

ABSTRACT

The establishment and development of Biotechnology Incubators is the key for the high technology industries. As a developing country Sri Lanka has made efforts to develop University Interaction Cells, with the aim of building partnerships with different institutions. However, developing a Biotech incubator in Sri Lanka with limited resources is a new approach and is a challenging task. Therefore the present study evaluates the feasibility of developing Biotech incubators in the Faculty of Science, University of Colombo. Eventhough this study did not include any laboratory work, it involved extensive work on collection of information through surveys ,communication ,analysis of information and recommendation for implementation of such incubator in the faculty of Science. This is the first ever study, especially in a Faculty of Science in the country. This study mainly focus on aspects such as the knowledge/awareness on incubators and Biotechnology among the 3 different groups of the society tested both scientists and nonscientists.(Academics, Private sector industries, and Public from three different provinces namely, Uva, Northern and Eastern) , the types of partnerships with other institutes and personnel, The type of innovation/ technologies which could be developed by companies in a Biotech incubator, possible sources of funding for a newly emerging incubator and potentials and constraints for developing a Biotech incubator at the University of Colombo.

Based on the information provided by respondents, it is evident that the level of knowledge on incubators is limited in all groups surveyed during the study. Thus, it is essential to take necessary steps to educate and improve awareness on incubators and biotechnology among public a necessity prior to establishing a Biotech incubator. There was a positive response in all three societies tested towards building new Biotech incubator in the University of Colombo. Almost all public sector respondents is of the opinion that, this would be a greater opportunity for them to improve their products and also most of them are interested in starting small scale industries/ businesses. In contrast, the most of the private sector respondents' opinion was there is no chance to become a tenant in a Biotech incubator. The main reason was due to lack knowledge on incubators and how they process. Furthermore it was stated that financial support may not be possible for establishing incubators. They were not willing to take the challenge or risk. Thus change of attitude is needed.