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NATIONAL STARTUP DAY — Celebrating 10 years of Startup India

5th Edition

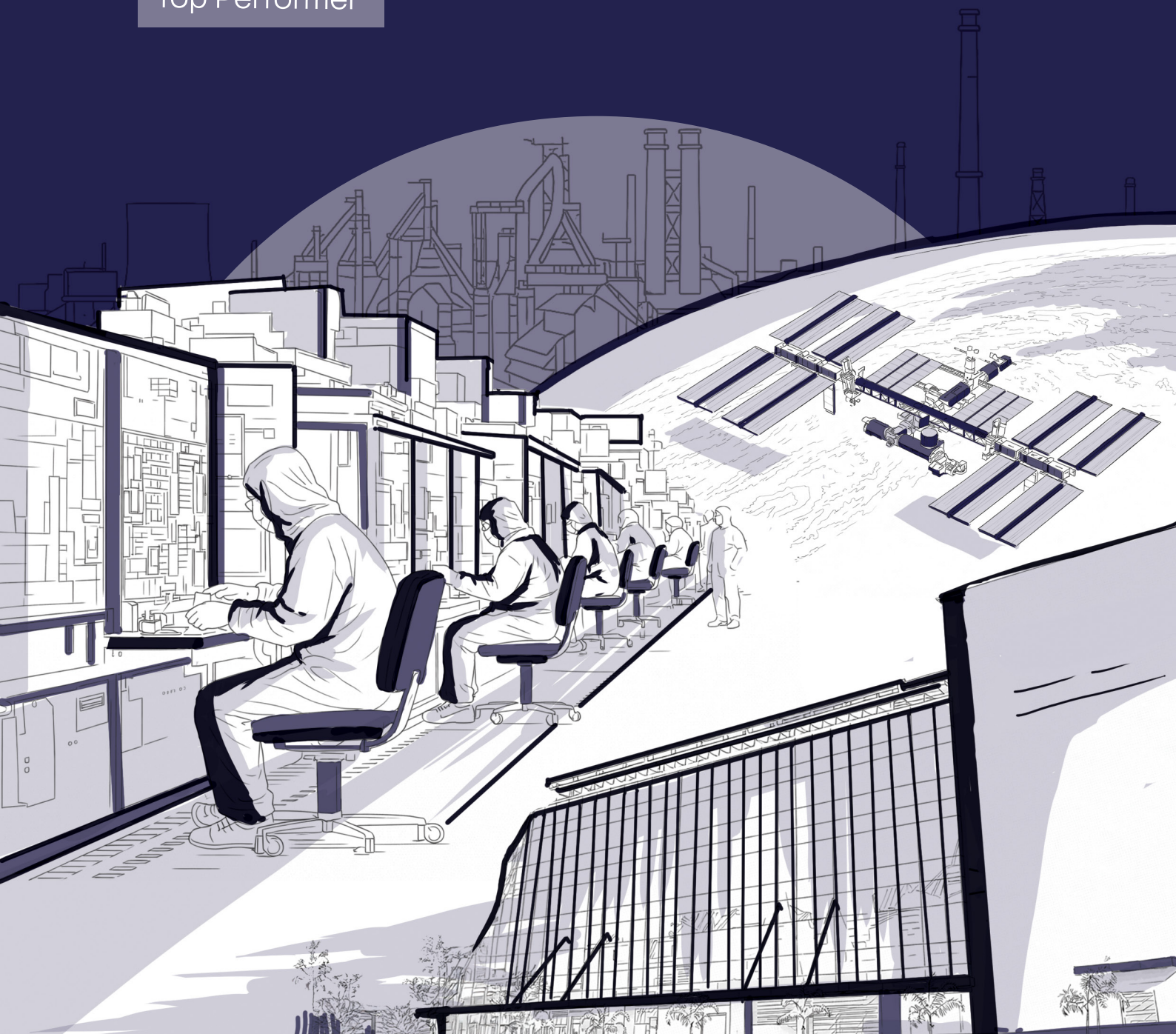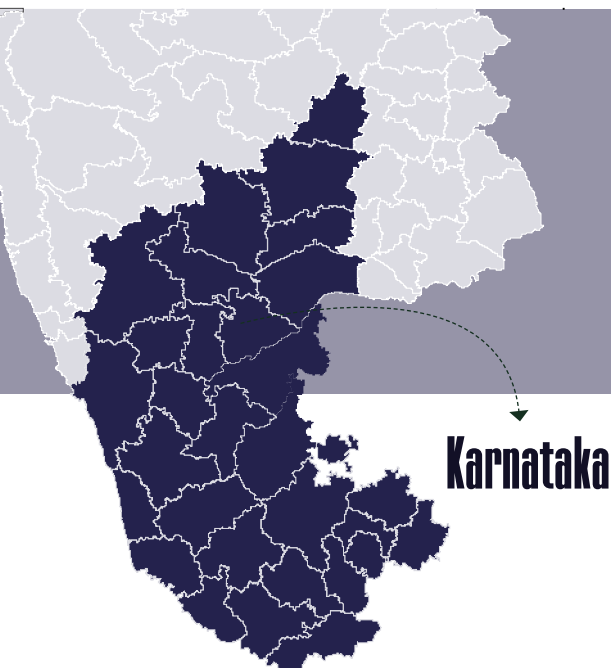# States' Startup Ecosystem Ranking

Karnataka

Top Performer

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1. About the State

Karnataka

The Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS) is the nodal agency promoting the State's startup ecosystem, implementing schemes, programs, and policy interventions.

Karnataka is located in the southern part of the Indian subcontinent, spanning a geographical area of 192,000 Sq. Km. As per the Census 2011, the State had a population of 6.87 Cr. Its Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) stood at INR 28.83 Lakh Cr in 2024-25, growing at a CAGR of 12.7% over 2011-12.

The Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS), Department of Electronics, Information Technology, Biotechnology, and Science & Technology, Government of Karnataka is the nodal agency promoting the State's startup ecosystem, implementing schemes, programs, and policy interventions. Under KITS, the Karnataka Startup Cell acts as a single point of contact for startups,

providing access to incentives, CoEs, TBIs, CIFs, incubation support, mentor and investor networks, and facilitating outreach and international exposure.

Karnataka hosts one of India's most mature startup ecosystems, with 21,000 startups and the distinction of being the first State to announce a dedicated Startup Policy in 2015. The Government has implemented a range of programs to support startups across their business lifecycle, including funding at various stages (seed, venture capital, angel investment, and sector-specific funding), incubation support, mentorship, coworking spaces, and a dedicated Startup Cell. The State is home to over 40 unicorns and has established 14 Centres of Excellence, reflecting its strong focus on innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship. Recently, the state had released an updated version of the policy – Karnataka Startup Policy 2025 – 2030.

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2. State Startup Policies and Initiatives

2.1 State Startup Policies

- The Karnataka Startup Policy 2022-27 is a nine-pillar framework and offers incentives, including SGST reimbursement, patent filing cost reimbursement, and quality certification cost reimbursement for Beyond Bengaluru startups.

- Under the Karnataka Biotechnology Policy 2024–2029, Biotechnology Incubation or Acceleration Centres located outside Bengaluru Urban and Bengaluru Rural districts are eligible for a one-time capital grant towards Fixed Cost Investment (excluding land and building). Additionally, for the upgradation or expansion of such centres, a one-time capital grant of 50% is also provided.

- Under the Karnataka ESDM Policy, incentives to startups include reimbursement of testing/certification charges from domestic or international labs, interest subsidy on term loans for five years, and reimbursement of prototype development costs.

- The Karnataka AVGC-XR Policy 2024–2029 provides funding support through the Early-Stage Startup Support Program, offering reimbursement of marketing and leasing costs, and operational and compliance costs.

- The Karnataka Cyber Security Policy 2024 aims to identify and nurture promising startups in the cybersecurity domain through state-supported incubation programs, providing them with specialized mentorship, intellectual property facilitation, and industry partnerships, in alignment with the Karnataka Startup Policy.

- The Government of Karnataka's IT Policy (2020–2025) has announced an exemption for IT, ITeS, Knowledge, and Startup entities from the applicability of the Karnataka Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Rules, 1946 for a period of five years, accompanied by provisions to ensure the protection of women employees and to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

2.2 Key Initiatives Driving Growth

The State has undertaken several strategic initiatives to nurture innovation, empower entrepreneurs, and accelerate the growth of the startup ecosystem:

- **Grand Challenges, Karnataka:**
  A Government of Karnataka initiative to identify technologies or innovations addressing persistent social issues, channelizing innovations for social impact and supporting startup establishment and growth.

- **Schemes:**
  LEAP, an INR 1,000 Cr initiative to boost regional entrepreneurship; RGEP, providing early-stage funding for student- and entrepreneur-led ideas; New Age Innovation Network 2.0, fostering innovation in educational institutions; and ELEVATE Idea2PoC, offering up to INR 50 L for prototype development and market readiness.

- **Startup Booster Kit:**
  The 'startup Karnataka booster kit' initiative was launched initially in 2016. Now, the Karnataka government is introducing new sector-based booster kits for startups.

- **Centre of Excellence for IoT & AI:**
  Established to accelerate Karnataka's IoT and AI ecosystem by leveraging India's IT strengths, the Centre fosters innovation through collaboration between startups and corporates to develop cutting-edge applications and build domain capabilities in the convergent hardware–software landscape.

- **Karnataka Information Technology Venture Capital Fund (KITVEN Fund):**
  A State and Central Government–backed venture capital fund operating since 1999, KITVEN supports the growth of Karnataka's startup ecosystem by providing funding support.
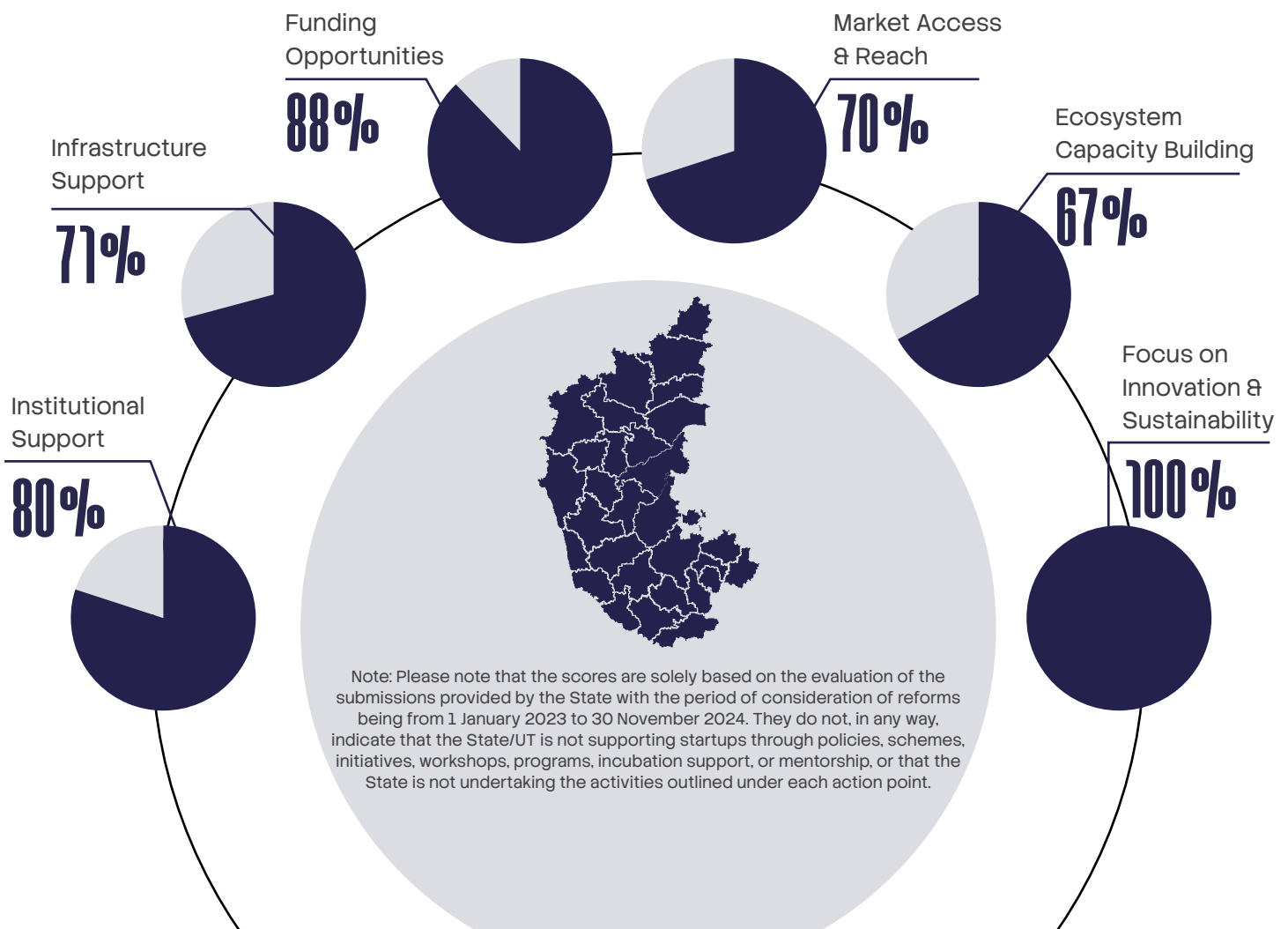
3. States' Startup Ecosystem Ranking Results

Karnataka participated in all 6 Reform Areas and 19 Action Points under the 5th edition of States' Startup Ecosystem Ranking, and has been positioned as a 'Top Performer' State in Category A.

The State's performance in each of the Reform Areas has been graphically represented, with the results presented in the form of percentile scores. These percentile scores reflect the State's relative performance in each Reform Area vis-à-vis other participating States and UTs in Category A. For instance, a 100th percentile score in the 'Institutional Support' Reform Area indicates that Karnataka has outperformed all other participating States and UTs in Category A on this parameter.

The state has been evaluated on six reform areas that have a significant contribution towards propelling the startup ecosystem in the State. Detailed analysis with insights into the initiatives taken by the State to promote its startup ecosystem are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Figure 1: Reform area wise scores for Karnataka

Funding Opportunities **88%**

Market Access & Reach **70%**

Infrastructure Support **71%**

Ecosystem Capacity Building **67%**

Institutional Support **80%**

Focus on Innovation & Sustainability **100%**

Note: Please note that the scores are solely based on the evaluation of the submissions provided by the State with the period of consideration of reforms being from 1 January 2023 to 30 November 2024. They do not, in any way, indicate that the State/UT is not supporting startups through policies, schemes, initiatives, workshops, programs, incubation support, or mentorship, or that the State is not undertaking the activities outlined under each action point.

4. Reform Area 1 - Institutional Support

4.1 Introduction

Institutional Support focuses on the foundational support provided by state governments to foster startup ecosystems. It evaluates whether states have active startup policies, designated nodal departments, and dedicated teams. It also assesses the extent of support provided by other government departments beyond the nodal agency. Key action points include the presence of a startup policy, identification and development of priority sectors, support for women entrepreneurs, and initiatives for young student entrepreneurs.

It covers 6 action points:

Action Point 1:
Support Provided to Startups by State/UT Department(s)

Action Point 2:
For Development with a Futuristic and Disruptive Focus

Action Point 3:
Women Entrepreneurial Development
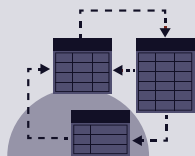
Action Point 4:
For the Growth of Young Entrepreneurs

Action Point 5:
Entrepreneurial Growth in the Social Innovation Landscape

Action Point 6:
Mentorship Support Provided to Startups

4.2 Performance

10+
Unique schemes/ initiatives/activities launched to develop Priority Sectors

110+
Startups supported by Departments other than those by the nodal department

295+
Startups supported in the priority sectors

80+

Women-led startups supported by the State

20+

Structures/ schemes/ initiatives/ activities and/ or programs provided in educational institutions to support student entrepreneurs

95+

Mentors providing mentorship support to Startups facilitated by the State

Institutional support provided to Startups:

The State has put in place an institutional framework to support startups through its Startup Policy Karnataka Startup Policy 2022-27, with its nodal department being Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS), Department of Electronics, Information Technology, Biotechnology, and Science & Technology, Government of Karnataka.

Several incentives have been extended under this policy, including 100% reimbursement of State GST for eligible startups incubated in government-supported incubators outside Bengaluru for up to 3 years, reimbursements for marketing expenses (typically up to 30% of costs or INR 5 L per year), patent filing cost reimbursement (up to INR 2 L for Indian patents and INR 10 L for foreign patents), and quality certification cost support (50% reimbursement up to INR 6 L) among other incentives.

Under the Karnataka Startup Cell, the State has a dedicated nodal officer and a dedicated team responsible for startup promotion and facilitation

In addition to the nodal department, multiple line departments across the State including Department of Backward Class Welfare, Department of Social Welfare, Department of Urban Land Transport, Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board, Minority Welfare Department, among others, have extended institutional support to startups in the form of financial assistance, and other incentives.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, a total of **7+ departments other than the nodal department** have implemented startup-relevant schemes, benefitting **110 startups** during the evaluation period.

Development with a Futuristic and Disruptive Focus

The State has identified priority sectors to guide the development of a futuristic and innovation-driven startup ecosystem. These priority sectors include Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES), Biotechnology, AVGC, Electronics and Semiconductor Manufacturing, Cybersecurity,

Agriculture, Textiles and Apparel, Tourism, Aerospace and Defence, among others.

To promote startups operating within the identified priority sectors, the State had **10+ schemes, initiatives / policies / activities operational** during the evaluation period. These priority sectors have been identified and supported through slew of schemes launched by the state including Karnataka Startup Policy 2022-27, Karnataka Information Technology (IT) Policy 2020-25, Karnataka Biotechnology Policy 2024-29, Karnataka AVGC-XR Policy 2024-29, Karnataka ESDM Policy 2018-22, among others.

These interventions include funding support, incubation and acceleration programmes, infrastructure and cluster creation, pilot and regulatory sandbox opportunities, industry and global partnership facilitation, research and innovation grants, skilling and talent development initiatives, and market access and procurement linkages. Further, complemented by tax and SGST reimbursements, capital and R&D subsidies, patent and certification cost support, shared testing and prototyping facilities, Centres of Excellence, and sector-specific parks and hubs, among others.
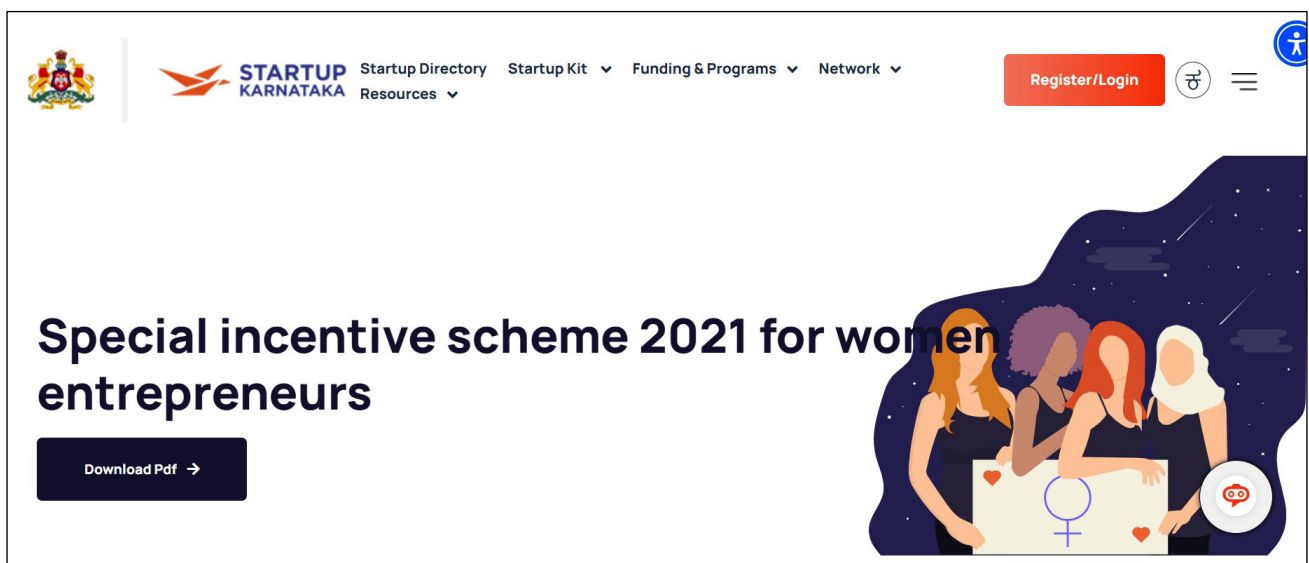
As per the documentary evidence submitted, a total of **295+ unique startups** have been supported across the identified priority sectors.

Women Entrepreneurial Development

The State has undertaken focused measures to promote women entrepreneurship as part of its startup ecosystem development efforts. Dedicated incentives and support mechanisms for women-led startups have been introduced through Karnataka Startup Policy 2022-27, including reservation of at least 10% of seats across all government supported incubators on a preferential basis for startups with women cofounders, 1/3rd of participants in state supported exposure and immersion programs, including startups, students, and faculty, must be women, among others.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, the State has supported **80+ unique women-led startups** during the evaluation period. These startups are distributed across **20+ district**s within the State.

Figure 2: Dedicated webpage for Women Startups on Startup Karnataka Portal

Growth of Young Entrepreneurs

The State has implemented structured interventions to encourage entrepreneurship among students and young innovators through educational institutions. These include Sustainability Hackathon Challenge, Innovation in Technology, Entrepreneurship as a Career Option, World Creativity and Innovation Day, Achieving Problem Solution Fit and Product Market Fit, Yuva Entrepreneurship Skills, Attitude and Behavior Development, Young Entrepreneurship Programme AURA 2.0, Entrepreneurship Boot Camp, National Level Hardware Hackathon, and Workshops on Intellectual Property Rights and IP Management among others.

For instance, the State initiated a one-day "Sustainability Hackathon Challenge (SHC)" bootcamp on 27th March 2023 at the Alva Institute of Engineering & Technology, Moodbidri. The event was organized jointly by the Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC) of the institute, the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), and the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC), with support from the Manipal Universal Technology Business Incubator (MUTBI) and other partners. The inauguration featured senior leaders including Mr. Ronald Silvan D'Souza (Founder & Director, Leksa Lighting Technologies), Prof. Shibin Mohamed T K (EDII trainer), Mrs. Sushma (Project Coordinator, EDII), Mr. Vivek Alva (Managing Trustee, AEF), Dr. Peter Fernandes (Principal, AIET), Dr. Dattathreya (IIC President) and Prof. Sudheer Shetty (EDC Coordinator).

During the bootcamp, participants attended expert sessions on sustainable start-ups, entrepreneurship ecosystems, and value innovation, gaining practical knowledge on product validation, business-model development, and creating value-added solutions.

Overall, during the evaluation period, the State implemented **20+ such comprehensive suppor**t structures / schemes / programs aimed at supporting student entrepreneurs which saw participation of 2860+ students from various New Age Innovation Network (NAIN) colleges setup in the State under the Startup Policy of Karnataka.

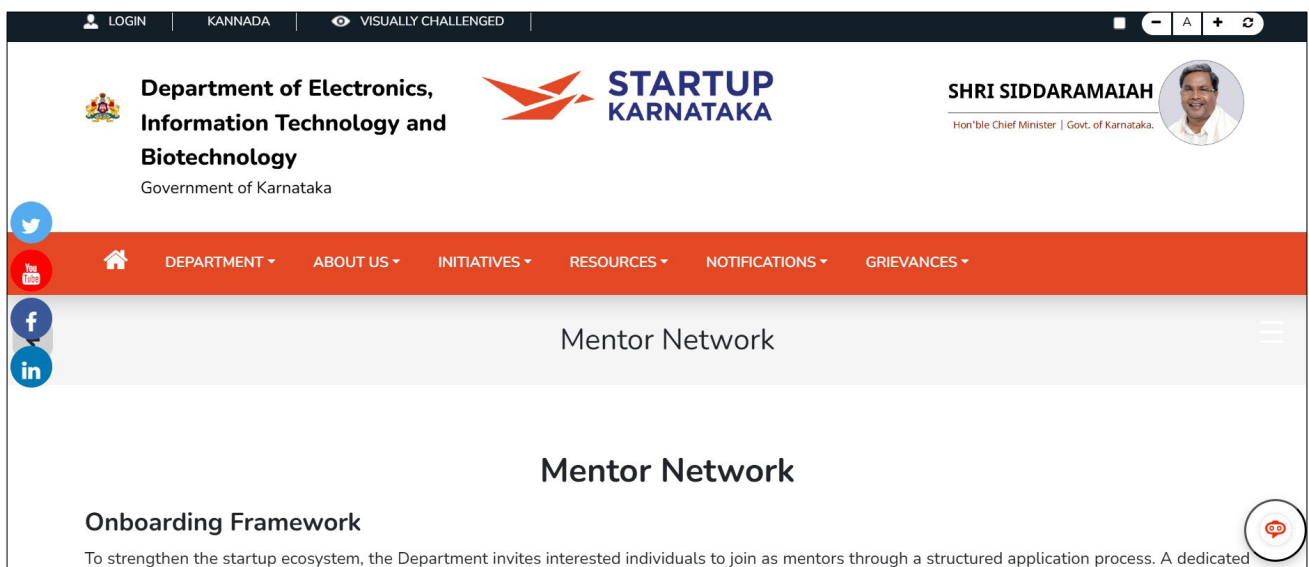**Figure 3: Glimpses of the Sustainability Hackathon Challenge Bootcamp**

Entrepreneurial Growth in the Social Innovation Landscape

The State has extended targeted support to startups operating in the public welfare and social innovation space, through Karnataka Startup Policy 2022-2027, wherein it gives a thrust to startups working for social/rural impact in terms of providing employment generation, rural entrepreneurship and innovation focused on social/rural impact. The State has also come up with a dedicated definition for Grassroot or Innovation with Social/Rural Impact for identifying and nurturing them and the same was announced in the Government Order with number ITBT 10 PRM 2021, Bengaluru dated 18th June 2021.

Mentorship Support Provided to Startups

The State has facilitated structured mentorship support for startups as part of its ecosystem development initiatives through Expert Mentorship Program, Karnataka Startup Advancement Programme, among others. As per the documentary evidence provided, a total of **95+ mentors** have been engaged to provide mentorship support to startups within the State during the evaluation period.

Figure 4: Karnataka's Mentor Network

5. Reform Area 2 - Infrastructure Support

5.1 Introduction

Infrastructure Support evaluates the availability and quality of both digital and physical infrastructure provided by states to startups. Digital infrastructure includes state startup portals with features like online registration, grievance redressal, and accessibility in local languages and for people with disabilities. Physical infrastructure focuses on the establishment and upgrading of incubators, especially those supporting manufacturing and hardware startups. It also assesses the number of startups receiving incubation support and the facilities available to them.

It covers 2 action points:

Action Point 7:
Access to Digital Infrastructure

Action Point 8:
Access to Physical Infrastructure

5.2 Performance

940+
Startups registered on the State Startup portal

20+
Existing incubators were upgraded for the Startups.

245+
Startups were incubated at incubators

Access to Digital Infrastructure

The State has enabled digital access for startups through a unified State Startup Portal - Mission Startup Karnataka that serves as a single-window interface for registration, information dissemination, and service delivery. As per the records submitted, **940+ startups** are registered on the State Startup Portal.

The State has ensured that key service delivery features are available through the digital platform, including a fully online application process for incentives under the State Startup Policy and a grievance redressal mechanism for startups to submit queries or complaints. The portal is accessible in the local or official language of the State and has provisions to support accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The portal provides easy access to policy and scheme information, incentive details, government orders, reports, and events, helping startups stay informed about opportunities and compliance requirements. It also hosts a startup directory and networking tools that connect startups with incubators, investors, mentors, and ecosystem partners, and enables participation in flagship programmes like Idea2PoC/ELEVATE for early funding and validation. Additionally, the platform supports registration and application management for various state initiatives, shares updates on industry challenges and grand competitions, and offers resources such as IP facilitation and market incentive details.

The state has also integrated the portal with AI-based chatbot called KAIPIDI to support startups regarding policy information, updates and other details.

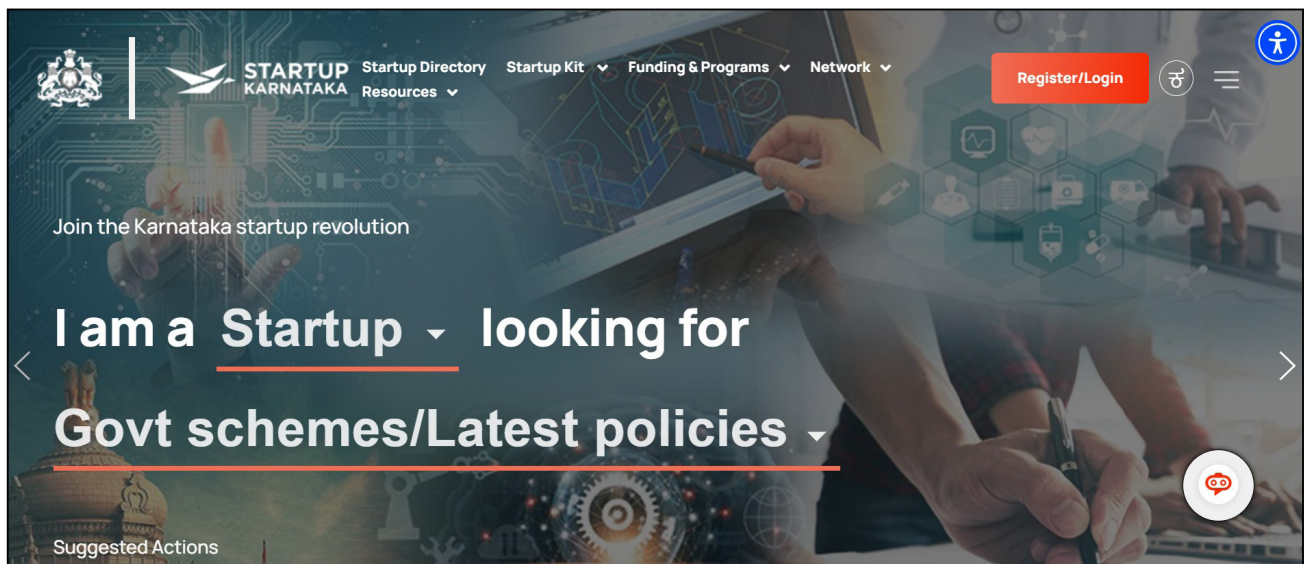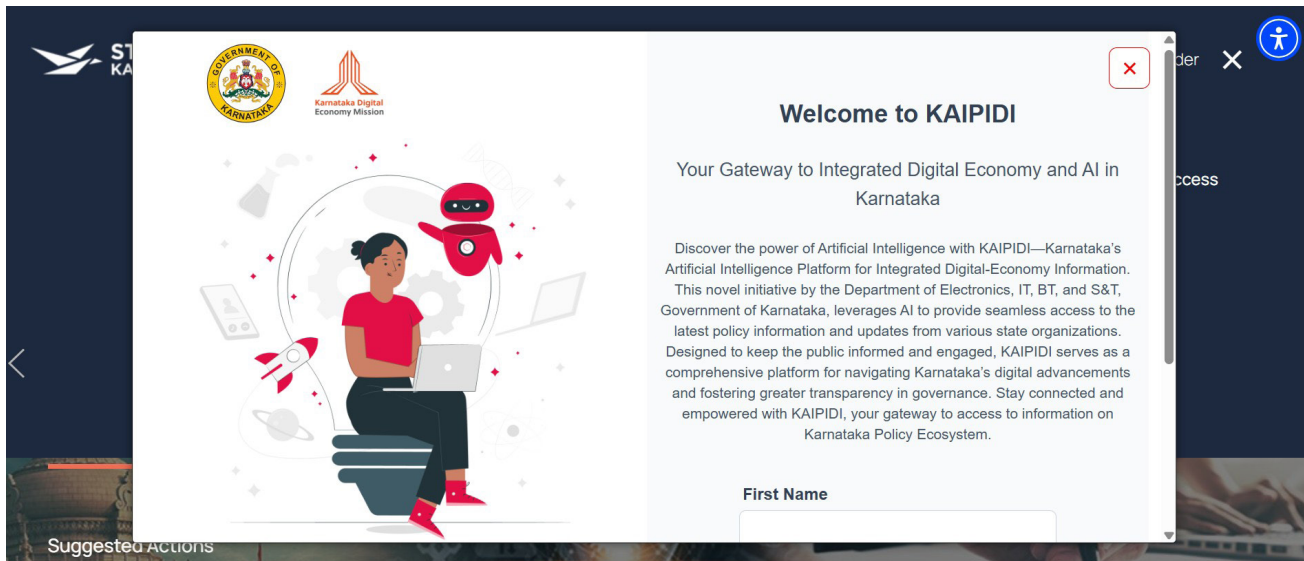**Figure 5: Webpage of Mission Startup Karnataka Portal**

Figure 6: AI-based chatbot – KAPIDI – on Startup Karnataka portal

Access to Physical Infrastructure

The State has strengthened physical infrastructure support for startups, particularly those engaged in manufacturing and hardware sectors, through the establishment and upgradation of incubators and acceleration facilities.

During the evaluation period, the State has upgraded **20+ existing incubator**s. These include Institute of Bioinfomatics and Applied Biotechnology (IBAB), Centre for Human Genetics, Bangalore Bioinnovation Center (BBC), IKP Knowledge Park, Nasscom Centre of Excellence for IoT, among others.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, a total of **245+ unique startups** have received incubation or acceleration support across State-supported incubators and accelerators during the period of consideration.

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6. Reform Area 3 - Funding Opportunities

6.1 Introduction

Funding Opportunities examine the financial mechanisms established by states to support startups. It includes the creation and management of seed funds, venture funds, and funds of funds, especially those targeting priority sectors. It also evaluates the number of startups that have received funding through these mechanisms and the extent of collaboration with financial institutions. Additionally, it assesses initiatives like pitching sessions and investor connect programs that facilitate access to private capital.

It covers 3 action points:

Action Point 9:
Access to Funding

Action Point 10:
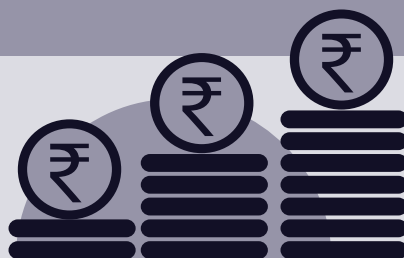Number of Startups which have Received Funding through State Supported Funds or Mechanisms

Action Point 11:
State Support in Fundraising Initiatives

6.2 Performance

285+ Startups received funding from the State

10+ programs with pitching sessions for Startups undertaken by state

75+ Startups connected with investors

Access to Funding

The State has instituted dedicated funding mechanisms to improve access to capital for startups. For instance, Karnataka Innovation and Technology Venture Fund-5 (KITVEN Fund-5) is an Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) – Venture Capital Fund with a target corpus of INR 100 crore. The fund aims to invest in startups and SMEs in Karnataka working on Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, MedTech, Electric Vehicles, and other disruptive technologies.

In addition to direct funding instruments, the State has initiated collaborative funding provisions for startups in partnership with banking and financial institutions such as SBI Bank and HDFC Bank.

The State of Karnataka has provided funding support to **285+ startups** during the period of consideration.

State Support in Fundraising Initiatives

The State has undertaken targeted initiatives to facilitate fundraising for startups by enabling structured interactions with angels, investors, and financial institutions. These initiatives include **10+ state-led programs** featuring pitching session for Startups such as Investor Connect – Mysuru Blue, Investor Connect – Mangaluru Blue organized under the Beyond Bengaluru Program in collaboration with the Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM) and the Department of Electronics, IT, BT, and S&T, Government of Karnataka.

One of the major events organized by the state was Investor Connect Program - Bangalore Tech Summit 2024 which connected 166 innovative startups with over 100 global investors. The event showcased cutting-edge solutions in sectors such as AI, biotech, fintech, and green tech, with a strong focus on deep tech, healthtech, and sustainability. Several high-potential startups engaged in funding discussions, gaining direct access to capital and networking with industry leaders. The program underscored Karnataka's commitment to innovation and economic growth, driving future collaboration and investment.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, the State has facilitated successful connections between **75+ startups** and investors through its initiatives and partnerships during the evaluation period.

Figure 7: Hon'ble Minister for IT & BT, Shri Priyank Kharge witnessing live pitching session

7. Reform Area 4 - Market Access & Reach

7.1 Introduction

Market Access & Reach focuses on how states help startups access markets by relaxing public procurement processes, awarding Government Work Orders, and domestic and international exposure. It evaluates the number of tenders floated with startup-friendly relaxations, the number of startups awarded work orders, and the reach of market access initiatives across districts. It also considers programs that connect startups with government departments, corporates, and international trade bodies for product showcases and pilot projects.

It covers 3 action points:

Action Point 12:
Market Access Opportunity Provided to Startups through Public Procurement

Action Point 13:
Number of Startups Awarded Purchase Orders or Work Orders

Action Point 14:
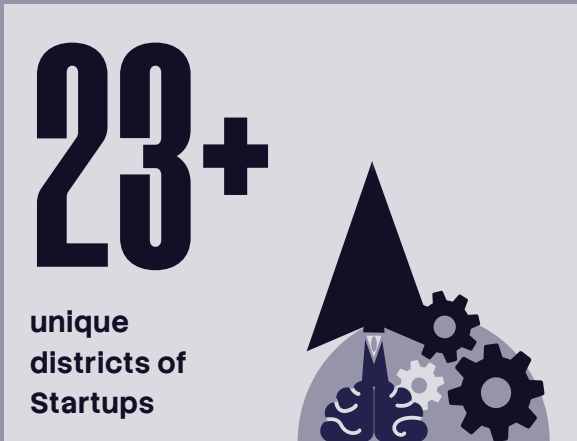Access to Domestic and International Market Access Opportunities

7.2 Performance

350+
tenders/RFPs floated by the state govt/ PSUs

60+
Startups awarded purchase orders

23+

unique districts of Startups

14+

unique market access opportunities

Market Access Opportunity Provided to Startups through Public Procurement

Government of Karnataka, as per Government Order No. FD 218 Exp-12/2021, Bengaluru, dated:01/09/2021 has relaxed "Prior Turnover" and "Prior experience" criteria for encouraging startups to participate in public procurement. Further, Government of Karnataka, as per Government Order No. ITD 27 PRM 2015 Bengaluru. dated:16.09.2017 has relaxed 'Submission of EMD criteria for startups for public procurement.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, Karnataka State Electronics Development Corporation Limited floated **350+ such tenders** during the period of consideration.

Number of Startups Awarded Purchase Orders or Work Orders

The State has enabled tangible market access for startups by awarding purchase orders or work orders through State government departments, agencies, and public sector undertakings. The awarded work orders or purchase orders span multiple sectors and departments such as Karnataka State Electronics Development Corporation, Department of food and Civil Supplies,

Department of Information and Public Relation, Animal Husbandry and Fishery Department and Water Resource Department among others.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, **60+ startups** have been awarded purchase orders or work orders during the evaluation period. These startups were distributed across **23 district**s within the State.

Access to Domestic and International Market Access Opportunities

During the evaluation period, the State implemented **10+ market access initiatives**, including G-20 Startup Showcase, Mega ICAI Startup Sphere 2024, Bangalore Tech Summit, Global Innovation Alliance Market Access Programme (GIA-MAP)-Belgium, Startup Ka Mahakumbh sessions among others, designed to improve visibility, customer acquisition, and business expansion opportunities for startups.

For instance, the Mega ICAI Startup Sphere 2024 facilitated over 200 startups in connecting with 100+ investors and industry leaders, driving funding discussions and strategic partnerships. The event strengthened India's startup ecosystem through knowledge sessions, networking, and ICAI's commitment to enabling innovation and investment opportunities.

8. Reform Area 5 - Ecosystem Capacity Building

8.1 Introduction

Ecosystem Capacity Building evaluates efforts to strengthen the startup ecosystem through training and sensitization programs. It includes workshops for government officials, capacity development for incubators, and sensitization programs for ecosystem enablers like mentors, investors, and accelerators. The focus is on building awareness, improving stakeholder capabilities, and fostering collaboration across the ecosystem.

It covers 3 action points:

Action Point 15:
Capacity Building of Officials of State Government Departments on Startup Ecosystem of India

Action Point 16:
Number of State-supported Incubators Trained Through Capacity Development Workshops

Action Point 17:
Number of Programs Conducted to Sensitize Ecosystem Enablers

8.2 Performance

10+
Sensitization workshops conducted

30+
Unique State-sponsored incubators trained

15+
State Departments Participated

2+
programs conducted to sensitize existing and potential ecosystem enablers

Capacity Building of Officials of State Government Departments on Startup Ecosystem of India

During the evaluation period, **10+ sensitization workshops** or programs have been conducted to familiarize officials with startup-related policies, regulatory frameworks, and the role of government in enabling entrepreneurship.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, officials from State departments such as Department of Horticulture, Department of Agriculture, Department of Women and Child Welfare-Directorate of Child Protection, Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Tourism among others participated in these sensitization programs.

Number of State-supported Incubators Trained through Capacity Development Workshops

The State has undertaken capacity development initiatives to strengthen the operational and managerial capabilities of State-supported incubators through structured training workshops and programs. As per the documentary evidence provided, **30+ State-supported incubators** have participated in capacity development workshops during the evaluation period.

Number of Programs Conducted to Sensitize Ecosystem Enablers

The State has conducted targeted programs to sensitize existing and potential ecosystem enablers, including knowledge-based sessions and one-on-one interactions to facilitate investor to investor connects as well as themes covering basics of angel Investment among others. As per the documentary evidence submitted, the State has conducted / supported **2+ sensitization programs** during the evaluation period.

9. Reform Area 6 - Focus on Innovation & Sustainability

9.1 Introduction

Focus on Innovation and Sustainability assess how states promote innovation and sustainability through support for Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Research and Development (R&D), and startups focused on climate change and circular economy. It evaluates the presence of policies facilitating IPR, the extent of R&D support, and the number of sustainability-focused startups receiving incentives.

It covers 2 action points:

Action Point 18:
Initiatives Undertaken by the State/UT to Facilitate Research and Innovation

Action Point 19:
Support to Startups for a Sustainable Focus

9.2 Performance

75+

Startups focused on renewable energy, climate change, and sustainability

Facilitating Research and Innovation in the State

Karnataka has the special provisions for facilitating and fast-tracking Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) like patent, copyright, trademark, etc. for startups. For instance, under Karnataka Startup Policy 2022-2027, startups are eligible for patent cost reimbursement up to INR 2 Lakh for each Indian patent and up to INR 10 Lakh for each foreign patent. Additionally, the state has established IP facilitation centres across eight locations, providing startups with support for patent filing and intellectual property protection.

Technology Transfer Organization (TTOs) in Karnataka were introduced in the 2023–24 budget with INR 4 crore allocation to support NAIN Centres. They manage intellectual property rights, facilitate patent filing, and drive technology commercialization by bridging the gap between research and industry.

Karnataka also provides R&D support for startups and innovators in priority sectors such as Additive Manufacturing, AI/ML, Digital Twin Technology, Language Technologies, Computer Vision, and Clean Energy. Under the Karnataka Startup Policy, the state is establishing 6 TBIs in IT/Electronics and 3 in Biotechnology, with funding of up to INR 10 crore per TBI over 5 years to strengthen links between R&D and technology commercialization in academic and research institutions.

Support to Startups for a Sustainable Future

The Karnataka Startup Policy 2022–2027 identifies renewable energy, climate change, and sustainability as priority innovation areas. Startups in these sectors are defined as those offering technology solutions to address gaps in renewable energy, sustainability, and climate challenges. The policy also provides dedicated support and funding for projects in these areas to strengthen the state's innovation ecosystem.

As per the documentary evidence submitted, the State has supported **75+ startups** working in areas such as renewable energy, climate resilience, climate technology, resource efficiency, waste management, and other sustainability-focused solutions.

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10. Way Ahead

- The State may establish a permanent inter-departmental coordination board that brings together the Innovation & Technology Society, the nodal officer, and all line ministries (social welfare, backward-class welfare, urban transport, minority welfare, among others). The board may publish a single-point contact list, define joint-ownership of incentives and monitor implementation across districts.

- The State may design a "social-impact startup" classification and publish a list of the special benefits (incubation support, capital subsidies, stamp-duty waivers, fast-track approvals) that apply to ventures addressing rural employment, health, education and other public-welfare outcomes.

- The State may expand the mentor ecosystem by launching a mentor-recruitment drive that targets sector experts, alumni entrepreneurs and corporate leaders, and by introducing a structured matching algorithm that aligns mentor expertise with startup stage and domain.

- The State may formalise a continuous capacity-building programme for ecosystem enablers (government officials, incubator managers, mentors and investors) that delivers certified modules on policy updates, procurement reforms, financing models, IPR processes and best practices in ecosystem support.

- The State may establish an "innovation-to-commercialisation" track for R&D that links technology-transfer organisations, research universities and incubators with fast-track funding, prototype-development grants and market-pilot linkages, especially for deep-tech, AI/ML, clean-energy and biotech projects.

11. Annexures

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