

engineering and other applied sciences. I would have thought that in a country like India where there are thousands of problems which need to be solved, young people would jump at an opportunity like this to obtain funds. However, it is possible that not enough publicity has been given to this programme and so very few people know about it.

The philosophy underlying research support for young scientists by the D. S. T. is that projects should be small enough to be successfully completed without necessarily involving senior scientists. The scheme therefore funds projects (i) pursuing bright ideas determining the feasibility of a large project, (ii) continuing Ph.D. research (iii) training in the management of large projects, which do not need large amounts of money for equipment and infrastructure. As such, a limit of Rs.50,000 per project per year has been set and the projects which are socially relevant are given priority. Provision has also been made for unemployed young scientists to draw a salary from their own projects within the financial limit of Rs.50,000 per year. The Department of Science and Technology wants this scheme to be used by the largest number of young scientists who have bright ideas for

small projects. Handling such small projects would also provide experience for submitting larger projects in competition with senior scientists later on. To make things easier, the DST does not even demand that the initial proposal be forwarded formally. Of course, if a project is approved it can only be funded through the regular channels of the organisation where the scientist wants to work.

I feel that young scientists should take full advantage of such a scheme. There is hardly any country in the world where a separate budgetary allocation is made for research projects submitted by young scientists. Unless the DST receives hundreds of proposals which are novel, different and indigenous, we become very pessimistic because that would indicate that the senior scientists of tomorrow will be just like the establishment of today.

Information about the scheme "Promotion of Scientific Interest in Young Scientists" may be obtained by writing to Director, Promotion of Scientific Interest in Young Scientists, Department of Science and Technology, New Mehrauli Road, New Delhi 110016.

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## NEWS

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### SCIENTISTS AND THE MEDIA: SOME PROPOSALS

... "In the hope of stimulating discussion and debate, I am [proposing] some rather radical and incompletely developed thoughts. . . . For future journalists and the general public, I recommend high-school and college curricula that emphasize such areas as the process of science, the evaluation of data, and the critical reading of documents. As for scientists, let me make two suggestions. First, the training of scientists in working with the media should begin no later than graduate school. I believe that every graduate student should take a course in scientific communication. The course should emphasize such topics as how to write scientific papers and how to present papers at conferences, but it should also address how to work with the media. Furthermore, every master's thesis or doctoral dissertation should be accompanied by a lay summary or press release written by the graduate student (with the guidance, if possible, a science-writing instructor or public

information officer at the student's institution). And just as the student must defend his or her thesis or dissertation, the student should have to be interviewed by a public information officer, science writing instructor or journalist. Perhaps, as suggested in a recent letter to the editor of *Science*, every doctoral candidate should be required to give a popular talk and write a popular article. Second, I would like to see the departments that employ scientists give more tangible encouragement to working with and in the media. Ultimately, this means giving substantial weight to such activities when reviewing candidates for promotion and tenure."

[Barbara Gastel (Beijing Medical Coll., People's Republic of China) in *Earth & Life Science Editing* (24): 3-4 Jan. 85. Reproduced with permission from Press Digest, *Current Contents*® , No 8, February, 25, 1985, p. 12. (Published by the Institute for Scientific Information® , Philadelphia, PA, USA.)]