



THE ASSAM GAZETTE

অসাধাৰণ

EXTRAORDINARY

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GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
ORDERS BY THE GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF INNOVATION, INCUBATION & START-UPS (DIIS)

NOTIFICATION

The 18th November, 2025

No. E- 701403/1.- In cancellation of the notification vide ecf no. 514281/151 on “The Assam Startup and Innovation Policy 2025-30” dated 22.2.2025, the Governor of Assam is pleased to notify “**The Assam Startup and Incubation Policy 2025-30**”. The Policy will come into effect from the date of publication in the official gazette for a period of 5 years.

1. Introduction

Assam, the largest economy in Northeast India, contributes about ₹6.43 lakh crore (US\$80 billion) to the national economy and ranks 17th among Indian states. The state has registered robust momentum with ~11% CAGR GSDP nominal growth, since FY 2016, significantly above the national average. Its economic structure is diversifying with services (45%) and industry (31%) outpacing agriculture (24–25%). Assam's population of 35–36 million is predominantly rural, with high literacy (87% in 2024). The state's diverse social fabric, resource base and growing industrial sectors provide strong foundations for entrepreneurship-led transformation.

Geographically, Assam is strategically positioned as India's gateway to Southeast Asia, sharing borders with Bhutan and Bangladesh and lying at the heart of regional connectivity corridors under the Act East Policy. Its location along the Brahmaputra-Barak valleys makes it a natural logistics and trade hub for the Northeast and beyond.

With nearly 500 recognised startups already active, supported by early institutions like Assam Startup – The Nest and the MASI framework, the state has laid the foundation for a vibrant innovation ecosystem. Innovate Assam 2030 seeks to build on this base by tripling the startup count, deepening support across ideation to scaling stages and positioning entrepreneurship as a driver of inclusive growth, quality employment and Assam's emergence as the gateway economy of the East.

1.1. Assam's Startup Landscape: Opportunities and Challenges

Assam's startup ecosystem has gained momentum with Assam Startup–The Nest acting as a key catalyst, though incubation capacity remains concentrated in Guwahati. To fully unlock the state's entrepreneurial potential, support needs to be decentralized to zones, districts and academic institutions, with domain-specific programs tailored for diverse sectors.

Assam offers a dual opportunity landscape: traditional sectors such as Handloom, Handicrafts, Agro-processing (including Tea) and Tourism present untapped potential for innovation, while emerging sectors like Electronics manufacturing, Clean energy, Logistics and Digital technologies are being strengthened by landmark investments such as Tata Electronics' semiconductor OSAT unit in Jagiroad. This industrial convergence signals pathways for startups to integrate into value chains and deliver innovative solutions.

At the same time, the ecosystem faces structural gaps that require targeted interventions to sustain growth. Access to early-stage funding remains limited, mentorship and R&D infrastructure are limited and individual-level barriers such as knowledge gaps, societal pressures and geographical isolation restrict participation.

Addressing these bottlenecks through capital access, simplified governance, stronger incubation and inclusive programs will be critical to broaden Assam's startup base and position entrepreneurship as a driver of economic transformation.

Key Challenges

- **Funding:** Limited local seed funds, institutional investors and angel networks
- **Mentorship and R&D:** Scarce access to mentors, labs, prototyping facilities and industry linkages.
- **Individual Barriers:** Knowledge gaps, societal risk aversion, linguistic/ geographical isolation limiting entrepreneurship.

1.2. Innovate Assam 2030: Strategic Framework**1.2.1. Vision**

To establish Assam as one of the leading hubs of entrepreneurship and innovation in India by 2030, with a startup ecosystem that is inclusive, regionally distributed and sectoral diverse. Innovation will be positioned as a key driver of Assam's growth, revitalising traditional industries while creating new opportunities in sunrise sectors so that entrepreneurial benefits are shared widely across all districts and communities.

1.2.2. Mission

To make Assam a launchpad for bold ideas and thriving enterprises by:

- a) Igniting an entrepreneurial mindset across academia, communities, and industries paving the way for a vibrant startup ecosystem generating socio-economic value through industry and business building and employment generation.
- b) Enabling founders with the appropriate resource: funding, mentorship, market connect and infrastructure to move from Idea to IPO.
- c) Building a seamless ecosystem where government, investors, corporates and academia work hand-in-hand to fast-track startup journeys.
- d) Attracting private capital and partnerships that catapult startups in both national and global landscape.
- e) Driving inclusive growth by ensuring that women, youth, and rural innovators have equal access to opportunities.

1.2.3. Objectives

Through implementation of this policy, DIIS aspires to achieve the following objectives -

Expand Statewide Reach	Triple the number of recognized startups in Assam by 2030, with at least 20% emerging from rural, tribal and remote districts.
Job Creation & Economic Impact	Generate over 50,000 new direct and indirect jobs through startup-led enterprises and ensure startups impact to at least 1% of Assam's GSDP by 2030.

Sectoral Innovation	Support at least 2,000 new startups across traditional sectors (handloom, agro-processing, tea, tourism) and new economy sectors (electronics, clean energy, digital tech).
Lifecycle Support	Establish 20 incubation/acceleration hubs and ensure that 80% of startups can access prototyping, seed funding and mentorship support locally.
Inclusive & Sustainable Growth	Ensure that 20% of supported startups are women-led or from marginalised communities and that 20% of startups focus on social impact and green innovation.

1.2.4. Definition

- a) **Accelerator:** A program or entity that supports startups in achieving rapid growth by providing mentoring, training, funding, networking, and other value-added services to expand customer reach, enhance profitability, and scale operations.
- b) **Entity:** Includes Private Limited Companies, One Person Company, Limited Liability Partnerships (as defined under the LLP Act, 2008) and Partnership firms.
- c) **Startup:** "Startup" shall mean an entity incorporated or registered as a Private Limited Company, including a One Person Company (OPC), under the Companies Act, 2013; or registered as a partnership firm under Section 59 of the Partnership Act, 1932, or as a limited liability partnership under the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008, which satisfies all the following conditions:
 - i. Recognition
 - i.i The entity is recognised as a "Startup" by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Government of India under the "Startup India" initiative, or
 - i.ii The entity meets all eligibility conditions prescribed under this Policy, including but not limited to:
 - i.ii.i Having a date of incorporation/registration not earlier than ten (10) years from the date of application
 - i.ii.ii Having had an annual turnover not exceeding ₹100 crore in any preceding financial year.
 - ii. Being registered in the State of Assam or registered outside Assam but employing or commit to employ at least twenty-five percent (25%) of its total qualified workforce from Assam (excluding contractual employees)
 - iii. The entity demonstrates innovation in its business model, product, process, or service, such innovation being characterised by the application of original or substantially improved ideas, technologies, or methods that address real-world challenges in a novel and effective manner, provide measurable value, are scalable and contribute to the socio-economic development of the State.
 - iv. The entity must not have been formed by splitting up, reconstruction, or as an extension of an existing business or family enterprise.

- d) **Incubator:** An organization that nurtures early-stage startups by offering infrastructure, mentorship, assistance in capital raising, shared services (including legal and compliance), and networking opportunities.
- e) **Innovation:** The introduction of novel ideas, products, services, or processes that create value by addressing challenges, improving efficiency, or transforming sectors.
- f) **Satellite Incubation Centres:** Satellite hubs of Assam Innovation and Startup Foundation offering coworking space, mentoring and local incubation support, operating in a hub-and-spoke model with AISF to ensure inclusive reach beyond Guwahati.
- g) **Partner Incubators & Accelerators:** Empanelled institutions in Assam and across India delivering domain-specific mentorship and programs for startups, thereby expanding capacity without duplicating infrastructure.
- h) **Entrepreneurship Development Cells:** Dedicated units within educational institutions established to encourage innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship among students.
- i) **Tinkering Labs:** Innovation labs within schools designed to instil entrepreneurial skills and foster innovation among high school students.
- j) **Mentor:** An individual or organization providing structured advisory and capacity-building support to startups.
- k) **Investor:** An individual or organization offering financial support to startups through equity, debt, or hybrid instruments.
- l) **MASI (My Assam Startup ID):** A unique identification number issued to startups registered on the Assam Startup Portal and approved under this Policy, enabling access to benefits under the Assam Startup and Innovation Policy, 2025 or under any of its preceding/successor policy.
- m) **Women led Startup:** A startup registered in Assam that meets the following criteria:
 - i At registration, at least 51% of the capital is owned and controlled by Women.
 - ii Post-investment, a minimum of 33% equity ownership continues to remain with Woman.
 - iii At least 33% of voting rights on the Board of Directors are held by Woman.
- n) **Tribal entrepreneur** means a startup wherein more than 50% of equity ownership is with promoter/s who hold a government issued ST certificate.
- o) **Rural entrepreneur** means a startup wherein more than 50% of equity ownership is with promoter/s whose residence is within the jurisdiction of Gaon Panchayats/ Zilla Parishads of Districts of Assam.
- p) **Proof of Concept (PoC):** The stage where a startup or innovator demonstrates the basic feasibility and functioning of an idea, hypothesis, or innovation.
- q) **Minimum Viable Product (MVP):** An initial version of a product with core features sufficient for early adoption by users/customers, enabling feedback for further development.
- r) **Seed Equity Fund:** A fund constituted under this Policy to provide risk capital to early-stage startups to validate business models, build prototypes, and achieve initial market traction in exchange for equity.
- s) **Managed Services:** Specialised professional services which may include financial and legal advisory, accounting and compliance support, human resource and talent management, branding and marketing, digital transformation, technology development,

and market access facilitation provided to startups by the Assam Innovation and Startup Foundation (AISF)

- t) **Scaling Stage:** The stage in a startup's lifecycle when the business has validated its product or service, achieved consistent market traction, and established a repeatable business model.

1.2.5. Key Goals - Result Framework Matrix

The policy at the end of its period envisages to expand the current network of startups significantly by creating awareness programs covering all districts of Assam. It will also facilitate the development of satellite incubation centres across various regions of the state amongst many other key goals.

The following Results Framework Matrix (RFM) has been designed to measure progress under *Innovate Assam 2030*. It links each strategic objective to measurable indicators, targets for 2030 and sources of verification. The RFM will serve as the central monitoring tool for assessing the impact of the strategy and guiding mid-course corrections.

A detailed layout of the RFM is listed below

Key Goals	Key Indicator	2030 Target
Expand Statewide Reach	Number of recognized startups in Assam	3× current baseline
	Share of startups from rural/tribal/remote districts	≥20% of total
Job Creation & Economic Impact	Direct and indirect jobs created by startups	>50,000 jobs
	Impact of startups on State's GDP	≥1% of Assam's GDP
Sectoral Innovation	Startups supported in traditional sectors (Handloom, Handicrafts, Agri-processing, Tourism, etc.)	≥1000
	Startups supported in new economy sectors (Electronics, IT, Biotech, Renewable energy, Logistics, AI, etc.)	≥1000
Lifecycle Support	Number of incubation/acceleration hubs established	20
	Share of startups accessing seed funding, mentorship, prototyping facilities	≥80%
Inclusive & Sustainable Growth	Share of women-led or marginalised community startups	≥20%
	Share of startups focusing on social impact/green innovation	≥20%

2. Institutional Framework

A strong institutional backbone will drive *Innovate Assam 2030*, ensuring effective implementation and last-mile support for startups. The framework combines leadership from government, a specialised execution agency and a network of innovation hubs and partners:

2.1. Department of Innovation, Incubation & Startups (DIIS)

The nodal department responsible for overall strategy, policy direction, inter-departmental coordination and monitoring of key performance metrics. It provides leadership, mobilises resources and embeds entrepreneurship across Assam's economic agenda.

2.2. Assam Innovation & Startup Foundation (AISF)

A Section 8 company functioning as the operational arm and ecosystem integrator. AISF manages incubation centres, runs funding and acceleration programs, delivers business services, administers incentives and forges partnerships with investors, corporates and academia to expand opportunities.

2.3. Empowered Committee (EC)

An Empowered Committee headed by Senior Secretary of Department of Innovation, Incubation and Startups and other Expert members from Academia, preferably with experience of conducting Incubation Programs and having worked with Startups from IITs/IIMs, Senior representatives from agencies operating Venture Capital or Alternative Investment Funds, Industry experts. It provides strategic oversight on policy implementation, and guides mid-course policy corrections, take investment and funding related decisions under the policy and discharge any other responsibility assigned by the Government from time to time.

2.4. Advisory Committee

State-level Startup Advisory Council chaired by Minister/Secretary-in-Charge, including DPIIT representation for regular review, alignment, and fund utilization. The Advisory Committee will provide thought leadership, ensure sectoral alignment, strengthen stakeholder engagement, and track policy implementation.

2.5. Satellite Incubation Centers

Satellite hubs of Assam Innovation and Startup Foundation offering coworking space, mentoring and local incubation support, operating in a hub-and-spoke model with AISF to ensure inclusive reach beyond Guwahati.

2.6. Partner Incubators & Accelerators

Empanelled institutions in Assam and across India delivering domain-specific mentorship and programs for Assamese startups, thereby expanding capacity without duplicating infrastructure.

2.7. Assam Startup Portal

A unified digital platform for startup recognition, benefits and reporting. The portal will act as a single-window interface ensuring transparency, tracking ecosystem growth and providing startups seamless access to state support.

3. Support Framework for Startups

To achieve its objectives, Assam Startup and Incubation Policy (2025-30) adopts a comprehensive support framework that addresses most of the critical needs of startups: financial assistance, infrastructure, mentorship, market access and enabling policies – in a stage-wise manner.

The support framework is designed to nurture a startup from the first idea to a scalable enterprise, ensuring that at each stage, the necessary resources and incentives are available within Assam with an aim to create successful ventures from the state, in the innovation space.

Key pillars of the support framework include:

- Inclusive Startup Funding and Financial Incentives
- Incubation and Infrastructure Support
- Market access, networking linkages and capital mobilization
- Mentorship, Skill Development & Capacity Building
- Whole of Government approach and Policy Advocacy
- Regulatory Support.

3.1. Inclusive Startup Funding and Financial Incentives

To overcome the limitations in accessing private capital in the local funding ecosystem, the policy through AISF will provide stage-wise financial assistance to startups across their lifecycle from ideation and prototype development to early revenue and growth stages in the form of a structured program. By injecting risk capital at critical stages, the program seeks to nurture innovative ideas into scalable businesses. The financial support to startup will be made available through AISF, as below:

- a) For early-stage ideation, the policy will offer small Ideation Grants up to ₹10 lakh to help innovators validate concepts or build a proof-of-concept prototype.
- b) As startups progress, dedicated Prototype Development Grant (up to ₹20 lakh for general and tech startups and up to ₹40 lakh for deep-tech startups) will be offered under the policy to fund for materials and product testing for building MVPs (Minimum Viable Products)

- c) For startups that have launched their tested or proven ideas/ products and need capital to grow, Assam Startup Seed Fund – a seed equity fund with government corpus to invest (directly and/or co-invest with angels/VCs) in promising startups will be set up under the policy (up to a maximum investment of ₹50 lakh/startup).
- d) The policy through its various interventions has provisions of supporting startups through advanced acceleration services in the form of Managed Services and direct seed funding in startups through equity or equity related instruments. The shareholding acquired in such startups by Assam Innovation and Startup Foundation through such interventions under the policy shall not exceed 4% of the issued and paid-up share capital of the startup (on a fully diluted basis).
- e) Further to incentivize women, tribal and rural entrepreneurs 20% of the overall fund will be reserved for women, tribal and rural entrepreneurs.
- f) At the scaling stage, eligible startups raising larger funding rounds shall be supported through the government-promoted Startup Venture Capital Fund, specifically designed to provide growth capital and strengthen their expansion trajectory.
- g) The funds shall be released in single or in multiple tranches based on performance in achieving certain pre-agreed milestones or actions.

Other Financial Incentives

- a) The policy will facilitate Assam startups to access interest-rate subsidies, credit guarantees and concessional finance under Central and State schemes (e.g., IIPA 2019, UNNATI 2024 etc.).
- b) Startups with MASI shall be eligible for reimbursement up to 100% of the actual costs (including filing fees, attorney fees, search fees, maintenance fees) for patent filing with a maximum limit of ₹1 lakh for filing a domestic patent and 50% or up to ₹5 lakh whichever is lower for filing an international patent. This reimbursement shall be payable after the patent has been granted. Further, incentive towards the cost of patent can be increased to cover the full cost with the approval of the Department in extra ordinary cases.
- c) The policy shall reimburse 30% of eligible costs incurred towards boarding and lodging, logistics, booth rent, literature and display materials for approved overseas trade fairs and exhibitions. Reimbursement is subject to an annual ceiling per entity per financial year of ₹5,00,000 (five lakh rupees).

These funds de-risk private investment and ensure startups in Assam have access to risk capital at all stages.

A detailed structured program document with operational guidelines will be notified by the Department and put in place for administering under the policy and the same shall be reviewed annually.

3.2. Incubation and Infrastructure Support

In the early life cycle of a startup access to high-tech labs and research facilities, prototyping and testing equipment are vital for its development. Since startups cannot afford to set up such

expensive facilities they usually rely on the existing common facilities in research and academic institutions or those provided by the government through incubation centres.

The Incubation and Infrastructure support program aims to expand the incubation capacity and innovation infrastructure across Assam, with a focus on areas beyond the state capital, along with a central world-class facility and support system. By 2030, the policy through the program seeks to create an increase in incubation support available outside Guwahati, ensuring that entrepreneurs in all districts of Assam have access to incubation support and infrastructure.

The policy will seek to address the challenge of incubation and infrastructure support through a structured program -*The Assam Startup Infrastructure & Incubation Program (ASIIP)*.

- a) Creating world-class infrastructure for innovation is a core element of the support framework. The state has established Assam Startup – The Nest in Guwahati, a flagship eco-system integrator providing coworking space, mentorship and networking for startups.
- b) Building on this, Assam Startup and Incubation Policy (2025-30) will set up common infra facilities equipped with state-of-the-art prototyping labs in satellite incubation centres and partner incubation centres hubs across Assam. These are generally co-located in educational institutes across the States. The program under the policy will develop the implementation framework and guidelines for the incubators, defining the eligibility criteria etc.
- c) A onetime capital grant support for Partner Incubation Centres of upto ₹50 lakh per eligible centre and an operational grant support of upto ₹20 lakh per year for a defined period of initial 5 years will be provided under the policy based on the appraisal of the proposed activities by the Empowered Committee. Further, for the development of EDCs (Entrepreneurship Development Cells), financial support of ₹1 lakh per year to support EDC activities will be provided during the policy period for select institutions which meet the readiness criteria as defined in the operational guidelines to be issued by the policy implementing agency from time to time.
- d) Scale-Up Hub: The policy shall facilitate the establishment of a specialised Scale-Up Hub in and around Guwahati. The Hub will be developed and operated by the designated nodal agency as a state-of-the-art ecosystem, offering office and co-working spaces, R&D and prototyping laboratories, testing facilities, and corporate innovation suites. Conceived as the nucleus for startup scale-up, the Hub will support a seamless transition of enterprises from early-stage growth to national and international markets. It will prioritise advanced infrastructure and strategic partnerships to encourage collaboration with both domestic and global stakeholders. To operationalise this vision, the Department shall design and implement a comprehensive structured program under the policy.

3.3. Market access, networking linkages and capital mobilisation

Many early-stage startup founders lack essential entrepreneurs' knowledge, leading to unsuccessful implementation of promising ideas. Further early growth stage and mature stage

startups have limited access to organized forums and platforms for funding avenues. Limited exposure to markets and venture building platforms lowers the benchmark of the regional entrepreneurs.

To strengthen the growth of startups in Assam, a dedicated market access, networking linkages and capital mobilization initiative will be implemented under AISF. This Initiative will serve as a strategic initiative to bridge the gap between innovative startups and potential markets, ensuring that entrepreneurs are not only supported with incubation and funding but also given opportunities to commercialise their solutions at scale.

By creating structured pathway, the initiative will connect startups with corporates, PSUs, Govt. entities and Industries for pilot projects and procurement opportunities, link them with investors for funding support, and facilitate partnerships with market players like distributors, retailers, logistic support providers, export industry and e-commerce companies for expanded market reach.

This will also integrate Assam's startups into national and global startup networks, enabling them to tap into new customers, collaborators, and ecosystems. Through corporate connect platforms, investor engagement forums, startup exchange initiatives with other states, and curated immersion initiatives at national and international agencies, events and trade fairs, Assam's startups will gain visibility, credibility, and access to both domestic and international markets.

In the long run, this initiative aims to position Assam as a gateway for innovation from the North East to the rest of India and the world, while ensuring sustainable growth for local entrepreneurs.

Key components include:

a) Corporate Connect Initiative

- i. Explore and sign MoUs with various corporates offering support to startups through various discounted products, cloud credits, problem solving opportunities, pilot and testing opportunities etc.
- ii. Organise an annual Startup–Corporate Partnership Summit in Guwahati to connect startups with large companies, industries, suppliers, and distributors.
- iii. Facilitate sector-specific matchmaking (e.g., Agritech with farmer cooperatives and tea estates, Craft startups with e-commerce platforms, IT startups with oil/tea companies).
- iv. Support startups in securing pilot projects, procurement opportunities, and distribution tie-ups.

b) Corporate Innovation Initiative

- i. Invite corporates to launch innovation challenges and problem statements, providing startups with opportunities to co-create solutions.
- ii. Encourage industries to adopt startup-driven technologies, enabling real-world validation and scale-up opportunities.
- iii. Establish long-term corporate–startup collaboration channels to strengthen industry adoption of local innovations.

c) Investor Connect Initiative

- i. Host the regular Investor Connect program for growth stage and deep-tech startups to bring venture capital funds, angel investors, and family offices to Assam.
- ii. Organise pitch days, demo days, and closed-door investor roundtables for startups at different stages.
- iii. Help in Establish the “Assam Angel Network” by identifying and training local HNIs, business leaders, and industry veterans on startup investment practices

d) Startup Exchange Initiative

- i. Launch a reciprocal exchange model with leading state startup ecosystems and incubators (e.g., Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Ahmedabad, Chennai etc.).
- ii. Enable Assam startups to access new markets, mentorship, and sectoral expertise across India.
- iii. Tie ups with leading incubators and research labs across the country to enable Assam Startups to get easy access to their facilities
- iv. Host startups from other states in Assam to build cross-market collaboration and visibility.

e) National & Global Immersion Initiatives

- i. Facilitate Assam startups’ participation in other state and national level events and Initiatives, industry expos, and startup events for better domestic market access.
- ii. Support selected startups in Global Immersion Initiatives through AISF's participation in international summits like GITEX, VivaTech, TiE Global Summit etc.
- iii. AISF will organize curated delegation visits to leading global innovation hubs (such as Pangyo, US, Israel, Singapore, Germany, Middle East and France,)), from time to time , offering startups targeted mentorship, investor connects, and capacity-building opportunities.
- iv. Partner with embassies, global accelerators, and industry bodies to access international facilities and innovation ecosystems.

3.4. Incubation, Skill Development & Capacity Building

To establish Assam as a leading startup ecosystem, the development of robust human capital through targeted mentorship, skill development, and capacity-building initiatives is essential. These elements are the foundation for translating infrastructure, finance and policy into sustainable, scalable and impactful ventures. This policy outlines a holistic approach to address the current gaps, such as a limited skilled talent pool and the lack of structured platforms for mentor-mentee interaction, by creating a comprehensive support system for innovators at every stage of their journey.

a) Fostering Student Innovation

- i. **Entrepreneurship Development Cells (EDCs):** Supporting student innovation from the college level is critical to inculcating the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship among young minds. Entrepreneurship Development Cells will be established and strengthened in universities, colleges, and technical institutes (including ITIs, Poly-Technics) across Assam to foster a vibrant culture of innovation on campuses.
- ii. **Structured Campus Programs:** AISF will provide grants as outlined in Point 2 (c) above to eligible institutions to run structured programs, led by dedicated faculty champions will organize awareness programs, workshops, idea competitions, and mini-preincubation programs, creating a feeder pipeline of talent and ideas for the larger incubation network. To ensure quality and uniformity, AISF will issue a detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for all EDC activities.
- iii. **Makers Labs and Prototyping Facilities:** Innovative labs equipped with modern equipment including 3D printers, electronics workbenches, fabrication tools, etc. will be established within universities, engineering colleges, and technical institutes across the state. These facilities will enable students and early-stage startups to develop prototypes and gain hands-on technical skills essential for innovation.

b) Strengthening the Incubation Network

- i. **Hub and Spoke Model:** The Satellite Incubation Centres and Partner Incubators will function as dynamic hubs for providing mentorship and capacity building for the startups.
- ii. **Quality Standards and Performance Monitoring:** All incubators are expected to deliver high-quality support to startups from ideation to prototyping stage, including structured mentorship, domain-specific training, and networking opportunities. This will be monitored through the Incubator Ranking & Accreditation Framework to be developed by the Policy Implementation Agency to drive performance excellence, with annual assessments based on startup success rates, intellectual property creation, and sectoral diversity
- iii. **Incubator Capacity Building:** AISF will organize regular capacity-building workshops/programs for incubation managers to share global best practices in startup mentorship, investor pitching, and program management. Also, connect the Incubators of Assam with leading incubators and accelerators of the country to adopt best practices.

To strengthen the ecosystem, Initially AISF will actively support the newly established Satellite Incubation Centres in building their operational capacity, with the goal of helping them evolve and become Partner Incubators in the future.

c) Structured Mentorship and Acceleration

- i. **Statewide Mentor Network:** A diverse, statewide mentor network will be established, comprising entrepreneurs, industry leaders, academics, and investors. This network will be integrated with the Assam Startup Portal, allowing startups in any part of the state, including remote areas, to connect with national and global experts.
- ii. **Structured Accelerator Programs:** For startups ready to scale, AISF will design and run structured, cohort-based accelerator programs.
 - ii.i **Scale-Up Stage:** For startups with early revenue, intensive 3–6-month programs will focus on sharpening business models, achieving product-market fit, and developing growth strategies.
 - ii.ii **Growth Stage:** For more mature startups, advanced programs will provide mentorship on market expansion, fundraising, and global go-to-market strategies. These programs will culminate in demo days to connect founders with investors.

d) Access to Managed Business Services

- i. **Managed Business Services:** AISF will facilitate managed business support services – a network of vetted service providers offering legal, finance and accounting, IT Service and design thinking, marketing and other professional services to exclusive startups which demonstrates the maximum potential for growth and scalability. This helps founders focus on core product development while experts handle their back-office needs.

3.5. Whole of Government approach and Policy Advocacy

A supportive and enabling policy environment is essential for the growth and sustainability of startups in Assam. *Innovate Assam 2030* emphasises policy advocacy as a central pillar to address regulatory bottlenecks, institutional gaps, and cross-sectoral challenges that often impede startup growth.

The Department of Innovation, Incubation and Startups (DIIS) will serve as the nodal agency for policy advocacy, ensuring convergence across state departments, institutions, and industry stakeholders. DIIS will:

- a) **Coordinate with State Departments:** Work closely with departments such as Industries & Commerce, Agriculture, IT, Education, Tourism, Handloom & Textiles and Power to identify sector-specific challenges, simplify regulatory processes, and create sector-focused opportunities for startups. Advocate for implementation of 0.5% departmental spend on innovation.
- b) **Streamline Approvals & Compliance:** Advocate for startup-friendly norms across licensing, registrations, taxation, and procurement, thereby reducing compliance burdens and enabling faster go-to-market pathways for entrepreneurs.
- c) **Integrate Startups into Government Departments:** Various government departments shall support the startup movement and contribute in big way in the form of conducting

Grand Challenges / Hackathons to find innovative solutions to some state specific problems, subsequently using the innovative procurement procedures under Assam Procurement Rules such as Swiss Challenge method, Quality Based Selection etc. to deploy the solution to solve real world problems, offering financial and non-financial incentives, in addition based on findings of the project appraisal. A Supplementary Startup Policy under each government department is envisaged under this policy. It will ensure, through Grand Challenges and Hackathons, startups have access to departmental work orders through innovation-friendly clauses, lower eligibility thresholds, and pilot project provisions, in the procurement processes adopted as per the Procurement rules.

- d) **Policy Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a formal channel for startups and incubators to provide continuous feedback to DIIS, which will then advocate for mid-course corrections, enabling responsive and adaptive policymaking.
- e) **National and Global Alignment:** Represent Assam's startup interests at national forums (Startup India, NITI Aayog, DST, MeitY) and international collaborations, ensuring local startups benefit from larger policy reforms, schemes, and partnerships.

Through proactive advocacy, DIIS will ensure that the startup ecosystem in Assam is supported by clear, transparent, and growth-oriented policies that evolve with the needs of entrepreneurs

3.6. Regulatory Support

A conducive policy environment underpins all of the above. The Government of Assam will continuously work to simplify regulations and reduce barriers for startups.

- a) The state will also ensure robust intellectual property (IP) support, an IP Facilitation Cell is being set up to help startups file patents and trademarks and the policy will reimburse a maximum limit of ₹1 lakh for filing a domestic patent and 50% or up to ₹5 lakh whichever is lower for filing an international patent for eligible startups.
- b) All startup-related schemes and applications are being integrated into a one-stop digital portal (MASI), improving transparency and efficiency in availing incentives.
- c) The support framework also stresses inclusivity; special outreach and additional support is earmarked for women entrepreneurs, tribal and rural innovators (including dedicated challenges or a small preference in grant selection) to ensure equitable participation.

3.7. Alignment of Policy with Startup India Benefits

The Assam Startup and Incubation Policy 2025 have been carefully aligned with the flagship programs and initiatives of Startup India, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Government of India. The alignment ensures that startups from Assam not only benefit from state-level incentives and support mechanisms but also leverage national-level schemes, funding opportunities, and facilitation platforms. This chapter outlines the key areas of convergence between the Assam Startup ecosystem and the Startup India framework, aimed at maximizing impact and sustainability.

- a) **Continuous Cooperation with DPIIT and Startup India** - The State Government of Assam, through the Department of Innovation, Incubation and Startup (DIIS), shall maintain continuous cooperation with DPIIT to ensure that startups in the state are sensitized and encouraged to leverage national initiatives. Joint workshops, capacity-building sessions, and outreach activities will be undertaken in collaboration with Startup India to enhance visibility and access.
- b) **Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS)** - The Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS) provides collateral-free credit guarantee coverage to banks and financial institutions for loans extended to DPIIT-recognized startups. The policy supports awareness and facilitation measures for startups in Assam to access debt financing under this scheme through sensitization programs, promotional drives, and partnerships with financial institutions.
- c) **Fund of Funds for Startups (FoF)** - The Fund of Funds for Startups (FoF) initiative enables the government to provide capital to SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), which in turn invest in DPIIT-recognized startups. The Assam Startup ecosystem shall actively promote linkages with participating AIFs and facilitate venture funding opportunities for local startups, ensuring improved access to equity capital. Assam is a beneficiary of the FoF scheme through the Assam Venture Capital Fund managed by SIDBI Venture capital.
- d) **Section 80-IAC Tax Exemption** - Eligible DPIIT-recognized startups can avail 100% income tax exemption for three consecutive years out of the first ten years since incorporation, subject to prescribed conditions. The Assam Government, through DIIS and Assam Startup, will undertake targeted sensitization campaigns to enable startups to apply for and avail these benefits. Furthermore, a dedicated Startup Innovation Week will be celebrated annually in alignment with the National Startup Day (16th January) to foster awareness and participation.
- e) **Integration of MASI Portal with Startup India** - The policy proposes integration of the MASI (My Assam Startup ID) portal with Startup India's digital platform through API or BHASKAR framework. This integration will ensure transparency during Startup India States' Ranking evaluations and facilitate real-time data exchange between the State and DPIIT.
- f) **Entrepreneurship in Rural and Aspirational Districts** - The policy promotes entrepreneurship in Tier 3 and Tier 4 regions through targeted bootcamps, incubation facilities, and market linkages under Startup India's TEJAS initiative. Additionally, it supports the creation of sectoral clusters in smaller towns focusing on areas such as agriculture, construction, healthcare, education, and IT services.

3.8. Maturity Stage based support matrix

To ensure that startup support is tailored to the needs of entrepreneurs across different stages of their journey, Assam Startup and Incubation Policy adopts a structured, stage-based framework.

The matrix, enclosed as Annexure I, outlines the continuum of support from ideation and pre-incubation to scale-up capturing the unique interventions, funding instruments, infrastructure and policy enablers provided at each stage.

4. General Terms and Conditions

4.1. General Terms

- a) Assets created with policy support cannot be sold/transferred outside Assam for 3 years without DIIS approval.
- b) Any misuse of benefits or false claims leads to cancellation, blacklisting, and recovery as arrears of land revenue.
- c) The decision of the Department of Incubation, Innovation & Startups (DIIS), Government of Assam, in regard to the interpretation of any clause, provision, or eligibility criteria of this Policy shall be final and binding on all stakeholders and beneficiaries.

4.2. Delegation of powers to the Department of Innovation, Incubation and Startups

- a) The Department of Incubation, Innovation & Startups (DIIS), Government of Assam, reserves the right to amend, modify, or withdraw any provision(s), including fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, under this Policy as and when necessary for the development of the startup ecosystem and in the interest of the general public of the State.
- b) The DIIS reserves the right to review any matter related to the sanction, disbursement, or utilisation of incentives/facilities by eligible startups, incubators, or partner institutions. In this regard, the decision of the State Government shall be final and binding.
- c) The DIIS reserves the right to modify the eligibility or non-eligibility criteria for beneficiaries, and to include or remove sectors or activities from the list of focus sectors, as and when required, in the interest of the overall economic growth of the State and preservation of the environment and ecology.

4.3. Power to Remove Difficulties

- a) The State Government shall have the power to issue orders, directions, or clarifications, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Policy, as may be necessary or expedient for the purpose of removing any difficulty in giving effect to the provisions of this Policy.

4.4. Guidelines for Implementation

- a) A comprehensive set of operational guidelines, including eligibility criteria, application forms, required documentation, evaluation procedures, disbursement processes, and monitoring formats for availing various incentives and facilities under this Policy, shall be issued separately by the Department of Incubation, Innovation & Startups (DIIS)

4.5. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is central to ensuring that *Innovate Assam 2030* achieves its objectives in a timely and transparent manner. The policy will adopt a structured half-yearly performance review cycle (2025–2030) anchored in measurable indicators that reflect both ecosystem growth and socio-economic impact.

AISF shall publish category-wise dashboards each half-year, tracking: applications, approvals, survival, revenue, jobs, IP, exports, capital mobilised, and (for Social Impact) outcome metrics; and (for Deep Tech) TRL progression and regulatory milestones.

4.6. Half-Yearly Performance Tracker

Macro-Objectives during policy period

- a) 5,000 Startups Application (MASI IDs)
- b) 1,000 Startups funded (Seed + Growth)
- c) ₹1,250 Cr private capital mobilised (VC, angels, corporates)
- d) 20 Zonal Innovation Centres across Assam
- e) 50,000 Business Support Hours delivered
- f) 100 IP filings supported
- g) 50,000 Jobs created (direct + indirect)
- h) 20% Women-led Startups
- i) 20% Social Enterprises
- j) 100 Government contracts
- k) ₹300 Cr startup exports

Performance Tracker

Parameter	Year 1 Target (H1 + H2)	Year 2 Target (H1 + H2)	Year 3 Target (H1 + H2)	Year 4 Target (H1 + H2)	Year 5 Target (H1 + H2)	Cumulative
Startup Applications (MASI IDs)	400 + 600 = 1,000	500 + 700 = 1,200	600 + 800 = 1,400	700 + 800 = 1,500	700 + 900 = 1,600	5,000
Startups Funded (Seed + Growth)	60 + 90 = 150	80 + 120 = 200	100 + 150 = 250	120 + 150 = 270	120 + 160 = 280	1,000
Private Capital Mobilized (₹ Cr)	100	200	300	300	350	1,250
Zonal Innovation Centres	4	4	4	4	4	20
Business Support Hours Delivered	3,000 + 4,000 = 7,000	4,000 + 5,000 = 9,000	4,000 + 6,000 = 10,000	5,000 + 6,000 = 11,000	6,500 + 6,500 = 13,000	50,000
IP Filings Supported	6 + 9 = 15	8 + 7 = 15	10 + 10 = 20	12 + 13 = 25	12 + 13 = 25	100
Jobs Created (Direct + Indirect)	3,000 + 4,500 = 7,500	3,500 + 4,500 = 8,000	3,500 + 5,000 = 8,500	4,000 + 5,000 = 9,000	4,000 + 6,500 = 11,500	50,000
Women-led Startups (% of Total)	15%	17%	18%	19%	20%	30%

Social Enterprises (% of Total)	15%	17%	18%	19%	20%	20%
Government Contracts Facilitated	5 + 10 = 15	8 + 12 = 20	10 + 15 = 25	10 + 15 = 25	5 + 5 = 10	100
Startup Exports (₹ Cr)	15 + 20 = 35	20 + 25 = 45	25 + 30 = 55	30 + 35 = 65	40 + 30 = 70	300

5. Conclusion & Anticipated Impact

The Assam Startup and Incubation Policy (2025–30) lays down a comprehensive, delivery-oriented, programmatic approach designed to create a vibrant, inclusive and self-sustaining startup ecosystem in the State. By combining stage-wise financial support, incubation infrastructure, market access facilitation, mentorship programs and enabling policy interventions, the Policy seeks to transform Assam into a preferred destination for innovation and entrepreneurship in the Northeast.

It is envisaged that with the implementation of this Policy, four key segments of startups will thrive in Assam:

- **Deep Tech Startups:** R&D-intensive ventures developing core IP in AI/ML, biotech, med-tech, new materials, cleantech hardware, electronics/semiconductors, robotics, etc., typically requiring longer gestation cycles
- **General Tech Startups:** Tech-enabled ventures, including startups in Electronics and ICT, focused on rapid validation and scale using software and light-asset models
- **Non-Tech Startups:** Product or service ventures innovating in food, crafts & handloom, fashion, tourism, agribusiness, services, etc., where technology is not the core IP.
- **Social Impact, for-profit enterprises** delivering measurable social or environmental outcomes (e.g., livelihoods, healthcare access, education, climate resilience, waste-to-wealth, water resources, biodiversity), with revenue models tied to impact.

These startups will access all benefits of the Policy, with additional/reserved support under the policy. Collectively, these initiatives are expected to mobilise over ₹1,250 crore of private capital, support 1,000+ startups, create 50,000 direct and indirect jobs and impact nearly 1% to Assam's GSDP by 2030. This Policy is thus expected to serve as a basis for economic diversification, youth entrepreneurship and sustainable growth.

Annexure I**Maturity Stage based support matrix**

Parameter	Pre-Incubation (E-Cell Program)	Incubation (Incubator Affiliation)	Acceleration (Startup Maturity)	Scale-Up
Operational Driver	Entrepreneurship Cells in institutions & agencies	Satellite / Partner Incubation Centres / AISF	AISF + Sectoral Accelerators	AISF (Scale-Up Hub)
Startup Lifecycle	Pre-Idea / Student / Workforce sensitisation	Idea → Proof of Concept (PoC/MVP)	PoC → Early Revenue	Growth Stage / Expansion (Series A+)
MASI Affiliation	Not required	Required	Required	Required
Key Activities	Awareness, hackathons, idea competitions, EDPs	Full-stack incubation, prototype dev,	GTM workshops, 3–6-month accelerators, investor readiness	High-growth support, export programs, global linkages
Support for Incubators	Annual sustainability grants for E-Cells	Institutional & operational grants, Performance linked from Y3	Advisory, networking, sectoral partnerships	Strategic facilitation, global delegations
Support for Startups	Ideation grants for concept validation-through E-Cells	Prototype Dev Grants	Equity / co-funding support	State promoted Venture Capital Fund
Investment Instrument	Grant	Grant	Equity / Convertible,	Debt / Equity (VC, Banks, FIs)
Funding Amount	Up to ₹10 lakh	Up to ₹20 lakh for general and tech startups and up to ₹40 lakh for deep-tech startups/startup	Up to ₹50 lakh/startup	U to ₹10 crore/startup
Infrastructure Support	Student innovation labs, E-Cells	Prototyping labs, zonal incubators, co-working	Sectoral innovation hubs,	Scale-Up Hub in Guwahati
Mentorship & Capacity Building	Faculty champions, student bootcamps	Structured mentorship, legal & financial advisory, Managed Business Services	Go-To-Market accelerator cohorts, VC connect, Managed Business Services	Advanced mentorship, Managed Business Services
Market Access & Networking	Campus demo days, intra-state idea fairs	Govt pilot projects, early customer connects	Corporate connects, Demo Days, VC roadshows	Startup Procurement Policy, export promotion
Policy & Regulatory Support	Recognition of student IP, seamless	IP Facilitation Desk	Relaxed procurement eligibility	Domestic and International IP

	MASI registration post-idea			reimbursement (50%), advocacy
End Beneficiary	Students / Aspiring entrepreneurs	Early startups	Startups	Startups
Duration	NA	Up to 2 years from incorporation	Up to 3 years from incorporation	7–10 years from incorporation
Expected Outcome	Validated ideas for startup launch	MVPs, Proof of Concept	Early revenues, investor readiness	Revenue growth, exports, jobs, GDP impact

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