

Working and  
living at the  
National Centre for  
Biological Sciences



# NCBS AND BANGALORE

The National Centre for Biological Sciences is located in the rapidly growing cosmopolitan city of Bangalore in Southern India. Rich with many different cultures and modern lifestyles, here is a city to enjoy diverse culinary styles, music and theatre. Bangalore is the academic capital of India with more than a dozen institutions carrying out research ranging from Space, Astronomy, Engineering, Agriculture, Medicine, Biotechnology and Basic Sciences. It is also a hub for entrepreneurs with Biotechnology as well as Information Technology companies being established in great numbers in the city. The science intensive environment is nicely balanced by Centres for Law, Business Administration and Art.

NCBS is located in a 20 acre campus within the lush and green campus of the University of Agricultural Sciences in the North of the city. It forms a part of a biocluster together with the Institute of Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine and the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms.

*“... you get to enjoy the amazing Bangalore weather unspoilt by the noise of the city. The agricultural university campus is particularly nice, specially in February when the mango trees are blossoming and in summers the Jacaranda. There is also a really nice Banyan tree just outside the gates ...”*

*Adil Khan  
Graduate student*



# OUR STUDENTS

Our graduate students come from diverse educational backgrounds. They hail from different parts of India as well as abroad. Many of our groups carry out interdisciplinary work and we strongly encourage students who have completed their primary degrees in Physics and Chemistry to join our program. We also have students from Engineering, Medicine and Veterinary Science.



*“Life at NCBS caught me by the scruff of my neck the moment I got here and I have yet to struggle free. The community here is a diverse one – that is to say, that the quirky ones among us are given the space to be quirky. More importantly though, there is always someone who has already gone through what you’re going through at any given point. There is always companionship and lots of friendly advice.”*

*Mehrab Modi  
Graduate student*

# THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

Students join the laboratory of their choice after two to three rotations. During their tenure as graduate students, they are expected to credit a number of courses (see [www.ncbs.res.in/courses](http://www.ncbs.res.in/courses) for details). The graduate teaching program prepares students not only for their research at NCBS but also for their future careers. Students need to pass a Comprehensive Examination before they register for a Ph.D degree. The tenure of the PhD programme is 5 years after a Master's and 6 after a three-year Bachelors's degree. If your research requires more time, reasonable extensions are possible and many do ask for one.

In addition to courses offered by our faculty, NCBS plays host to several workshops on a variety of topics throughout the year. Students can credit these for their Ph.D. programs.

*“All teaching and non teaching staff, anywhere be it lab kitchen, stores or administration are always ready to help with a smile; all day, all the time. Fundamental scientific temperament, ethical service and ‘much ahead of time’ outlook towards research is not just the promise, but also a culture at NCBS...”*

*Saheli Halder, Anusuya Banerjee,  
Radhika Joshi and Shuchita Soman  
First year graduate students*

# NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT COLLABORATIONS

In addition to our regular graduate program at NCBS, students may enrol for degrees in other Universities within India and abroad.

1. NCBS, Manipal University and University of La Reunion (RU) Twinning Program established in 2006. NCBS students can register for their degree at ReUnion University, France. This dual studentship requires spending equal time in NCBS and RU and are supported by a European studentship during their stay in RU.

2. European Study Programme in Neuroinformatics: NCBS is a partner with three other frontline neuroscience institutes :

- i) Kungliga Tekniska högskolan, Sweden
- ii) University of Edinburg, UK
- iii) Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany.

Students on this program will have one supervisor from each of two of the partner universities and will have an opportunity to visit all four centres. Instruction is in English ([www.kth.se/EuroSPIN](http://www.kth.se/EuroSPIN))

3. Institute for Complex Adaptive Matter (ICAM-12CAM), is a multi-disciplinary research program of the University of California with close to 90 partner institutions worldwide. As one of the ICAM partners, NCBS encourages joint students who will work in Bangalore and in other laboratories of other partners (<http://www.icam-i2cam.org>)



In addition, NCBS has formal arrangements for Student Scientific Exchange with a large number of organizations internationally.

- 1. Harvard-MIT exchange program for summer students
- 2. Cambridge University, U.K.
- 3. Max-Planck Institutes, Germany
- 4. University of Wisconsin – The Khorana Program
- 5. Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland
- 6. Tamasek Life Sciences Laboratories, Singapore
- 7. University of Milan, Italy





# INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS, COLLOQUIA, PUBLIC LECTURES DISCUSSIONS

The Meetings Office organizes a large number of international meetings and conferences throughout the year. In addition, we hold monthly colloquia on different topics which are often in areas not actively being pursued at NCBS. Several scientists, historians and writers have spoken in our Public Lecture Series.

*“...as months went by, I realized that I started to comprehend more and hence enjoy and appreciate talks more. I realized that talking science helped build bridges and I got to know a lot more people whom I wouldn't have dreamt of talking to otherwise. There is so much going on (seminars, symposiums, Annual Work Seminars) that I could not help being involved. Though there are many things that strike you when you enter NCBS, what I appreciate most is the science which is not just on paper but is very alive all around...”*

*Anupama H L  
Graduate student*



## A LIBRARY FOR SCIENCE AND RELAXATION

You can access any research paper you want from anywhere in NCBS or indeed the world. Our library subscribes to all the top journals in the world and will get you any article from anywhere that you may need for your work. We do have a 'real' library too, not just an electronic one. It is a very pleasant place where you can read journals, books, archival material and also newspapers and magazines. It is a perfect hideout to relax and yet be stimulated intellectually.



# HOSTELS AND GUEST HOUSES

All graduate students are provided with hostel accommodation in one of our campuses during their tenure. The hostels are equipped with modern amenities, including a modern kitchen and laundry area.

Our guest houses on campus accommodate our national and international visitors.





## CAFETERIAS, DINING HALLS

NCBS cafeterias serve breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks throughout the day. They are closed only on Sunday nights giving students a chance to explore the culinary delights in the city.



## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

We recognize the importance of public hygiene, regular medical check-ups and immediate attention whenever there is a medical problem. Our campus is clean and the food is cooked and served under well-monitored hygienic conditions. A doctor is present in our medical room each day to attend to your concerns and to treat minor ailments and advice you about seeing a specialist if needed. An ambulance is available on site for emergencies. Excellent consultancy and hospital facilities are available nearby. All our students are covered by a comprehensive medical insurance.

*“The walks in NCBS are truly one of the best ways to escape our small world and restore a healthy perspective! Almost every walk takes you to a new place - past sunflower fields, the gorgeous Jacaranda blooms when they are in season, Mango trees and crop fields. There are flowers of every hue and the calls of myriad birds, the jumbled smells of the domesticated and wild woods, there’s solitude and most important of all, there’s the calm realization of the microcosm nature of the academic universe that we inhabit on a daily basis”*

*Gayatri Ramachandran  
Graduate student*





# SPORTS FACILITIES

# TEAM SPORTS

*“The sports activities have kept me busy and challenged. In the years here, I have progressed from ignoring physical fitness to almost becoming fanatical about it simply because the company and the relaxation it brings to life has been so rewarding”*

*Amrita Shekar  
Graduate student*

*“With the opening of the new sports complex, the entire NCBS community has been seized with an ardent desire for sports. Thanks to the swimming pool and the brand new wooden badminton court, the basketball court is nowadays free for skating”*

*Tanvi Deora  
Graduate student*



## MUSIC AND RECREATION

We encourage budding actors and playwrights as well as accomplished actors to perform in our open air amphitheatre. Musicians performing pop, blues, jazz, classical Indian and Western have thrilled many audiences at NCBS. Even classical and modern dance performances are very popular!

*“The NCBS Movie Club along with its various initiatives with the Bangalore Film society has broadened my perspective of cinema. The ties with SPIC MACAY has brought a lot of great Indian classical music to our campus.”*

*Amrita Shekar  
Graduate student*



*“There’s a piano in Lecture Hall 2! I’ve been teaching myself how to play, with very limited success, but with much enjoyment. When I feel like a break from work anytime during the day, I can run down to practise”*

*Rohini Ramadas  
Graduate student*



## OUR ALUMNI

Most of the students who graduate from NCBS do well in their chosen careers. Several have started their own laboratories in research institutions or universities in the United States, Europe, Singapore and India. Some have joined international biotech companies and others have gone on to start their own businesses. In whatever they do, they have benefitted from the unique experience that NCBS is - a mix of competitive science, exposure to the arts, social debate and interaction with a diverse population of people.



*“I was 22 when I started at NCBS, and the summer-trainees were 22. The next year, I was 23, and they were 22; the year after I was 24, and they... so on and so forth until I finally graduated, and they were still 22. The moral of the story is that the Institute never grows old, it is you and I who age. I went back to NCBS earlier this year, and already there was so much that was new, in terms of facilities and people, and it was great. We have our moment in the sun, and then pass on, hopefully changing the stage a bit, and carrying a bit of it in ourselves. I won't list the facilities at NCBS, those you'll know. But I remember with fondness the surrounding campus and the jogs by fields of sunflowers, the woods, and the city - far and yet near! It was a good time then, I believe it still is!”*

*Aprotim Mazumdar  
Currently a post-doc at Massachusetts  
Institute of Technology, USA*



*“...with students who have been here before you, you hunt down every eating joint in the neighbourhood. Within few months of being here one knows every eating joint, from the cheap yet great Sunny Namkeen and Kanti Sweets to the increasingly posh Sahakarnagar’s pizza stop and Beijing Bites...”*

*Anapuma H L  
Graduate student*

And for those who want to hunt further afield, an NCBS shuttle bus runs regularly into town and back.



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[www.ncbs.res.in](http://www.ncbs.res.in)