

EDITORIAL

The growth of research in science and technology in the world during the recent past and its impact on the economic development of nations have been dramatic. Today, most countries allocate a significant amount of their budget for research and development. The world average is about 1.4% of the GDP, while the Sri Lankan expenditure is below 0.2%. This is well below what a country should spend on research and development. However small the impact, the country must benefit from this investment for the betterment of society.

The output of research and technology is generally measured by indicators such as research publications, patents and the impact on the day to day socio-economic life in the form of increased production in the country and the quality of life of its people. Dissemination of the findings of researchers among peer groups, the policy makers and planners and also the general public including students is important. The scientists and technologists give high priority for publishing their findings in peer-reviewed journals accepted internationally and it is important to do so. However, it is also essential that the scientists and technologists bear in mind their responsibility to develop a research culture in the country. One very meaningful way in which the scientists and technologists can contribute to this all important cause is to extend support and cooperation for publishing their findings in Sri Lankan peer-reviewed journals. It is the quality research papers in the local journals that will make them acceptable internationally. Only the researchers of the country can bring about this change and make a significant contribution for the development of science in the country.

The Editorial Board of the National Science Foundation is committed to develop a partnership with the scientists and technologists in this endeavour. Findings in science and technology is however, too important to be left solely in the hands of scientists and technologists. Policy makers, planners and society as a whole must also take an interest in the questions raised and the solutions offered by the scientists. This is where science journalists must contribute. They can help citizens of the country and decision makers understand scientific activities and fit them harmoniously into society. In this context scientists must also play a role as science communicators. Scientists as communicators and science journalists must be the bridge between the producers of scientific findings and society that ultimately utilizes them.

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