STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

AN OVERLOOK AT THE VIBRANT ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA, POLICY LANDSCAPE, INNOVATION, IP, FUNDING AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

LexOrbis | Intellectual Property Attorneys & Advocates

Contents

Foreword

India’s startup ecosystem has emerged as one of the most dynamic engines of economic and innovation-led growth. In just over a decade, the country has evolved from a primarily services-driven entrepreneurial landscape into a global hub for product companies, deep-tech ventures, digital platforms, and innovation-first enterprises. This transformation is powered by world-class technical talent, rapidly expanding digital public infrastructure, a large and diverse consumer base, and a strengthening funding and incubation ecosystem.

The policy environment has evolved in parallel. Programmes under the Startup India initiative, along with sector-specific schemes across ministries, have enabled access to recognition, seed funding, incubation, credit support, procurement pathways, and intellectual property facilitation. Recent reforms, such as expanded eligibility thresholds, a dedicated deep-tech category, new financial support schemes, and a continued push for Make in India, highlight the government’s commitment to strengthening innovation-driven enterprises.

This guidebook serves as a practical reference for founders, investors, incubators, corporates, and ecosystem enablers. It consolidates the essential components of India’s startup landscape into a single, accessible document, covering definitions and recognition frameworks, data-driven insights on startup growth, sectoral overviews, lifecycle and funding journeys, key government schemes and platforms, and dedicated chapters on innovation, deep technology, intellectual property, and the future outlook for the ecosystem.

1. Overview of India's Startup Ecosystem

India has developed one of the world's most vibrant and fast-expanding startup ecosystems, powered by a combination of public digital infrastructure, a large domestic market, entrepreneurial talent, and a structured policy and funding environment. Over the past decade, entrepreneurship has moved beyond metro-centric hubs to create a nationwide network of innovation, with startups emerging across consumer products, fintech, deep tech, climate technology, biotechnology, defence, and advanced manufacturing.

India also benefits from one of the world's largest talent pools of engineers, developers, researchers, and business professionals, forming a strong foundation for technology-driven ventures. Simultaneously, rapid digitalisation and expanded internet access have enabled startups to scale solutions to millions of users with unprecedented speed. A key driver of this evolution has been the formalisation and recognition of startups under the DPIIT framework of the Startup India programme.

Another defining strength of the Indian startup landscape is the presence of a robust network of incubators and accelerators, supported by universities, research institutions, and private-sector organisations. The ecosystem is further strengthened by integrating research and innovation with entrepreneurship. Intellectual property has become a crucial pillar for the growth and sustainability of startups, especially those developing technology-led and innovation-driven solutions. For startups creating novel products, software, hardware, or research-based technologies, strong IP and legal protection are essential to safeguard inventions, build market credibility, and secure long-term competitive advantage.

Highlights of India's Startup Ecosystem

+ Strong Entrepreneurial Talent Base and Public Infrastructure
+ Supportive Incubation and Acceleration Networks
+ Diverse Government Schemes and Policy Initiatives
+ Expansion into Emerging Technology Sectors
+ Robust Intellectual Property and Legal Support Frameworks

2. Latest DPIIT Startup Definition

Startups in India are recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Startup India framework. On February 4, 2026, DPIIT issued G.S.R. 108(E), a comprehensive notification that replaces the 2019 guidelines. The new framework significantly expands the economic thresholds and broadens the criteria for what qualifies as a startup. Notably, it introduces a formal statutory category for "Deep Tech Startups," covering enterprises engaged in advanced technologies such as AI, ML, biotechnology, and robotics.

These revisions reflect a shift from viewing startups purely as early-stage entities to recognising them as long-term drivers of innovation requiring sustained policy support. The reforms aim to strengthen the recognition framework, promote deep-tech development, support scaling ventures, and encourage cooperative-led entrepreneurship. Collectively, they highlight the government's intent to create a more enabling and innovation-focused ecosystem for startups to grow and contribute to economic development.

Changes Introduced by the DPIIT Notification

+ Turnover eligibility for general startups has been increased to INR 200 crore, enabling a wider range of enterprises to qualify for recognition and support.

+ A new category, "Deep Tech Startups," has been introduced to cover companies focused on advanced technologies. These startups are now eligible for recognition for up to 20 years from incorporation and with a turnover of up to INR 300 crore. Deep-tech startups are defined as enterprises developing solutions based on new or evolving scientific or engineering knowledge; having high R&D expenditure relative to revenue or funding; owning or building significant novel IP with clear commercialisation efforts; and operating with long development cycles, high capital requirements, and substantial technological uncertainties.

+ The revised guidelines also broaden the definition of eligible entities to include Multi-State Cooperative Societies and Cooperative Societies registered at the State or Union Territory level, ensuring a more inclusive startup ecosystem.

+ The notification further restricts the use of startup funds for speculative investments, non-productive activities, or luxury assets during the recognition period. Both general and deep-tech startups are expected to allocate resources primarily to core business activities, including innovation, R&D, product development, and scaling operations, to ensure genuine value creation and prevent misuse of public incentives.

+ Recognition as a startup would now require clear and demonstrable evidence of how the entity is working towards innovation, development, or improvement of products or processes or services, or of its scalability in terms of employment generation or wealth creation.

3. Startup Ecosystem in Numbers

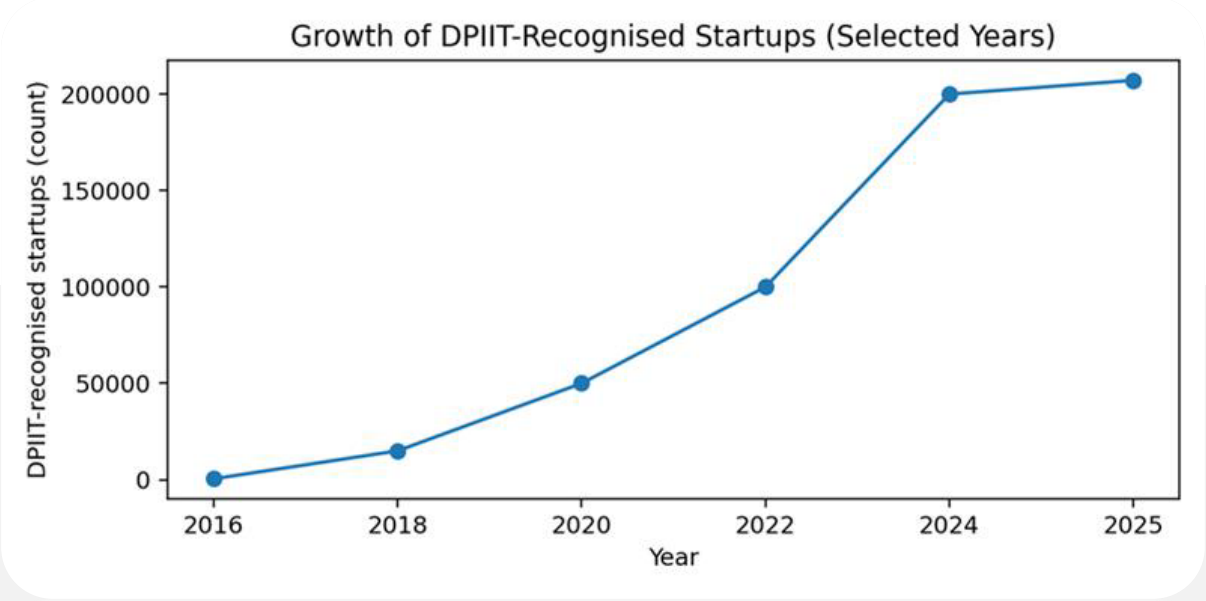
| 2,07,135 DPIIT-Recognised Startups

| Over 21.9 Lakh Direct Jobs Created

| 95% (approx.) CAGR in Recognised Startups over the Last Decade

| CAGR of 53% over the Last Decade in Deep Tech Startups

Growth Trends in the Last Decade



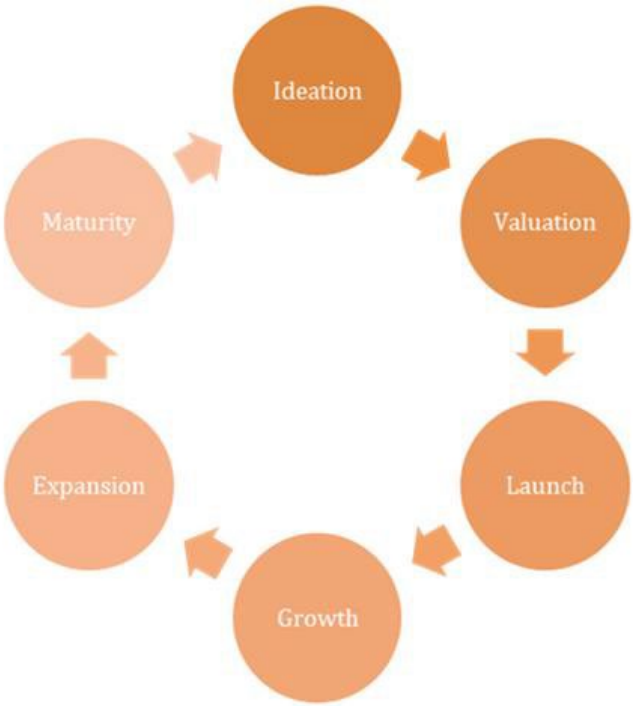
Top Emerging Sectors

+ FinTech
+ HealthTech
+ SaaS and Enterprise Tech
+ Agri Tech
+ Deep Tech
+ Climate Tech

Leading Startup Hubs and Emerging Cities

+ Bengaluru
+ Delhi-NCR
+ Mumbai
+ Hyderabad
+ Pune
+ Chennai

4. Overview of Startup Lifecycle



Every startup goes through different stages during its lifecycle, from an initial idea to a mature, sustainable enterprise. Different objectives, challenges, and strategic priorities characterise each stage of this journey. Understanding these stages helps founders, investors, and stakeholders align resources, funding strategies, legal decisions, and operational decisions to support the startup's growth trajectory.

+ **Ideation:** The ideation stage involves identifying a problem or market gap and developing an innovative business idea to address it, along with initial research.

+ **Validation:** In this stage, the startup tests the idea by developing its prototype and gathering early feedback to assess product-market fit, along with legal protection for the idea.

+ **Launch:** The launch stage involves introducing the product or service to the market, acquiring initial customers, and establishing basic operations and brand presence.

+ **Growth:** During the growth stage, the startup scales its operations, grows its customer base, improves the product, and often raises investment to accelerate expansion.

+ **Expansion:** At this stage, the startup enters new markets, diversifies products or services, and strengthens organisational capabilities to support larger-scale operations.

+ **Maturity:** The maturity stage represents a stable and established business with consistent revenue streams, where the focus shifts toward sustainability, innovation, and long-term strategic growth.

5. Government Schemes for Startups

1. Startup India (DPIIT Recognition)

Objective: DPIIT recognition under Startup India is designed to formally identify eligible startups so they can access the Startup India ecosystem, including policy facilitation, easier compliance pathways, tax-related benefits where applicable, intellectual property support, and other programme linkages through the Startup India platform.

Eligibility: Based on DPIIT's recognition criteria published on the Startup India portal (entity type, age/turnover limits, and innovation/scalability intent). Startups apply through the Startup India workflow and receive a recognition certificate that is commonly required for schemes such as CGSS and other Startup India-linked benefits.

2. Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS)

Objective: The Fund of Funds for Startups supports startups indirectly by providing capital to SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) ("daughter funds"), which then invest in high-potential Indian startups. The goal is to strengthen the VC ecosystem, improve access to capital at scale, and create a multiplier effect through professional fund managers.

Eligibility: FFS funds AIFs that are SEBI-registered and meet scheme conditions, including investment deployment requirements into startups. For instance, AIFs supported under FFS are required to invest at least a specified multiple of the FFS commitment in startups. Startups benefit when these AIFs invest in them, provided the startup matches the definition under Startup India as applicable.

3. Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS)

Objective: SISFS was created to help startups bridge the early-stage funding gap for proof-of-concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry, and commercialisation. It aims to reduce operational risks by providing seed funding through a network of incubators that evaluate and disburse funds.

Eligibility: Eligibility is assessed primarily through the scheme's incubator-led process. Startups typically must be early-stage and apply through the SISFS portal/incubator route as per scheme guidelines. The incubator evaluates the startup's stage, need, and milestones, and disburses a grant and/or debt/convertible support as permitted by the scheme.

4. Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS)

Objective: CGSS is designed to enable collateral-free debt funding for DPIIT-recognised startups by providing credit guarantees on loans extended by eligible lenders, including scheduled commercial banks, NBFCs, and venture debt funds under SEBI-registered AIFs. This improves startup access to venture debt, working capital, and term loans. The scheme's revised framework enhanced the maximum guarantee cover per eligible borrower from INR 10 crore to INR 20 crore.

Eligibility: The scheme is specifically for DPIIT-recognised startups, and the guarantee applies to eligible credit instruments issued by participating financial institutions/lenders under the CGSS framework. Eligibility and coverage are determined through lender-side underwriting, along with scheme rules and caps.

5. Scheme for Facilitating Startups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP)

Objective: SIPP is intended to promote awareness and adoption of intellectual property among startups and to help them protect and commercialise their innovations by enabling access to quality IP services (including empanelled facilitators). The scheme has been extended for three years with effect from April 1, 2023 (modified scheme).

Eligibility: The scheme is designed for startups that meet its eligibility criteria and seek support for IP filings through the SIPP facilitator framework, which is often accessed via empanelled facilitators/IP Mitras listed on the official IP India portal.

6. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

Objective: AIM is the Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. Its objective is to develop programmes and policies for fostering innovation across sectors, provide platforms for collaboration, and create an umbrella structure to oversee and strengthen the innovation ecosystem nationwide.

Eligibility: AIM is an umbrella mission and does not function like a single grant to founders. Eligibility varies by programme under AIM—for instance, incubation centres, innovation challenges, and institutional programmes. Startups typically participate via AIM's incubator network or programme calls as applicable.

7. Atal Incubation Centres (AICs)

Objective: AICs are world-class incubators established under AIM to foster and support innovation and entrepreneurs building scalable and sustainable enterprises, offering incubation infrastructure, mentorship, ecosystem access and venture-building support.

Eligibility: Startups access AIC support through the incubation selection process of a specific AIC. Eligibility, therefore, varies by centre's focus areas, cohorts, and selection criteria, but typically targets innovation-driven ventures that can benefit from structured incubation.

8. MeitY SAMRIDH

Objective: SAMRIDH supports existing and upcoming accelerators in selecting and accelerating IT-based startups, providing accelerator services and enabling funding support (including matching funding to startups, up to a stated cap per programme guidelines).

Eligibility: Typically routed through accelerator selection and cohort intake. Startups are selected into SAMRIDH-supported accelerator cohorts based on programme criteria and readiness, and accelerators receive support to deliver services and facilitate matching funding per guidelines.

9. MeitY TIDE 2.0 - Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs

Objective: TIDE 2.0 aims to strengthen technology startups and incubation centres by promoting tech entrepreneurship through financial and technical support to ICT and emerging-tech startups (e.g., IoT, AI, blockchain, robotics) in identified areas of societal relevance.

Eligibility: Access typically happens through TIDE-supported incubators/centres and programme tracks, including variants such as EiR in some centres. Eligibility depends on the specific call/centre guidelines and the applicant profile as defined by the programme documentation.

10. NIDHI - National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations

Objective: NIDHI is DST's umbrella initiative to nurture and translate innovations and technological ideas into startup ventures. It supports innovation-to-entrepreneurship pipelines through multiple instruments designed for ideation, prototyping, and early venture formation.

Eligibility: Eligibility varies by NIDHI sub-programme and implementation partner/incubator. Applicants typically participate through recognised programme centres that run calls, selection and milestone monitoring.

11. DST - NIDHI PRAYAS

Objective: NIDHI-PRAYAS aims to support young innovators in translating innovative ideas into prototypes, enabling early proof-of-concept/working models that can eventually spur entrepreneurship.

Eligibility: PRAYAS eligibility is administered through PRAYAS centres (programme centres), which issue calls and evaluate applicants. The programme documents highlight the focus on prototype development, timelines, and applicant commitment requirements, while detailed eligibility criteria are provided in the programme/centre guidelines.

12. BIRAC - Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG)

Objective: BIG is BIRAC's flagship programme to support early-stage biotech innovation by providing grant-in-aid funding, typically up to INR 50 lakh for up to 18 months, to help translate ideas into proof of concept and stimulate enterprise formation.

Eligibility: governed by BIG scheme guidelines and calls. Public programme pages indicate that it supports young startups/innovators working on biotech ideas with commercialisation potential, and that applicants must meet the conditions specified in the scheme documentation and call requirements.

13. Ministry of Defence - iDEX

Objective: iDEX aims to create an ecosystem to bolster innovation and technology development in defence and aerospace by engaging startups, MSMEs, innovators, R&D institutes, and academia, and by providing grants/funding, and support for R&D with potential for adoption in defence/aerospace.

Eligibility: Eligibility depends on the specific iDEX challenge/track and its guidelines. Applicants generally apply against challenge problem statements and submit technical/financial proposals through the iDEX platform in accordance with the official process.

14. Ministry of MSME - ASPIRE

Objective: ASPIRE is designed to promote innovation, entrepreneurship and agro/rural industry development by strengthening incubation networks and enabling venture creation, particularly aligned to rural/agro and livelihood contexts.

Eligibility: ASPIRE operates through incubator structures, such as livelihood/technology business incubators, and scheme rules. Eligibility varies by component and call; some official summaries reference MSME-linked requirements and incubator participation structures, with details set out in scheme guidelines.

15. Startup India Hub

Objective: Startup India Hub acts as a single-point platform for startups to connect with government agencies, investors, incubators, mentors, and industry experts. It facilitates knowledge sharing, ecosystem collaboration,

and access to resources that help startups navigate regulatory processes, funding opportunities, and market access channels.

Eligibility: The platform is accessible to startups, entrepreneurs, investors, incubators, and ecosystem stakeholders registered on the Startup India portal. DPIIT-recognised startups typically benefit the most from its services.

16. SIDBI Venture Capital Support

Objective: SIDBI provides venture capital support through various funds and initiatives to encourage investment in early and growth-stage startups. These funds aim to strengthen India's venture capital ecosystem and provide long-term capital for innovative businesses.

Eligibility: Eligible startups are those operating in sectors aligned with SIDBI's investment mandates and meeting the criteria set by SIDBI-supported venture funds. Investments are typically routed through venture capital funds rather than directly from SIDBI.

17. SIDBI Make in India Soft Loan Fund for MSMEs (SMILE)

Objective: The SMILE scheme provides soft loans to MSMEs and startups to support the establishment, expansion, and modernisation of manufacturing and service enterprises. The scheme encourages domestic manufacturing under the "Make in India" initiative.

Eligibility: MSMEs and startups engaged in manufacturing or service sectors can apply through SIDBI, subject to financial viability, credit assessment, and compliance with scheme guidelines.

18. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)

Objective: PMMY aims to provide collateral-free loans to micro and small enterprises for business expansion and entrepreneurship development. It supports small businesses through three loan categories: Shishu, Kishore, and Tarun.

Eligibility: Non-corporate small business entities, including startups, micro enterprises, and entrepreneurs, can apply through banks, NBFCs, and microfinance institutions participating in the scheme.

19. Stand-Up India Scheme

Objective: Stand-Up India promotes entrepreneurship among women and members of the Scheduled Castes (SC) and the Scheduled Tribes (ST) by providing bank loans for setting up greenfield enterprises in manufacturing, services, or trading sectors.

Eligibility: At least one SC/ST or woman entrepreneur per bank branch is eligible for loans under the scheme, subject to business viability and financial assessment by participating banks.

20. IP Mitra

Objective: The IP Mitra programme supports startups in identifying, protecting, and managing intellectual property assets. It provides guidance on patent, trademark, and design filings and helps startups navigate the IP ecosystem.

Eligibility: Startups, innovators, and entrepreneurs seeking assistance in IP protection and strategy can access the programme through authorised facilitators and IP service providers.

21. Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACIC)

Objective: ACICs aim to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in underserved and rural regions by establishing community-level innovation centres that support local entrepreneurs and grassroots innovators.

Eligibility: Innovation centres are established through partnerships with academic institutions, NGOs, and organisations that support

entrepreneurship. Startups and innovators in these regions can access incubation support through these centres.

22. Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL)

Objective: ATLs are established in schools to foster creativity, innovation, and problem-solving among students. They encourage young innovators to experiment with technologies such as robotics, IoT, and 3D printing.

Eligibility: Schools selected under the Atal Innovation Mission can establish ATLs and provide students access to innovation tools and mentorship.

23. ARISE - Applied Research and Innovation for Small Enterprises

Objective: ARISE supports MSMEs and startups in developing innovative solutions to national challenges through funding for research and development.

Eligibility: MSMEs, startups, and research institutions working on technology-driven innovations can apply through programme calls aligned with national problem statements.

24. NIDHI Accelerator Programme

Objective: This programme supports accelerator initiatives that help startups scale rapidly through mentorship, access to investors, and market linkages.

Eligibility: Accelerators selected under the NIDHI framework run structured programmes and admit startups based on their selection criteria and sector focus.

25. NIDHI Technology Business Incubators (TBI)

Objective: TBIs provide incubation infrastructure, mentorship, and access to funding for early-stage technology startups, supporting innovation and commercialisation.

Eligibility: Technology startups associated with recognised incubators and research institutions can participate in incubation programmes under this scheme.

26. NIDHI Centre of Excellence

Objective: Centres of Excellence under the NIDHI framework aim to build specialised infrastructure and expertise in emerging technologies to support high-impact innovation.

Eligibility: Research institutions, universities, and innovation organisations may establish Centres of Excellence to support startups and innovators in specific technology domains.

27. BIRAC SEED Fund

Objective: The BIRAC SEED Fund supports early-stage biotechnology startups by providing funding to transform innovative ideas into commercially viable products.

Eligibility: Biotechnology startups and innovators developing novel life sciences solutions can apply through BIRAC-associated incubators.

28. BioNEST Bioincubator

Objective: BioNEST provides specialised incubation infrastructure for biotechnology startups, including laboratory facilities, mentorship, and access to industry networks.

Eligibility: Startups working in biotechnology, healthcare, and life sciences can join BioNEST incubators, subject to selection by participating institutions.

29. BIPP - Biotechnology Industry Partnership Programme

Objective: BIPP supports industry-driven biotechnology research and development projects with significant commercial potential.

Eligibility: Biotechnology companies and startups conducting R&D in collaboration with

research institutions can apply for funding under the programme.

30. MeitY Startup Hub (MSH)

Objective: MSH serves as a national platform for promoting technology startups by providing mentorship, incubation support, funding opportunities, and ecosystem networking.

Eligibility: Technology startups, incubators, and entrepreneurs operating in IT and emerging technology sectors can participate through the MeitY Startup Hub ecosystem.

31. Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC)

Objective: DISC encourages startups to develop innovative solutions for defence and aerospace applications by addressing problem statements issued by defence organisations.

Eligibility: Startups and innovators can submit proposals for defence challenges and, if selected, receive funding and mentorship.

32. SFURTI - Scheme for Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries

Objective: SFURTI aims to modernise and strengthen traditional industries by promoting cluster-based development and improving market competitiveness.

Eligibility: Traditional industry clusters, artisans, and small enterprises can benefit from infrastructure, technology upgrades, and marketing support under the scheme.

33. MSME Incubation Scheme

Objective: The MSME Incubation Scheme supports innovative ideas by providing financial assistance for prototype development and commercialisation.

Eligibility: Entrepreneurs, innovators, and startups with innovative business ideas can apply through approved host institutions and incubators.

34. Government e-Marketplace (GeM) - Startup Runway

Objective: Startup Runway on the GeM platform allows startups to showcase innovative products and services to government buyers, facilitating procurement opportunities.

Eligibility: Startups registered on GeM and recognised under relevant startup frameworks can list their offerings for government procurement.

35. India AI Mission

Objective: The India AI Mission aims to develop a comprehensive artificial intelligence ecosystem in India by supporting research, innovation, infrastructure, and AI startups.

Eligibility: AI startups, research institutions, and technology organisations working on AI solutions may access infrastructure, funding, and research support under the mission.

36. National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)

Objective: NM-ICPS promotes research and innovation in cyber-physical systems, including robotics, smart manufacturing, and intelligent transportation systems.

Eligibility: Startups, researchers, and institutions working in cyber-physical technologies can collaborate with mission-supported research hubs.

37. National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications (NM-QTA)

Objective: This mission aims to strengthen India's capabilities in quantum computing, communication, sensing, and cryptography.

Eligibility: Research institutions, startups, and technology companies working in quantum technologies may access funding and research infrastructure.

38. India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0

Objective: ISM aims to build a robust semiconductor ecosystem in India by promoting chip design, manufacturing, and supply chain development.

Eligibility: Semiconductor startups, technology firms, and manufacturers engaged in semiconductor innovation and fabrication may access support under the mission.

39. National Mission on Transformative Mobility & Battery Storage

Objective: This mission focuses on promoting electric mobility, advanced battery technologies, and clean transportation solutions.

Eligibility: Startups working in electric vehicles, battery technologies, and mobility solutions can benefit through research support, industry partnerships, and policy incentives.

40. Self-Reliant India Fund (SRI Fund)

Objective: The SRI Fund supports growth-stage startups and MSMEs by providing equity funding through daughter funds, strengthening India's self-reliant innovation ecosystem.

Eligibility: Startups eligible under fund guidelines receive investment indirectly through venture capital funds supported by the SRI Fund.

6. Role of Innovation and Deep Tech

Innovation is the defining feature that sets startups apart from conventional businesses. Most startups are created to introduce new products, services, or processes, often technology-driven, that solve unmet needs or improve existing solutions.

In India, innovation-led startups have emerged across diverse sectors such as fintech, health tech, enterprise software, climate tech, biotechnology, mobility, and space technology. The widespread availability of digital infrastructure, cloud platforms, AI, and advanced analytics has further enabled startups to build solutions for both domestic and global markets.

A key part of this landscape is deep-tech startups; enterprises built on significant scientific or engineering advancements. These ventures typically operate in areas such as artificial intelligence, robotics, semiconductors, quantum computing, biotechnology, advanced materials, aerospace, and clean energy. Deep-tech startups require long development cycles, substantial R&D investment, extensive testing, regulatory approvals, and strong IP protection before reaching commercialisation.

Given the strategic importance of deep-tech innovation, the Indian Government is expanding support systems for such ventures. This includes dedicated research grants, national innovation missions, specialised incubators, and funding mechanisms designed to help research-driven startups transition from laboratory-stage ideas to market-ready technologies

What Makes Deep Tech Different

+ **Longer research and development cycles**: Deep tech innovations often require extensive experimentation, prototyping, and validation before reaching the market.
+ **Higher capital requirements**: Significant investment is needed for hardware development, testing, and specialised equipment.
+ **Greater reliance on IP Protection**: Patents and proprietary technologies are critical for protecting innovations and maintaining competitive advantage.
+ **Complex regulatory compliance**: Sectors such as biotechnology, aerospace, and energy require compliance with stringent regulatory frameworks before entering the markets.

7. Intellectual Property Strategy and Support

Why IP Matters

Critical value driver for tech and deep-tech startups

Protects innovation while enabling fast go-to-market

Essential for competitive advantage, investor confidence, and brand growth

What to Protect

Patents

+ Protect novel inventions, processes, hardware, and technical solutions
+ Key differentiator for deep-tech and R&D-driven ventures

Trademarks

+ Protect brand names, logos, and product marks
+ Build brand identity, trust, and market differentiation

Designs

+ Protect product appearance: shape, configuration, texture, ornamentation
+ Enhance user experience and consumer appeal

Copyright

+ Protect software code, digital content, UI elements, and documentation
+ Crucial for software and digital-product companies

Trade Secrets

+ Protect confidential algorithms, models, formulations, and internal methods
+ Require strong contracts and internal controls

Strategic Importance

+ Safeguards innovation and market position
+ Supports scaling, partnerships, and investment
+ Acts as a long-term enabler of growth, not just a defensive tool

8. Challenges, Opportunities and Future Outlook

Key Challenges Faced by Startups

+ Gaps in early-stage capital and long-cycle innovation requirements.
+ Limited awareness about innovation protection, IP strategy, and brand-building.
+ Complex compliance and regulatory frameworks, especially during the scaling phase.
+ Intense competition for talent in AI, cybersecurity, chip design, and product leadership roles.
+ Volatility in funding cycles and exposure to global macroeconomic shifts.

Opportunity Areas for Startups

+ Development of AI-first products across healthcare, BFSI, manufacturing, and consumer services.
+ Climate and energy transition solutions, including EVs, battery storage, green innovation, agritech, and carbon-tracking technologies.
+ Expansion of B2B SaaS businesses from India into global markets.

Future Outlook for the Startup Ecosystem in India

India's startup landscape is poised for significant evolution, supported by policy directions aimed at broadening coverage and strengthening the enabling infrastructure for emerging ventures. The next phase of growth is expected to be marked by deeper technological innovation, with advancements in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and blockchain likely to play a transformative role across sectors.

Enhanced regulatory preparedness will be critical, ensuring that governance frameworks evolve in step with rapid technological progress and provide a secure, trustworthy environment for innovators, investors, and consumers alike. Additionally, India is expected to place greater emphasis on the large-scale commercialisation of research and development (R&D), enabling the transition from laboratory-driven innovation to market-ready products and solutions.

9. Startup Offerings by LexOrbis

A | Intellectual Property - Our Core Strength

Identify, protect, commercialise, and enforce IP assets.

Patents

+ Patentability & landscape analysis
+ Drafting and prosecution (India, PCT, US, EP & other jurisdictions)
+ Portfolio building aligned with product roadmap
+ Freedom-to-operate (FTO) and risk assessments

Trademarks

+ Brand clearance & filing strategy
+ Indian and international filings
+ Opposition, rectification, enforcement, & anti-counterfeiting
+ Domain name disputes and online brand protection

Designs & Copyright

+ Industrial design registration and strategy
+ Copyright registration, licensing, and enforcement

B | Commercial & Technology Contracts

Startup-ready contracts that protect IP, manage risk, and support scale.

+ Founders' agreements & IP ownership structuring
+ Employment and contractor agreements with robust IP clauses
+ NDAs, MSAs, SOWs, SLAs
+ SaaS agreements, platform terms, licensing arrangements
+ Website/app Terms of Use and Privacy Policies
+ Open-source software advisory

C | Fundraising & Investment Readiness

Legal and IP support to make startups due-diligence-ready.

+ IP ownership and chain-of-title clean-up
+ Contract and compliance review for investor diligence
+ IP strategy for valuation and investor confidence
+ Support on term sheets and investment documentation (scope-based)

D | Enforcement & Dispute Support

Protecting value when it matters most.

+ Trademark and brand enforcement
+ Online takedowns and domain disputes
+ Pre-litigation IP strategy and advisory
+ Support in IP and commercial dispute

10. Startup-Friendly Service Models

Launch Ready (0-6 months)	Fundraise Ready (6-18 months)	Scale Global (18+ months)
+ IP and ownership health check + Trademark filing roadmap + NDA + basic contract templates + Founder IP checklist	+ IP and contract diligence readiness + Patent and trademark portfolio strategy + IP assignments and employment clean-up + Contract playbook for growth	+ PCT and international filing strategy + Multi-jurisdiction IP prosecution management + Licensing and commercialisation support + Enforcement and brand protection strategy

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