

Business Standard

Great Lakes Institute to open university in Sri City in 2 years

The institute will offer a five-year integrated engineering and MBA programme to begin with

[Great Lakes Institute](#) of Management is planning to open a university at Sri City, a planned integrated business city located 55 km North of Chennai, in the next two years.

"We are going to build a Great Lakes University in Sri city. We will buy 30 acres of land at subsidized rates from the state government and it will be up and running in the next two years. It will come up next to the Indian Institute of Information and Technology (IIIT) Hyderabad," said Bala V Balachandran, Founder, Dean and Chairman, Greak Lakes Institute of Management.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has sanctioned this land at a subsidised cost to the institute.

The Indian Institute of Information Technology, Sri City, in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh is one of the 20 new IIITs being set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Public Private Partnership with AP government and [Sri City](#) consortium, with IIIT Hyderabad as the mentor institute. The IIIT campus at Sri City is spread over 70 acres.

SriCity has been able to sign around 30 memoranda of understanding, worth Rs 8,000 crore, in the last two years, a period when SEZs faced the heat of the global economic meltdown and policy issues in the country. It is an integrated business city comprising a special economic zone (SEZ), on the borders of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Balachandran said that to begin with he would need Rs 60 crore to set up the university for which he and his team would launch a fund raising exercise sometime later this year. He added that they have already received Rs 20 crore worth funds from several individuals.

Most of the international institutions that it has a partnership with will be roped in for the university. Among other international institutions, Great Lakes has an association with Yale University, Georgia State University, University of Bordeaux, Nanyang Technological University.

"We have an established relationship with these institutions and we would bring them on board for our university project too," added Balachandran.

To begin with, the university will have a five years integrated engineering and MBA programme where engineering would be offered upto the third year. Student capacity would be not more than 300, Balachandran said.

Great Lakes Institute of Management started in 2004 in Chennai and in 2011, it set up a campus in Gurgaon in Delhi-NCR region. In 2014, Great Lakes received the AMBA (Association of MBAs), UK accreditation for its flagship programme.

Shelves plan for new campuses

The institute, which was earlier planning to expand by establishing a campus in Bhubaneswar and Mumbai, said it has given up its plans for the same.

"There are various issues associated with campus expansion so we have shelved those plans. We are putting all energy into establishing the university now," said Vaidyanathan Jayaraman, Associate Dean, faculty affairs and academic programme.

Great Lakes has a campus in Gurgaon.

Earlier, it was planning to identify the location for the institute in Mumbai by December 2014. They were also in talks with philanthropists in Mumbai who could provide land for the campus. Similarly, their plan to set up a campus in Bhubaneswar was also shelved. This was because Balachandran had earlier said that there were not many internship opportunities there and the job market there was also slow

To launch PhD programmes and a publishing house

The institute would be launching a PhD programme next year. The programme, however, would be kept small and focussed. It would also be setting up a publishing house in the next three-five years.

"We have realised that we will be able to make a huge impact only through high quality research. To publish research papers and books written by our faculty members, it would be wise to have a publishing house," said Jayaraman.

The institute would be tying up with publishing companies to set up its publishing house.

This publishing house would be involved in bringing out case studies of contemporary management issues and aims to produce high-quality research manuscripts.