

IIT Madras Establishes Prof. Subra Suresh Institute Lecture Series

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Indian Institute of Technology Madras launched the 'Prof. Subra Suresh Institute Lecture Series' at Bengaluru today (4th January 2020) in honour of one of its most illustrious alumni Prof Subra Suresh, a Distinguished Alumnus Awardee (1997) and currently a Distinguished University Professor and President of the prestigious Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

This new lecture series has been made possible by a generous gift from another illustrious alumnus of IIT Madras, Mr. Senapathy 'Kris' Gopalakrishnan, Chairman of Axilor Ventures, Bengaluru, and co-founder of Infosys.

Prof. Subra Suresh is a former Director of the U.S. National Science Foundation, a former Dean of Engineering and Vannevar Bush Professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and former President of Carnegie Mellon University. He is the first IIT alumnus and India-born academic to be appointed to these leadership positions.

Speaking about this new lecture series, Prof. Bhaskar Ramamurthi, Director of IIT Madras, said, "What can give us greater delight than having one Distinguished Alumnus endow a lecture series in honour of another! Mr. Kris Gopalakrishnan has IIT Madras always on his mind and his generosity towards his alma mater knows no limits. Prof Subra Suresh has maintained strong ties with IIT Madras from the time he graduated and all through his illustrious career. He continues to contribute to IIT Madras through his acumen and rich experience. This lecture series will place the spotlight on academic excellence and creativity – two hallmarks of any great academic institution".

Prof. Subra Suresh Institute Lecture Series will bring leading international scholars, engineers and scientists to IIT Madras on a periodic basis, up to twice every year, to discuss key advances in scientific discoveries and technological innovation. The inaugural lecture in this semi-annual lecture series is planned for October 2020 at the IIT Madras campus.

Speaking about this lecture series established in his name, Prof. Subra Suresh said, "IIT Madras has been instrumental in shaping my professional and personal lives since I enrolled there as a 16-year-old undergraduate student. I am delighted, honoured and humbled to have this opportunity to deepen my connections to IITM through this newly established Institute Lecture Series. I am profoundly grateful to my fellow IITM-alumnus Kris Gopalakrishnan, whom I have long admired, for his thoughtfulness and extraordinary generosity in establishing this lecture series."

Prof. Suresh's research has focused on the properties of engineered and biological materials and their implications for human diseases. He has authored more than 300 research articles and 30 patent applications and co-founded a technology startup.

An elected member of all three branches of the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, of Engineering, and of Medicine as well as the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Inventors, Prof. Suresh is also elected to all the major science and engineering academies in India.



In announcing the gift to establish this Institute Lecture Series, Mr. Kris Gopalakrishnan said: "Prof Subra Suresh continues to inspire students and researchers around the world with his contributions to the fields of education and research. He is also a great leader and administrator, having held leadership positions in academia and government. Since he is an alumnus of IIT Madras, it is only appropriate that we create this lecture series to celebrate his contributions as well as strengthen his bonds with his alma mater".

Prof. Subra Suresh has also been elected a foreign member of science and/or engineering academies in China, France, Germany, Singapore, Spain and Sweden, and awarded 18 honorary doctorate degrees from institutions in China, Greece, India, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States. His honours include the Padma Shri from the President of India; the Benjamin Franklin Medal of the Franklin Institute; the European Materials Medal from the Federation of European Materials Societies; and the Timoshenko and Nadai Medals of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

Prof. Subra Suresh Institute Lecture Series will also serve as an institute-wide forum for connecting global thought leaders with students, faculty and staff at IIT Madras to discuss topics of industrial importance and societal significance.

ABOUT PROF SUBRA SURESH: He joined IIT Madras at the age of 16 and received his B.Tech. degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1977 in first class with distinction. He was the Chief Guest of Honour and Convocation Keynote Speaker at the Golden Jubilee Convocation of IIT Madras in 2013, when he also received an honorary doctorate degree.

Nominated by the President of the United States and unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate, Prof Suresh was appointed as Director of the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2010. During his tenure as NSF Director, where he oversaw an annual budget of \$7 billion in support of research in all fields of science and engineering, Professor Suresh established a number of new programmes including the NSF Innovation Corps (I-Corps), Global Research Council, Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide, and Science Across Virtual Institutes. Since its inception in 2011, I-Corps, which accelerates the economic and societal benefits of NSF-funded scientific research projects, has become one of NSF's most successful programmes. As of 2018, I-Corps has supported more than 1,200 innovation teams from 248 universities in 47 states in the U.S. and has led to the creation of more than 577 companies.

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