

Startup Watch

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STARTUP POLICIES

DST invites applications from startups for developing new technologies, innovative products

Source: <https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/dst-invites-applications-from-startups-for-developing-new-technologies-innovative-products>

Promising startups will be provided with financial and mentoring support for scaling up their products or technologies to the next level and speeding up their processes, helping them reach the product deployment stage as fast as possible, it added.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has invited applications from startups and companies for developing new technologies and innovative products to tackle the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under NIDHI4COVID2.0 initiative by the DST, companies and startups registered in India, offering promising solutions in the thrust areas of oxygen innovation, portable solution, relevant medical accessories, diagnostic, informatics, or any other solution that addresses or mitigates various challenges faced by the country or society due to the severity are eligible for funding.

“As a rapid response to support startup-driven solutions for tackling the current challenging, the second wave of COVID 2.0 in the country, Indian startups and companies have been invited to apply for developing new technologies and innovative products that can enable our country to fight the crisis,” the DST said.

The initiative is a special drive of the National Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB) under the DST for supporting indigenous solutions and innovative products to combat the crisis the country is currently facing due to the pandemic.

“Development and manufacturing (import substitution) of the products parts currently being imported for the devices like oxygen concentrators would also be considered for seed support through the DST supported-network of Technology Business Incubations (TBIs),” it said.

Promising startups will be provided with financial and mentoring support for scaling up their products or technologies to the next level and speeding up their processes, helping them reach the product deployment stage as fast as possible, it added.

This initiative has been built based on the NSTEDB’s past experience of implementing the Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH) and also through special calls through the National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations – Seed Support System (NIDHI-SSS) from TBI to support startups in 2020.

“Supporting development of devices like oxygen concentrators also brings with it huge opportunities in the development and manufacturing of several critical components that are being imported such as specialised valves, zeolite materials, oil-less and noiseless miniaturised compressors, gas sensors, which have wider appli-

cations in several sectors,” said Prof Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, DST.

“Interested applicants offering promising solutions can apply through the centralised portal www.dstnidhi4covid.in latest by 31.05.2021 23.59 hrs,” the DST added.

DPIIT recognises 50,000 startups under Startup India: Commerce Ministry

Source: <https://yourstory.com/2021/06/50000-startups-recognised-dpiit-startup-india-commerce-ministry>

As many as 50,000 startups have been recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to date, an official statement said on Thursday.

Startup India — the flagship initiative of the Indian government launched on January 16, 2016 — intends to catalyse a startup culture and build a strong and inclusive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in India. The recognised startups are eligible to avail the benefits across a range of laws, regulations, fiscal, and infrastructural support.

With the launch of the Startup India initiative, recognised startups have now spread across 623 districts, it said, adding each Indian state and UT have at least one startup, and 30 states and UTs have announced specific startup policies to support them. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat have the largest number of these entrepreneurs.

“The recognised startups have contributed significantly to job creation, with 5,49,842 jobs reported by 48,093 startups with an average number of 11 employees per startup. About 1.7 lakh jobs were created by recognised startups in the 2020-2021 period alone,” it added.

The sectors with the maximum registered startups include food processing, IT consulting, and business support services.

Further, the ministry said that funding opportunities to startups have been enhanced through the Fund of Funds Scheme with an overlay of Rs 10,000 crore and the recently launched Startup India Seed Fund Scheme with an outlay of Rs 945 crore.

Earlier, in March 2021, as many as 6,000 compliance norms were identified at the state and central level, and the work is going on to reduce

these barriers to further promote ease of doing business for the industry, a top government official said. Guruprasad Mohapatra, Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), said that a systematic exercise across the centre and states is undertaken to eliminate or reduce compliances, which will have an adverse impact on time and cost of businesses.

STARTUP STORIES

India's sovereign wealth fund may make first digital bet with FirstCry

IBEF: May 19, 2021

India's sovereign wealth fund is considering investing in the country's thriving internet economy for the first time. The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) has held talks to invest in SoftBank-backed vertical e-commerce player FirstCry. If the deal goes through, it could perhaps set the stage for NIIF to invest in other tech start-ups in the country.

Some early investors are selling part of their stakes in the Pune-based omni-channel retailer that focuses on baby and mother care products in a secondary deal estimated to be worth US\$ 150-US\$ 200 million.

The investment will be done at a valuation of just over US\$ 2 billion, the same as when TPG, ChryCapital, and Premji Invest invested US\$ 315 million in the company in March.

One of the people briefed on the matter said that the latest negotiations are for about a US\$ 150 million but it might get extended up to US\$200 million.

According to a source familiar with the situation, this will bring the current round's overall value to about US\$ 450-US\$ 500 million. Aside from NIIF, there may be other new investors and the deal might be finalised in the next four to six weeks.

SoftBank is the single largest shareholder in FirstCry with over 40% stake and that will come down once the round closes formally. However, it will remain its single largest shareholder.

A spokesperson for NIIF said that they do not comment on market speculation and infor-

mation gathered from third-party sources. They manage capital commitments of over US\$ 4.5 billion across three funds -- Master Fund, Fund of Funds and Strategic Opportunities Fund. In April, they made first investment in the Indian healthcare sector by putting around US\$ 300 million in Manipal Hospitals, a multi-speciality healthcare provider.

In the next 12-18 months, FirstCry is considering an initial public offering (IPO). The company also has a logistics division called Xpresbees, which was founded in 2015. Its platform continues to see steady demand, though usage has dropped due to the second COVID-19 wave.

During its US\$ 300 million investment in March, investors like Elevation Capital, Vertex Partners and MegaDelta Capital Advisors sold their entire stakes.

FirstCry, founded in September 2010, had acquired BabyOye from Mahindra Retail worth around US\$ 50 million in 2015. Its other investors include Mahindra Group, Valiant Capital, Ratan Tata and Kris Gopalakrishnan.

FirstCry has over 300 stores across 125 cities. It has a user base of more than 4 million and offers more than 200,000 baby and children's products from 2,000 brands. It competes with Hopscotch and Kids Stop Press in the online segment.

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Inside IIT Madras' deep-tech startup incubator

Source: <https://http://www.incubation.iitm.ac.in/home>



TM Incubation Cell (IITMIC) is the umbrella body for nurturing and overseeing innovation

and entrepreneurship at IIT Madras. With a rich tradition of incubation through bodies such as the RTBI, IIT Madras has also pioneered innovation with groups such as the E-cell, CFI, CSIE and the IITMEF (to read more). IITMIC will leverage these experiences and give entrepreneurship a stronger push as well as serve to coordinate and promote innovation-driven activities at the institute.

IITMIC seeks to nurture technology and knowledge based ventures through their start-up phase by providing the necessary support to help entrepreneurs survive in the competitive market and reach a stage where they can scale-up their ventures further. The IC aims to build and share resources including space and infrastructure, access to business support services, mentoring, training programmes to enhance the skills of entrepreneurs and seed funds. The scope of support is broad-based, and covers technologies/IP developed wholly at the Institute or partly through collaborations elsewhere, as well as external start-ups with which IITM members are associated as consultants or mentors. IITM-IC is also particularly open to proposals with strong social and strategic impact

STARTUP FUNDING

Source: INC42

- Electric vehicle (EV) charging solutions company Magenta EV Solutions raised \$15 million in Series A round from Dr Kiran C Patel.
- Consulting firm ANSR raised \$15 million in Series B financing round from Sistema Asia Fund and Evolve India Fund.
- Spacotech startup Skyroot Aerospace raised \$11 million in a Series A round led by Greenko Group founders Anil Chalamalasetty and Mahesh Kolli. It also saw the participation of other angel investors.
- Spacotech startup Agnikul Cosmos raised \$11 million in a Series A round led by Mayfield India. Existing investors Pi Ventures, Speciale Invest, and Artha Venture Fund also participated.

- Mental health platform Wysa raised \$5.5 million in a Series A round led by W Health Ventures. Google Assistant Investment programme, Pi Ventures, and Kae Capital also participated.
- Fashion house brand High Street Essentials (HSE) raised Rs 25.50 crore led by existing investors Elevation Capital, India Quotient, Dominor Holding, and family offices.
- Health education startup Virohan raised additional funding from Rebright Partners, summing up its Series A round at \$3 million.
- BlissClub, a women's activewear brand, raised \$2.25 million in seed funding led by Elevation Capital and angel investors.
- Karbon Card, a fintech startup, raised \$1.2 million in a pre-Series A round from Orios Venture Partners along with MyAsiaVC.
- Deep tech startup Fabheads raised Rs 8 crore in a pre-Series A round from Inflection Point Ventures. Keiretsu (Chennai chapter) and Vijay Kedia, MD, Kedia Securities also participated.
- Edtech startup ClassMonitor raised Rs 3.5 crore in pre-Series A funding round led by PATH India and investors based out of the Gulf.
- Reccy Adventures, an adventure sports startup, raised Rs 3 crore in a seed round from founders of cloud-kitchen startup Rebel Foods.
- P r o p t e c h startup BricSpaces raised \$350,000 in a pre-seed round from a group of angel investors.
- Fintech startup BankSathi Technologies raised \$200,000 in a seed funding round from a group of angel investors.
- Extracurricular edtech startup Spark Studio raised its first round of undisclosed investment from Better Capital.
- Smart parking management platform ParkSmart raised an undisclosed amount of funding from Campus Fund and angel investors.
- Enterprise AI startup Keito has raised an undisclosed amount in a seed round from LetsVenture and angel investors.
- NextBillion.ai, the Singapore-headquartered AI spatial data SaaS startup with centres in India, raised \$6.25 million in Series A round from M12.
- Esper, an Android DevOps platform with offices in India and the US, raised \$30 million in Series B round led by Scale Venture Partners and other investors.
- Moglix, the B2B industrial goods e-commerce marketplace, has turned into a unicorn following its \$120 million in Series E round led by Falcon Edge Capital and Harvard Management Company (HMC). Existing investors including Tiger Global, Sequoia Capital India and Venture Highway also participated.
- O m n i c h a n n e l e y e w e a r startup Lenskart raised \$95 million from global investment firm KKR via a secondary stake acquisition.

STARTUP ACQUISITION

EdTech start-up upGrad acquires Impartus, commits Rs. 150 crore towards buyout and growth

IBEF: May 25, 2021

On Friday, upGrad, a Mumbai-based EdTech start-up announced that it has acquired Impartus, video solutions provider, at a transaction value of > Rs. 150 crore (US\$ 20.59 million).

The institutional investment partner of Impartus was Kaizenvest.

Impartus, has been rebranded as 'upGrad Campus' and is now a 100% subsidiary of UpGrad.

Its new programs would cater to higher education institutions and college students in learning tools and content in an integrated solution. The company aims to achieve revenue of Rs. 85 crore (US\$ 11.67 million) in FY22. The founders of the company would continue to function and operate the business independently.

Mr. Amit Mahensaria, CEO - upGrad Campus, said, "The integration of Impartus and upGrad would help us enhance our capabilities for an enhanced college education and offer students

with new-age courses to boost their skills, thereby advancing the candidates' skill-set for much better career opportunities."

According to the company, the upGrad campus would function in two verticals - B2C and B2B. The B2C vertical would focus on job-oriented courses in the area of business analytics, artificial intelligence, digital marketing, and soft skills for career readiness. The duration of the course would be 2-4 months, where each student would need to dedicate weekly 10-15 hours per week.

At the same time, B2B vertical would focus on customized offering to higher educational institutions (HEI). As HEI's B2B SaaS partner, upGrad Campus would enable them to provide credit-based online courses, both in new-age courses, as well as engineering and management courses. B2B services would also include the facility of technical platforms and services (course maps, placements, industry projects, etc.) aimed at enabling university students to find employment opportunities.

Through the acquisition, upGrad, which is primarily aimed at in-service professionals, would be able to strengthen its position on higher education institutions and students' market, which is estimated at Rs. 560 billion (US\$ 7.69 billion). Mr. Ronnie Screwvala, Chairman & Co-Founder, upGrad, said, "In line with our vision, the UpGrad campus would strengthen our position in the area of university education and support the youth of the country to learn the industry-based skills and enhance their employability opportunity."

According to an official statement, this deal would help upGrad add 50,000 paying students in the first year of the acquisition.

Mr. Gaurav Kumar, President - Corporate Development and M&A, upGrad, said, "This acquisition expands to a broad target group, as the upGrad campus would allow higher education institutions and its students to leverage world-class learning materials."

In early April 2021, upGrad advanced to the next unicorn EdTech start-up by raising US\$ 120 million in investments from Temasek in Singapore.

Aknamed acquires Vardhman Health Specialties for \$ 35M

Source: <https://yourstory.com/2021/05/indias-adani-green-buy-softbank-backed-sb-energy>

Hospital-focused supply chain platform Aknamed on Wednesday said it has acquired Vardhman Health Specialties (VHS) for \$ 35 million (over Rs 250 crore). The transaction enables Aknamed to further promote excellence in the delivery of healthcare essentials, with an enhanced pan-India footprint with leadership in therapeutic areas such as oncology, immunotherapy and virology, Aknamed said in a statement. The acquisition is for \$ 35 million, it added. "We are delighted to welcome Vardhman as part of the Aknamed Group...Our vision and goal have resonated very well with the Vardhman team as their business has been built on similar values over the years," Aknamed Founder and CEO Saurabh Pandey said. Vardhman CEO Naresh Chowhan said, This partnership underlines the growing importance of consolidation in the pharma supply chain industry in India. It opens up significantly larger opportunities, apart from the synergies derived from the combined businesses of Vardhman and Aknamed". The combined teams of Aknamed and Vardhman are aiming to work towards building a robust hospital focused supply chain in India through the use of technology, data, high-quality infrastructure and scale, delivering value to hospitals, OEM partners and employees, the statement said.

"I am excited about the combination of Aknamed and Vardhman as it will solve a significant number of procurement challenges, and will broaden the horizon of healthcare supply chain in India," Aknamed Co-founder and Chairman Mahadevan Narayanamoni said.

In March 2021, Vardhman Health Specialties (VHS) announced that it will enter adult immunisation by investing Rs 100 crore over the next year on technology, warehouse infrastructure and research, said the company.

VHS earned Rs 500 crore as revenue in FY21 and it plans to double it to over Rs 1,000 crore in the next three years at least, with the adult immunisation division contributing a significant 30 per cent of this.

STARTUP EVENTS >> UPCOMING**Maharashtra Startup Week****9th—13th August 2021**

MAHARASHTRA
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MSInSociety

MSInSociety

Startup Week is an annual flagship program of Maharashtra State Innovation Society where 24 startups across 8 sectors get work orders of Rs. 15 lakhs each & a chance to pilot with the Govt. of Maharashtra. Startups from across India are eligible to apply from the following focus areas: Agriculture, Education, Governance, Healthcare, Mobility, Skilling, Smart Infrastructure, Sustainability - Clean Energy, Sustainability - Waste Management, Sustainability - Water Management.

Top 100 startups will be shortlisted for the virtual pitches during the Maharashtra Startup Week from 9th Aug- 13th Aug. They will pitch to a panel that includes relevant govt department officials, industry, academia & investors. 24 startups will be chosen as winners. To apply visit www.msins.in. For any queries please reach out to team@msins.in. Last Date to Apply is June 15th, 2021

STARTUP FAQs**1. Would a One Person Company (OPC) be eligible to avail benefits under the Startup India initiative?**

Yes. One Person Companies are eligible to avail benefits under the Startup India initiative.

2. Can I provide two mobile numbers in the registration form?

Only one mobile number and one landline number of the authorized representative of the entity can be provided at the time of registration. The portal and the mobile app would be sending an OTP on the mobile number provided by the user to complete the authentication and registration process.

source:<https://cleartax.in/s/7-steps-to-register-your-startup-in-startup-india#faq>

For Feedback & Comments, please contact:

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