

## ABB, IIT Madras sign MoU to build microgrids for rural electrification

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Bengaluru, April 5:

ABB has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM) to enter into technical co-operation to build microgrids as well as joint R&D in the field of rural electrification, utilisation of natural non-fossil resources, battery energy storage and their connection to loads and main grid.

The agreement also includes internship opportunities for post-graduate students of IITM given that the Indian scenario related to microgrids is expected to evolve rapidly in the coming years. With thousands of Indian villages still un-electrified, decentralised microgrids are a viable solution to power these villages.

A low-maintenance microgrid has the potential to eliminate dependence on expensive diesel fuel and the grid.

IITM has been doing pioneering work over the last few years developing and demonstrating solar-based energy-efficient DC homes. ABB, a global power and automation major, has a strong portfolio of products for renewable energy integration, distribution and automation of interconnected renewable energy sources that form local microgrids.

IITM and ABB will jointly work to design, build and supply equipment for up to two such microgrids in rural areas. Along with ABB equipment, the microgrid will enable homes to be fitted with energy-efficient DC devices such as LED bulbs, TV, cell-phone charges, brushless DC motor-based fans, specially designed by IITM. The project will be managed by IITM till the transfer of the installations to the local distribution utility

“This is a great opportunity to combine our expertise with bright young minds from this renowned institute to devise and deploy solutions tailored for India,” said ABB CEO Ulrich Spiesshofer. “Microgrids technology is an important part of our Next Level strategy and well poised to make the Indian government’s vision of power to all a reality by providing access to energy and ensuing economic empowerment to the people.”

At the end of last year, ABB had set up India’s first multi-source urban microgrid in the heart of Delhi to power its flagship event, Automation and Power World.

(This article was published on April 5, 2016)

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