Bright minds with B.Tech and MBA degrees prospering in the IT sector is good for the Indian economy. But bright minds also need to create knowledge if India is to emerge as a knowledge economy in the 21st century. The leaders of science in the country and the Government of India were keen to attract bright minds to science, right after high school. Modern science requires a judicious mix of teaching and research, leading to cutting-edge technologies and an interdisciplinary approach to solving problems.

Therefore, the Science Advisory Council to the Prime Minister proposed setting up Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs). The central and the state governments worked closely to realize this dream. In record time, five IISERs with state-of-the-art research facilities, quality faculty and bright students were in place. The graduates and research output that followed ensured a global brand name for the IISERs in less than a decade’s time. The story within documents how the leaders in science built the institutions and made history.

The Story of IISERs is a story of what India can do, when it wants to, especially in the higher education sector.