



Confederation of Indian Industry

CII National Forum On Industry–Academia Partnership

Date: 10th April, 2026

Platform: Online (Microsoft Teams)

The CII National Forum on Industry–Academia Partnership 2026 convened over 100 senior leaders from government, industry, academia, and research institutions to advance India’s innovation agenda through stronger collaboration.

The discussions reinforced a shared view that India’s innovation journey will depend on how effectively the quad – industry, academia, research institutes and labs, work together to create scalable, outcome-driven partnerships. The dialogue moved beyond intent, focusing on actionable priorities to strengthen the national innovation ecosystem.

Highlights from Eminent Speakers

- **Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman (CEO, ANRF)** emphasized the need to build a robust national research ecosystem and accelerate **lab-to-market translation** of innovations, supported by strong funding and institutional frameworks.
- **Prof. V. Ramgopal Rao (Group Vice-Chancellor, BITS Pilani)** highlighted the importance of **systemic integration between academia and industry**, with a focus on research relevance and long-term collaboration models.
- **Mr. Aniket Gandhi (Head – R&D, Innovation, Strategy & Operations, HUL)** underscored the role of industry in shaping **future-ready talent pipelines** and aligning academic output with evolving business needs.
- **Mr. Dutta Kuvalekar (COO, Forbes Marshall)** shared insights on **advanced manufacturing and operational excellence**, stressing industry-led innovation and adoption of emerging technologies.
- **Dr. Avantika Tomar (Partner, EY)** provided perspectives on **strategic collaboration frameworks**, policy alignment, and scaling innovation through structured partnerships.

- **Prof. Balan Gurumoorthy (Director, FSID, IISc)** emphasized the need for **deep-tech research collaboration** and stronger academia-led innovation contributing to national priorities.

Key Outcomes

- Consensus on institutionalizing **industry–academia engagement frameworks**
- Strong push for accelerating **commercialization of research**
- Commitment to co-develop **future-ready talent aligned with industry demand**
- Recognition of the need for **trust-based, outcome-oriented partnerships**

Way Forward

CII will continue to play a catalytic role by enabling policy advocacy, global collaborations, and sustained engagement platforms. The forum marked the beginning of a more structured approach toward translating dialogue into **measurable outcomes and long-term partnerships** for national impact.