital learning

Kerala's *Let's Go Digital* initiative, launched in 2021, has been highly praised. The project, a collaboration between the Kerala State Higher Education Council and Digital University Kerala, focussed on training in model-based development and content creation.

Other successful projects such as the *Digicol* initiative, which developed customised syllabi to promote a tech-driven pedagogical approach, have also been recognised for their contribution to transforming education in the State.

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNEMNT OF KERALA

THE KERALA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL