



Policy Document on Startup Support by EDCIC, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata

A. PREAMBLE

St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata is recognized for its excellence in education and research. The college is dedicated to fostering innovation and supporting entrepreneurial ventures among its students, faculty, and staff. As part of this mission, the Entrepreneurship Development Cell and Incubation Centre (EDCIC) provides a comprehensive ecosystem to support the transformation of novel ideas into commercial ventures for the greater public good.

EDCIC aims at fostering collaboration between the cell members and the startup ecosystem at large. Startups get the opportunity to leverage fresh talent and ideas from the members of EDCIC and at the same time, it allows the cell members to gain hands-on experience and implement their skills by working closely with these startups. Overall, EDCIC wishes to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within the college, encouraging students to consider startups and entrepreneurship as a career path while simultaneously accelerating startups irrespective of their business stage, towards creating maximum impact for all stakeholders.

B. INITIATIVES AND ECOSYSTEM

1. **Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDCIC):** EDCIC facilitates entrepreneurship through various events, competitions, and continuous support for students and young entrepreneurs.
2. **Intellectual Property Management:** EDCIC manages all intellectual property protection and technology licensing activities, promoting the commercialization of research outputs.
3. **Incubator:** It provides comprehensive support for technology-based entrepreneurship, helping to convert research activities into viable business ventures.
4. **Centres of Excellence:** These centres provide research infrastructure, funding resources, and opportunities for students to engage in innovation and participate in national and international technology competitions.
5. **Industry-Academia Collaboration:** The college fosters strong collaborations with industry partners to enhance research commercialization and develop solutions for various technological challenges.
6. **Funding and Network Support:** EDCIC connects with a broad network of funding bodies, including industry, alumni, and government entities, both national and international.

Additionally, EDCIC is proud to have established certain key assets in its decade-long journey of empowering the startup ecosystem -

1. **Entrepreneurship Awareness Camp (EAC):** With a vision to revolutionize innovation by inculcating a culture of spirit- driven entrepreneurship in the country, EDCIC organizes a one of its kind start-up boot camp annually - Entrepreneurship Awareness Camp. EAC is an E-summit involving a series of workshops by industry experts providing competency in the strategic decision processes of a start-up, panel discussions and a platform to pitch their startups to eminent investors followed by an opportunity of networking to mobilize their feedback and guidance. We also offer one on one mentoring sessions with the mentors of the Startup Ecosystem. With the help of EAC, the cell aims to bridge the gap between entrepreneurs and the resources they yearn for. Having recently established itself officially as an Incubation Centre, EAC bolsters EDCIC's capabilities as an incubation centre by leveraging its established network of investors and mentors.
2. **Entrepreneurship Development Fund (EDF):** EDCIC's vision to revolutionise innovation & entrepreneurship in the country through its students took form as it started a non-commercial initiative called the St. Xavier's Entrepreneurship Development Fund which serves as a building block among young Xaverian's (both former & current) in their entrepreneurial journey & connects them to a pool of mentors, investors, & industry experts whilst giving them a chance to gain unconditional monetary support helping these budding entrepreneurs with their startups. Moreover, if a prototype is deemed unique and feasible, funding up to 50k can be provided from EDF to support their development and growth.
3. **IIC Affiliation:** We have also established an Institution's Innovation Council in the campus with the blessings of Rev Fr. Dr. Dominic Savio, SJ & as per norms of Innovation Cell, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India to create a vibrant local innovation ecosystem. Its primary objective is to nurture, develop, & stimulate young students by giving them the tools they need to experiment with new concepts & turn them into working prototypes during their formative years. We move to promote holistic development of all Xaverians & ensure the amalgamation of both science & commerce disciplines.

C. TYPES OF STARTUPS SUPPORTED

Idea Stage Startups: At the idea stage, startups often have a conceptual framework but require significant refinement and validation to progress. Our incubation centre is committed to helping these startups by providing comprehensive support in transforming their raw ideas into viable business propositions. We offer mentorship from industry experts who guide entrepreneurs through the process of market research, feasibility analysis, and business model development. Our structured workshops and training sessions cover essential topics such as ideation, strategic planning, and market identification. Additionally, we facilitate networking opportunities that connect budding entrepreneurs with experienced mentors, potential co-founders, and early-stage investors, allowing them to gain valuable insights and feedback that can help shape and improve their initial concepts.

Prototype Stage Startups: Startups at the prototype stage have moved beyond the idea phase and are developing tangible products or services. Our incubation centre supports these startups by assisting them in the patenting process, offering guidance on intellectual property rights, patent applications, and protection strategies to safeguard their innovations. Furthermore, we offer market validation support by connecting startups with potential customers and industry experts for feedback on their prototypes. Our goal is to help these startups refine their products, ensure they meet market needs, and prepare them for the next stage of development.

Incubation Stage Startups: At the incubation stage, startups have developed prototypes and require support to scale their operations and bring their products to market. Our Incubation Centre provides comprehensive incubation services, including access to funding opportunities, and business development resources. We offer strategic advisory services to help startups with go-to-market strategies, sales, and marketing plans. Our network of investors and industry partners provides startups with the financial backing and industry connections needed for growth. Additionally, we facilitate one-on-one mentoring sessions with experienced entrepreneurs and business leaders who provide personalized guidance on scaling operations, managing resources, and navigating challenges. Through our holistic support, we aim to accelerate the growth of startups and position them for long-term success.

D. STARTUP ONBOARDING PROCESS

Form Fill and Screening: The first step in our startup onboarding process is the completion of a detailed form designed to capture essential information about the startup. This form includes questions regarding the stage of development, the nature of the products or services, target market, and current challenges faced by the startup. The purpose of this screening is to assess the feasibility of providing meaningful support to the startup within our incubation framework. By gathering this information, we can ensure that we are equipped to address the specific needs of the startup and help them progress effectively. This initial screening helps us identify startups that align with our vision and resources, setting the stage for a successful incubation journey.

Team Interaction: Once the initial screening is completed, selected startups are invited for a one-on-one interaction with a member(s) of our incubation team. This interaction is a crucial step in understanding the startup's unique requirements and challenges in greater detail. During this session, startups have the opportunity to discuss their business model, goals, and specific areas where they need support. Our team member evaluates the startup's potential and identifies how our Incubation Centre can best assist them. This personalized approach ensures that we tailor our support services to meet the startup's precise needs, fostering a more effective and collaborative incubation experience.

Pitch Deck Submission: After the team interaction, startups are required to submit their pitch deck. The pitch deck should provide a comprehensive overview of the startup, including the problem being addressed, the proposed solution, market opportunity, business model, competitive analysis, and financial projections. This document is critical as it allows our evaluation committee to gain a deeper understanding of the startup's vision, strategy, and potential for success. A well-crafted pitch deck also helps in identifying the key areas where the startup requires support and how our resources can be allocated effectively. This step ensures that both the startup and the Incubation Centre are aligned in their objectives and expectations.

MOU and/or Confidentiality Agreement Signing: The final step in the onboarding process is the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This formal agreement outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both the startup and the Incubation Centre. It details the support services to be provided, including mentorship, access to resources, funding opportunities, and any other relevant assistance. The MOU serves as a mutual commitment to the startup's growth and success, ensuring that both parties are dedicated to achieving the outlined objectives. By signing the MOU, the startup officially becomes part of our incubation program, ready to embark on a journey of innovation and growth with the full backing of our resources and expertise.

E. WHAT WE OFFER

Mentoring Opportunities: Our Incubation Centre provides startups with unparalleled access to a pool of experienced mentors from various industries. These mentors offer personalized guidance and insights, helping startups navigate challenges and make informed decisions. Through one-on-one mentoring sessions, startups receive advice on business strategy, product development, market positioning, and more. This mentorship is designed to accelerate growth and ensure startups are well-equipped to achieve their goals.

Funding Opportunities: We connect startups with a network of investors, venture capitalists, and financial institutions to help secure the necessary funding for growth. Startups have the opportunity to pitch their ideas to potential investors during our events and through direct introductions. Additionally, we assist startups in preparing compelling funding proposals and pitch decks, increasing their chances of securing investment. Our goal is to provide startups with the financial resources they need to scale and succeed. To further foster innovation, based on adequate screening and feasibility analysis, selected startups with prototypes, from students of our college, will be granted a sum of Rs. 50,000 from EDF.

Strategy Development: Our team of experts works closely with startups to develop robust business strategies tailored to their specific needs and market conditions. This includes formulating go-to-market plans, revenue models, competitive analysis, and long-term growth strategies. We provide startups with the tools and frameworks needed to build a sustainable and scalable business, ensuring they are well-positioned for success in their respective industries.

Networking: We facilitate extensive networking opportunities for startups to connect with industry experts, potential partners, customers, and fellow entrepreneurs. Our events, workshops, and meetups create a vibrant community where startups can share knowledge, collaborate on projects, and build valuable relationships. This network is instrumental in opening doors to new opportunities and expanding the startup's reach in the market.

Access to Marketing Services: Startups in our Incubation Centre gain access to a range of marketing services to help them promote their products and services effectively. This includes digital marketing strategies, branding, public relations, and content creation. Our marketing experts provide guidance on how to build a strong brand presence, attract and retain customers, and leverage various marketing channels to drive growth. By enhancing their marketing efforts, startups can achieve greater visibility and market penetration.

Team Building: We support startups in building strong, cohesive teams by providing access to talent acquisition resources and HR support. This includes assistance with recruitment processes, identifying skill gaps, and developing strategies for team growth and development. By helping startups attract and retain the right talent, we ensure they have the human resources necessary to execute their vision and achieve their business objectives.

In summation, members of EDCIC will work closely with the startups, helping them improve the commercial viability of their product and service as well as fuel their growth by providing them with a plethora of acceleration opportunities and fresh perspectives, among other benefits.

For more information or to submit a proposal, please contact:

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