



Press Release

Deputy Commissioner of Mandi kicks off 'Startup Exploration Program 2019' of IIT Mandi Catalyst

MANDI, 14th February 2019: IIT Mandi Catalyst, the first technology business incubator of Himachal Pradesh, at Indian Institute of Technology Mandi, inaugurated the 'Startup Exploration Program 2019' on Monday, 11th February 2019. Mr. Rugved Thakur, Deputy Commissioner of Mandi, inaugurated the program.

The inaugural session began with an address by Prof. Timothy A. Gonsalves, Director, IIT Mandi, who welcomed 10 startup teams and encouraged them to make the best use of the research labs and faculty expertise available in the Institute.

Congratulating IIT Mandi Catalyst for greatly ramping up with its efforts for their plans in 2019, Prof. Timothy A Gonsalves, Director, IIT Mandi, said, "IIT Mandi Catalyst is essentially a win-win proposition for IIT Mandi and for entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs get access to our faculty, labs and sophisticated instruments. One of our commitments is to develop the technology that is useful for the society and one way of taking it to the society is through Startups."

In his address, Mr. Rugved Thakur, Deputy Commissioner of Mandi, welcomed the startup teams and congratulated them on their brave decision to start a venture. **Applauding the initiatives undertaken by IIT Mandi Catalyst to support budding entrepreneurs, Mr. Thakur said,** "It is a great initiative by IIT Mandi Catalyst that the young entrepreneurs are coming to Himachal with various business ideas and finding practical solutions for the community, state and other parts of the country".

The inaugural session was followed up by a 'Startups Showcase', during which the dignitaries visited the presentation booths of the startup teams and engaged in detailed discussion on their ideas and prototypes.

IIT Mandi Catalyst will be providing training, mentoring and financial support to these startup teams over the next three months during which these teams will convert their ideas into prototypes/products. It is noteworthy that Catalyst maintains a co-working space and hostel facility for startup teams at Mandav Complex in Mandi town. Among the 10 startups admitted to the program, three are working in agro-tech, three in clean energy, one in waste management and others in IoT and Augmented reality-based commercial solutions.

Here is an introduction to a few of the startups participating in the 'Startup Exploration Program 2019' of IIT Mandi Catalyst:

1. **Azeedo:** For farmers who suffer losses due to pest attack, have to spend more on chemical and biological pesticides, Crop-Defender, a product of Azeedo, will be a biological pesticide, eco-friendly and affordable.

2. **Innovation Quest:** ARaT is an augmented reality feature animated T-shirt, for children of age group of 4-14 years who find it difficult to get active while playing mobile games. It is a product where the children will get physically active and both the wearer and person focusing camera can play/interact over gaming and learning experience.
3. **Ecekal:** For apple growers who have to clean and sort apples manually, Ecekal, is providing an ultra-low cost, automatic and portable machine to sort and clean apples automatically.
4. **Arise Motors:** For autorickshaw owners, who spend a lot on fuel and maintenance, the unique product ELV-800 will be an Electric Auto Rickshaw that helps to cut down these operational costs considerably.
5. **Atuvik:** For the rural population of Himachal Pradesh, which cooks food on traditional wooden stoves, Atuvik stove will be a cost-effective way that provides clean combustion and healthier environment to cook food.
6. **BRAHMASTRA:** BRAHMASTRA is a mobile platform where vendors who struggle to find local produce, continued supply, off season organic, quality produce will connect with the local producers in the nearby location.
7. **High Five Innovation Labs:** We are building a cost-effective, efficient and accurate solution to convert existing energy meters into prepaid meters.
8. **Waste on Wheels:** For Municipal Corporation who spends a lot of money on waste collection and segregation, Waste on Wheels is making a processing unit that can be integrated into the waste collection truck to segregate mixed solid municipal waste into biodegradable and non-biodegradable, right at the source.
9. **Sun Navigation:** For commuters who waste time waiting for their transports, our product, Vehitra, is a mobile app and tracking device that helps to keep track of their buses and for better time management.
10. **MODI:** MODI is developing a swappable lithium ion battery pack for 'e-rickshaws' that will be cost effective and more efficient.

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About IIT Mandi (<http://www.iitmandi.ac.in/>)

Nestled in Sivalik Range of the Himalayas, IIT Mandi is fast emerging as a leader in science and technology education, knowledge creation and innovation, in an India marching towards a just, inclusive and sustainable society. Since the first batch of students took place in July 2009, IIT Mandi has grown to host 1,276 students including 274 PhD, 46 MS and 17 I-Ph.D. research scholars, 104 Faculty, 150 staff, and attracted funding to the tune of over Rs.70

crore for Research Projects. A growing body of alumni, nearly 850 in number, will become the champions of this institute as they assume leadership positions in industry, academia and administration.

From 1,280 students in 2018, the Institute aims to grow to 5,000 B.Tech, M.Tech/M.Sc. and M.S./Ph.D. by 2029. Currently, the campus has completed about 80,000 sq.m. of construction. Another 1,50,000 sq.m. is currently under construction. IIT Mandi has a fully residential campus with all students and 95 percent of the faculty residing within it.

Since 2010, IIT Mandi's faculty has bagged nearly 180 projects worth more than Rs. 85 Crore. IIT Mandi, in just 9 years of its existence, has been able to develop several labs and facilities on its campus here at Kamand, creating an extraordinary research ambiance. The Advanced Materials Research Centre (AMRC), created with an investment of about Rs. 50 crore, houses advanced instruments for the characterization of materials with scope for drug delivery, electrical, electronics and biological applications. Since its inception in 2013, the AMRC has contributed to more than 200 research publications.

The institute has an Interdisciplinary Academic Culture which is Design-oriented. The B.Tech. curriculum focuses on Real-World team projects from the Year One to Four A strong humanities component as well makes the IIT Mandi curriculum even more relevant to the society at large. There are many active MoUs with TU9 in Germany since May 2011.

Launched in 2016, IIT Mandi's very own technology-business incubator Catalyst is the first Technology Business Incubator (TBI) in Himachal Pradesh. It aims to incubate technology-based startups focused on economic and/or social impacts. EWOK (Enabling Women of Kamand Valley) is another very innovative program being run by IIT Mandi which focuses on Skills training village-scale businesses by village women using Internet and pervasive mobile network and Serving local and global customers.

Media contact for IIT Mandi:

IIT Mandi Media Cell - mediacell@iitmandi.ac.in

Akhil Vaidya -Footprint Global Communications

Cell: 9882102818 / Email ID: akhil.vaidya@footprintglobal.com

Samriddhi Bhal - Footprint Global Communications

Cell: 7905887524 / Email: samriddhi.bhal@footprintglobal.com

Palak Sakhuja - Footprint Global Communications

Cell: 9582338333 / Email: palak.sakhuja@footprintglobal.com

Shoma Bhardwaj - Footprint Global Communications

Cell: 9899960763/ Email: shoma.bhardwaj@footprintglobal.com

Bhavani Giddu - Footprint Global Communications

Cell: 9999500262 / Email: bhavani.giddu@footprintglobal.com