

Startup Activation Programme

The Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI), Tamil Nadu has launched a comprehensive program for Innovation & Entrepreneurship Development (IEDP) in colleges, polytechnics, ITIs, etc. EDI is facilitating creation of Entrepreneurial & Innovation ecosystem in Universities/ Colleges/ Polytechnics/ ITIs. Objective of this programme is to create a positive Entrepreneurship & Innovation ecosystem for student entrepreneurs within and around higher educational institutions by building entrepreneurial & innovation competencies of faculty, students and alumni with a view to fostering emergence and growth of technology based high-impact enterprises by students, alumni and people and incentivising creation and commercialization of Intellectual property.

This program uses a HUB and SPOKES model. 6 Resourceful Universities and Colleges have been recognized as Hubs. Each *College Entrepreneurship & Innovation Hub* will support around 20-40 colleges. The program is implemented on structured set of activities on campus, ideation, opportunity evaluation and selection, and most importantly, management involvement in the whole process. Government of Tamil Nadu had announced a Startup Action Plan focused on college student entrepreneurs in 2016-17. As part of this programme, EDI is organising the Startup Activation Programme in 5 regional Hubs namely, Anna University, Kumaraguru College of Technology (KCT), Coimbatore, Sastra University, Thanjavur, Thiagarajar College of Engineering (TCE), Madurai and Sona College of Technology, Salem in association with KCT and FORGE Accelerator, Coimbatore. KCT & Forge are coordinating the programme. The programme is being implemented in the following four stages:

Startup 101 Seminar series (Stage 1): Forge accelerator has organised a series of seminars hosted in the 5 regional hubs aimed at creating 'actionable awareness' among students, researchers, and educators. Awareness that will compel them into action, so they can sharpen their technology, innovation and entrepreneurship skills by attempting to solve real-world problems, building products and operating a startup company. Aspiring innovators and entrepreneurs from any college can login to www.forgeforward.in/startup-activation-program/ to apply for the programme with their 'startup idea'. The portal also offers the recorded video of the Startup 101 seminar for the benefit of those unable to attend the seminars. The last date for applying is 28th February, 2017.

Startup LAUNCHER (Stage 2): In this stage, participants (individuals or teams) by attending the Idea-Camp and Startup-Launcher workshops shall learn how to validate their problem statements, discover their customers, build the right prototype, launch their product in the market, and generate revenues. Forge will organize a series of Idea-Camps which are 1 day sessions in each of the 5 regional hubs. Teams and Individuals who have applied to the RSAP program will be invited to attend these idea camps during which mentors from

FORGE will guide the participants in honing their ideas. Other participants can also join these sessions by picking a 'problem statement' from a list of problem statements that will be supplied by FORGE on the RSAP web portal. These participants can also apply with their solutions to the RSAP program. At the end of this camp, the Top 25 ideas will be announced for the startup launcher – a 1 day workshop organised in each hub, will enable students to convert their ideas into 'Business Ideas'. Mentors and industry experts will guide the participants in this process which will then culminate in a pitch competition with judges selecting the Top 5 ideas. The Top 25 ideas (5 each from the 5 regional hubs) will then attend the next stage of the programme. Idea-Camps and Startup Launchers shall be organised between the 22th of February, 2017 and the 10th of March 2017 at FORGE – Coimbatore on 22nd February 2017, 28th February at Sona College of Engineering – Salem and subsequently at Sastra University, Tanjore, Thiagaraja Engineering College, Madurai and Anna University, Chennai.

Startup BootCamp and DemoDay (Stage 3): A 2 day bootcamp organized at FORGE.FACTORY– the 10,000 sq.ft hub for startups and innovators in Coimbatore, will give participants an experiential & in-depth learning of critical business, market/commercial, and financial aspects of startups, facilitated by various industry experts and mentors. The top 10 teams will be shortlisted for the grand finale DemoDay and these teams will undergo comprehensive pitch training and guidance. The Demo Day will be organised on the 3rd day of the bootcamp. It will be held during March 23rd – 25th 2017.

FORGE.FELLOWS (Stage 4 Optional): Top 3 teams will be eligible for the FORGE.FELLOWS program with access to startup grant (of upto Rs. 5 lakhs) along with access to state of the art technology facilities at Forge Factory in Coimbatore. Best startups will also be linked up with various Business Incubators for handholding support. For further details Dr. Lakshmi Meera, KCT Business School (meera@kctbs.ac.in) and Mr. Vishwanathan Sahasranamam, Co-Founder & VP, FORGE Accelerator, (vishwanath@forgeforward.in) or Mr. Shiva Shankar, Asst. Director, EDI via (pmo-iedp@editn.in) may be contacted. Details may also be obtained from FORGE portal link: <http://www.forgeforward.in/startup-activation-program/>.

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