

# IISER plans Department of Science Education to train gen-next teachers

First among IISERs to set up a dedicated dept in the field

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INDIAN INSTITUTE of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune is set to establish a dedicated department to carry out research in Science Education and engage in imparting teaching techniques to next generation teachers at schools, colleges and other levels of higher education.

In July, the institute's senate approved the setting up of the Department of Science Education. Once the Board of Governors clears this proposal, expected in a meeting scheduled within a month, IISER, Pune will become the first among the seven IISERs in the country, and also possibly among the IITs (Indian Institutes of Technology) and NITs (National Institutes of Technology), to have such a department, said officials.

Currently, research in Education is majorly carried out at the Regional Institutes of Education located at Shillong, Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and Mysuru, and the TIFR - Homi Bhabha Centre for Science

**“The aim is also to create awareness among teachers that this stream is a viable career option just like any other subject”**

— PROF BHAS BAPAT  
DEAN (ACADEMICS), IISER, PUNE

Education in Mumbai.

“Good work has been done at these institutes and in non-government sectors and now a scaling-up is required. Experts engaged in research in Education agree that teaching at the school level needs greater attention,” said Professor Bhas Bapat, Dean (Academics) at IISER, Pune.

For several years now, IISER, Pune has been hosting a number of workshops and teacher training sessions but they have mostly been short-term engagements.

“With a dedicated department in place, we will have full-time teaching faculty members keen on taking up research in teaching and Education. The aim is also to create awareness

among teachers that this stream is a viable career option just like any other subject,” added Bapat.

Initially, the department will engage senior students from within IISER, Pune, who are inclined towards teaching and research in education.

“This will be a slow but a long-term engagement. We are up against two challenges – finding faculty members, and creating awareness about research opportunities in Education,” said Bapat.

With the pandemic forcing virtual learning world over, and newer technologies allowing learning through multimedia tools, the Department of Science Education and Research will pay attention to the impact and possibilities that the latest tools usher in.

“New faculty members will have to be hired for the department to get operational. Once the department strengthens its faculty numbers, the courses will be open first for our own students and, in future, for teachers and other folks in the field of Education from outside IISER, Pune,” he added.

