



PRESS RELEASE

IIT Mandi Catalyst successfully organises Himalayan Innovation Challenge 2019

Innovative ideas in Agriculture, Waste Management, Climate Change, Renewable energy, Road safety, Disaster management and Healthcare sectors were presented in this challenge

MANDI, 27th May 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.

It is notable that Catalyst in the last two years has supported more than 30 startups of which 16 have been from the State of Himachal Pradesh. Of these, four startups have progressed into the commercialisation phase. These startups have generated employment and internship



opportunities for more than 60 individuals. Catalyst has disbursed over Rs. 1 crore grant and investments to startups in the past two years.

###

About IIT Mandi

Since the first batch of 97 students joined in July 2009, IIT Mandi has grown to host 1,300 students including 300 PhD, 46 MS research scholars, besides 110 Faculty and 150 staff. IIT Mandi's fully residential campus in Kamand boasts 1.2 lakh sq.m. of completed buildings with 95,000 sqm currently under construction. IIT Mandi has been ranked No. 20 in the Engineering Institutions Category in the [India Rankings 2019](#) released by National Institutional Ranking Framework, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Govt. of India. In the Outreach and Inclusivity metric of NIRF, IIT Mandi is 1st among all 23 IITs.

Since 2010, IIT Mandi's faculty has bagged nearly 180 projects worth more than Rs. 85 crore. A notable mention is the Advanced Materials Research Centre (AMRC), created in 2013 with an investment of about Rs. 50 crore, housing advanced instruments for characterization of materials. The Institute also hosts a 'Class 100 Clean Room' facility, a world-class research centre that is first-of-its-kind in India. In 2017, the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, selected IIT Mandi to lead the prestigious Rs. 10 crore FarmerZoneTM Project.

The unique, project-oriented B.Tech curriculum is centred around its 4-year long Design and Innovation stream. It is poised to become the first IIT to offer a B.Tech in Data Science & Engineering. There are many active MoUs with TU9 in Germany since May 2011. About 25 students from WPI, U.S., have been visiting IIT Mandi every year since 2013, along with 2 WPI faculty.

Launched in 2016, IIT Mandi's Catalyst is the first Technology Business Incubator in Himachal Pradesh. EWOK (Enabling Women of Kamand Valley) is another innovative program run by IIT Mandi, which focuses on imparting Skills training to rural women to enable them to start village-scale business.

Media contact for IIT Mandi:

IIT Mandi Media Cell - mediacell@iitmandi.ac.in / Landline: 01905267832

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

Sairam Radhakrishnan - Footprint Global Communications

Cell: 9840108083/ Email: sairam.radhakrishnan@footprintglobal.com

Bhavani Giddu - Footprint Global Communications

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