

Prof L S Shashidhara takes over as new director of TIFR-NCBS

Prof Shashidhara is an Honorary Professor at Ashoka University and has specialised in Genetics, Molecular Biology and Evolutionary biology.

By: **Express News Service**

Pune | Updated: February 22, 2023 10:54 IST



Prof L S Shashidhara.

Prof L S Shashidhara, a professor of biology at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune took charge as the new director of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research-National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bengaluru on Tuesday. He took charge from the outgoing director Prof Satyajit Mayor.

Prof Shashidhara is an Honorary Professor at Ashoka University and has specialised in Genetics, Molecular Biology and Evolutionary biology. His group has identified key mechanisms that specify organ development and regulate growth control during embryonic

development. They have also expanded their study to examine the status of these evolutionarily conserved mechanisms in epithelial cancers in humans.

He did his undergraduate and post-graduate studies in Genetics and Plant Breeding at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, and studied the regulation of chlorophyll biosynthesis for his PhD at the University of Cambridge, UK. During his postdoctoral studies at the University of Cambridge, UK, he initiated what would be his life-long work on the function of Hox proteins in appendage development in *Drosophila*. Prof Shashidhara was a JC Bose National Fellow and is an elected member of the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO). He has served in the past as Vice-President of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and is the current President of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS).

The new director of TIFR-NCBS has also been very involved in the promotion of science and science education and has had many experiments in this area, including working with the Ministry of Education on the training of high school and undergraduate teachers in adopting inquiry-based teaching methods, an official statement issued today has said.

Since the outbreak of the [Covid-19](#) pandemic, Prof Shashidhara, who is co-founder of [Pune](#) Knowledge Cluster, has been working very actively on various fronts to help mitigate the impact of the pandemic in Pune city and across India, which includes epidemiological data collection and analysis; serosurvey; indigenisation of reagents for RT-PCR kits; genome surveillance, longitudinal studies on the immune response to vaccination and others.

Prof Shashidhara said “In less than 30 years of its establishment, NCBS stands tall in the landscape of Indian biological sciences research, with exciting science and contribution across all scales (from single molecules to ecosystems). It is an honour to lead such an excellent organization and a humbling experience to follow in the footsteps of former Directors Obaid Siddiqi, Vijay Raghavan and Satyajit Mayor. The challenge in front of me is to ensure NCBS continues to excel in all fields of biology and, at the same time, it realigns to the fast-changing global S&T landscape such that it continues to contribute to new academic demands of biological sciences in the post-pandemic years.”