

Empowering States Through Science: NITI Aayog Launches Roadmap to Strengthen State S&T Councils

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In a major step towards strengthening decentralized innovation in India, NITI Aayog today released its strategic report titled *“A Roadmap for Strengthening State S&T Councils”*. The report was officially launched by Shri Suman Bery, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, in the presence of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon’ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, and Dr. V.K. Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog. The event was also attended by Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) & Secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR); Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES); Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF); and senior officials of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) underscoring the wide institutional backing for this initiative.

Setting the context for the launch, Prof. Vivek Kumar Singh, Senior Adviser, NITI Aayog, provided an overview of the report’s genesis and strategic intent. He emphasized the pivotal role that State S&T Councils can play in bridging national policy with local development needs, and elaborated on how the roadmap was shaped through an inclusive process of regional consultations, a national workshop, and extensive multi-stakeholder engagement.

Dr. V.K. Saraswat reflected on the evolving role of State S&T Councils. He emphasized the need for enhanced techno-administrative leadership, robust Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) data systems, and the importance of bringing research institutions, industries, and grassroots innovators onto a common platform. “To respond to the demands of the 21st century, our State S&T Councils must operate not only as administrative units but as integrated innovation ecosystems,” he said.

Delivering the keynote address, Dr. Jitendra Singh underlined the strategic importance of transforming State S&T Councils into mission-oriented institutions. He urged state governments to align their science and technology efforts with local developmental priorities and emphasized greater industry engagement to support innovation funding through co-financing mechanisms. “States should not rely solely on government allocations – industries must also be seen as partners in the innovation value chain,” he remarked.

He also advocated for strategic coupling of states based on shared sectoral priorities such as biotechnology, clean energy, or agri-innovation. “Such thematic clusters can allow states to learn from one another, pool resources, and build collective strength in areas of mutual interest,” the Minister added.

Speaking at the launch, Shri Suman Bery stressed the need to embed science and technology in the broader framework of federal governance. He noted that “State S&T Councils can act as catalytic enablers of innovation when empowered with the right tools, leadership, and autonomy. This roadmap is an effort to build the institutional backbone required for locally relevant, nationally aligned scientific advancement”.

The report identifies key challenges and calls for a more coordinated, well-governed, and sustainably funded network of State S&T Councils. The launch event witnessed participation from senior officials from various scientific departments and ministries, and different division heads from NITI Aayog. With this roadmap, NITI Aayog aims to catalyze a paradigm shift, enabling State S&T Councils to evolve into dynamic institutions that drive regionally anchored innovation and contribute meaningfully to India’s national transformation.

The full report is now available on the official website of NITI Aayog at:

<https://niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-07/A-Roadmap-for-Strengthening-State-ST-Council.pdf>

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