



INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education
Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110068

GUIDELINES

Startup Competition-2026
(Best Startup Award-2026)

The Institution's Innovation Council (IIC), Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is actively engaged in fostering its students and alumni towards *Atmanirbhar Bharat* by promoting, supporting, and nurturing the innovator students and alumni of IGNOU interested in setting up their own startups. In this context, NCIDE, IGNOU, is excited to invite IGNOU students and alumni to participate in the **Startup Competition-2026**.

Who is Eligible to Participate?

The **Startup Competition-2026** is open to all the students and alumni of IGNOU who have an innovative business venture/startup or intend to launch a startup.

Why Should You Participate?

If you participate in the Startup Competition-2026, you can look for the benefits like:

1. The top three Startups/ Innovative Business Ventures/to be Startups/ Innovative Business Ventures will be given the **Best Startup Award-2026**.
2. The winner of First, Second and Third Prizes will be awarded a cash prize of Rs. 10000/-, Rs. 7000/- and Rs. 5000/- respectively.
3. A national platform to showcase your startup/ innovative business venture.
4. An opportunity to network with fellow innovators and entrepreneurs.
5. The possibility of incubation and inputs for further progress of your startup/ innovative business venture.
6. An E-Certificate of Participation to all the shortlisted students and alumni who present their startups.

What are Different Stages?

1. Interested students and alumni are required to submit the details about their Startup/ Innovative Business Venture/ to be a Startup/ Innovative Business Venture through the Google Form for the First Round.
2. The entries received by the last date will be screened by an Expert Committee to shortlist the Startups/ Innovative Business Ventures/ to be a Startup/ Innovative Business Ventures.
3. The shortlisted students and alumni will be eligible to participate in the Second Round of the **Startup Competition-2026** be required to present their Startup/ Innovative Business Venture before the Expert Committee in the scheduled Pitching event.
4. The shortlisted candidates will be provided a **Template** for pitching/ presentation during the Second Round of the **Startup Competition-2026**.

What are the Suggested Themes?

1. Food Systems, Agriculture, AgriTech, and Rural Development
2. Clean Energy, Energy Storage, and Alternate Fuels
3. Clean Water, Water Security, and Water Management
4. Environment, Waste Management, and Circular Economy
5. Public Health, Healthcare, MedTech, Swacchhata initiatives and Hygiene
6. Fitness, Wellness, Lifestyle, and SportsTech
7. Smart Mobility, Transportation, Logistics, and Traffic Management
8. Smart Cities, Urban Development, and Housing
9. Electronics and Semiconductors
10. Education, Skilling, Employability, and Digital Learning
11. Hospitality, Travel, Tourism, and Experience Economy
12. IoT, Connected Devices, Sensors, and Edge Intelligence
13. Artificial Intelligence, Data, and Digital Public Infrastructure
14. FinTech, InsurTech, and Financial Inclusion
15. DeepTech, Robotics, Drones, and Automation
16. EV Ecosystem, Battery Tech, and Charging Infrastructure
17. SpaceTech and DefenceTech
18. Startups innovations integrating Indian Knowledge System and Ethos
19. Any other

Will a Certificate be Awarded?

An E-Certificate of Participation will be awarded to the shortlisted entries which are presented in the Demo Day/ Presentation session for the Startup Competition-2026.

How to Apply?

Interested Students and Alumni of IGNOU who have established a **Startup/ Innovative Business Venture or are at an advanced stage (at least TRL-5 to 7) of setting up their Startup/ Innovative Business Venture** can **submit their detailed entries** through Google Form at the link: <https://forms.gle/Eb6gWHMouh65wrzk6> latest by **August 31, 2026**.

Last Date of Submission: The last date for submitting the entries is **August 31, 2026**.

Whom to Contact

For any clarification or more details, you may contact via email at ncide@ignou.ac.in.

NCIDE, IGNOU