

IIT Mandi Catalyst successfully organises Himalayan Innovation Challenge 2019

Indian Institute of Technology Mandi Catalyst, the first technology-based Incubator in Himachal Pradesh, successfully organised the first edition of 'Himalayan Innovation Challenge' for startups and innovators on 25th - 26th May 2019. The Himalayan Innovation Challenge (HIC) - building solutions for Himalayan Region - is an initiative to actuate a series of innovative technology-based solutions designed specifically to solve social and economic problems in the Himalayan region.



Catalyst aims to create an impact in a range of relevant areas that bear importance for Himalayan region. More than 120 teams, ranging from individuals to organisations, willing to deliberate, debate and innovate to this end, applied for the Himalayan Innovation Challenge 2019 from which over 30 teams were shortlisted.

Inviting all the budding entrepreneurs to join this exciting journey to build the future, Prof. Timothy Gonsalves, Director, IIT Mandi, said, “Understand, Compare, Assess, Adopt and Develop, are the key features required for a startup. I hope all the budding entrepreneurs and IIT Mandi Catalyst will make a big mark in the betterment of Himalayan Region.”

For Himalayan Innovation Challenge 2019, IIT Mandi Catalyst invited startups and innovators from across the country to present their ideas to a panel of experts. The jury at the competition comprised of entrepreneurs, faculty members of IIT Mandi and other senior advisors of the industry.

While introducing IIT Mandi Catalyst to the participants, Dr. Puran Singh, faculty-in-charge, Catalyst, IIT Mandi, said, “IIT Mandi Catalyst is a low cost-high end destination for startups and functions as a facilitator and enabler of innovation. With a focus on building solutions for the Himalayan region, Catalyst has intellectual resources available at IIT Mandi to

nurture new startups. To address and building solutions for issues in the Himalayan region, Catalyst invites you to build products at IIT Mandi and to startup in hills.”

Delivering his keynote speech, Mr. Ambar Srivastav, Founder, Wrig Nanosystems and member of the Jury, HIC 2019, said, *“We are living in a very fast moving world. Technology is evolving on a day to day basis and we need to evolve as fast as technology in order to keep up with the world. For this, we need new innovative ideas and entrepreneurship is the best way to bring these new ideas into the light. We are living in a world where entrepreneurship is the best career option. ‘Philosophical grooming’, ‘having a passion for productivity’ and ‘to keep evolving’, are three elements for becoming a successful entrepreneur.”*

In the event, ideas for a range of thematic areas that are relevant to the Himalayas such as agriculture, waste management, climate change, renewable energy, road safety, disaster management, healthcare and many other areas relating to inclusive rural development were presented and discussed.

IIT Mandi Catalyst handpicked as many as 15 Innovative ideas and will enable these innovators/ entrepreneurs in prototyping, testing and implementing to create an impact in the Himalayan region.

Ms. Deepika Rana, Deputy Director, Department of Industries, Himachal Pradesh, attended the closing ceremony on 26th May 2019 during which **total prize money of Rs. 1 lakh was awarded to top three ideas out of thirty startups that presented during the event.** The cash prize was sponsored by HP Center for Entrepreneurship, Department of Industries, Himachal Pradesh Government. Prize winners included:

1. Drone Tech Lab won the First prize of Rs. 50,000

The startup provides Smart IoT based precision agriculture package including hardware, software and easy data analytic platform to reduce losses being incurred by farmers due to the absence of proper smart precision IoT based Agri solutions for pre, post and during cultivation analytics.

2. Go Vidyouth won the Second prize of Rs. 30,000

It is a low-cost extended range Electric Two-Wheeler with zero emissions in EV mode/ low emissions in the range extender (REx) mode that eliminates vehicle dependence on charging stations. Also, 60-80 percent reduction in the cost of travel compared to a gasoline vehicle.

3. KapUM won the Third prize of Rs. 20,000

A mechanically actuated autoflush for toilets with locking and unlocking mechanism that makes operation and maintenance easy for toilets.

IIT Mandi Catalyst will offer incubation support to these 15 teams including the top three teams. The incubation support creates an opportunity for startups to get grant and investment worth Rs. 16.5 lakh from IIT Mandi Catalyst.

