



MSDE, ABCF and BITS Pilani launch Innovation and Start-up Challenge for NSTI Students

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Directorate General of Training (DGT) under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has joined hands with Aditya Birla Capital Foundation (ABCF) & Pilani Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Society (PIEDS), the incubator of BITS Pilani, to promote Innovation & Entrepreneurship among students in all National Skills Training Institutes (NSTI) across the country. NSTIs, under the aegis of DGT, provide vocational training to create a pool of Instructor trainees and skilled manpower for industries. At present, there are 33 NSTIs operational in the country, where more than 10,000 students pursuing skill training under the Craft Instructor Training Schemes (CITS) and Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS). There are designated NSTI(W) as well, that specifically focus on women's vocational training.

Even though there is ample support for innovations to become ventures at School and Higher Education levels, minimal support exists for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector, that includes more than 13 lacs students enrolled in ITIs and NSTIs. Majority of the TVET graduates get absorbed in the industry, work as trainers or educators, or get into traditional self-employment trades.

Speaking at the launch, **Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, MSDE, Government of India** said, “At the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, we believe that every skilled individual carry within them the potential to become a job creator. Through this partnership with the Aditya Birla Capital Foundation, we are enabling NSTI students to channel their technical skills into innovation and enterprise. The *Navonmesh Protsahan Spardha* will empower our young innovators to transform ideas into sustainable ventures, strengthening India’s vision of becoming an Aatmanirbhar and innovation-driven nation.”

The innovation challenge has been launched under the title *Navonmesh Protsahan Spardha: Kaushalta se Udyamita*, with the objective to nurture skill-based innovation in NSTI students. Being a first of its kind innovation challenge, it will cater to 10,000+ NSTI students and will include mentoring, prizes, access to resources, and further incubation, for launching the ideas of students in the market. The focus of the program will be students with innovative ideas in IT/ITeS, Automotive, Apparel, Electronics & Hardware and Power, and Capital Goods & Manufacturing sectors. Pilani Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Society (PIEDS), the incubator of BITS Pilani, would be managing this program, and is being supported under the Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives of the Aditya Birla Capital Foundation.

About Directorate General of Training, MSDE (DGT):

The Directorate General of Training (DGT), under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), is the apex body responsible for formulating national policies, standards, and coordination of vocational training in India, including women's training. While Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) function under State Governments/UT Administrations, DGT oversees overall policy, quality, instructor training, and trade testing. Through key schemes such as the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS), Apprenticeship Training Scheme (ATS), and Craft Instructor Training Scheme (CITS), DGT ensures large-scale skill development through more than 14,500 ITIs, 33 National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) and Institutes for Training of Trainers (IToTs), training over 23 lakh trainees nationwide. It is also driving modernization of ITIs with new-age trades in AI, IoT, Mechatronics, Renewable Energy, 3D Printing, and Drone Technology. To strengthen the industry connect, DGT promotes the Dual System of Training (DST) and Flexi-MoU model, while embedding Employability Skills as a mandatory component to enhance industry readiness and digital capability among trainees.

About Aditya Birla Capital Foundation (ABCF): The Aditya Birla Capital Foundation ("ABCF") is the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of Aditya Birla Capital Limited, its subsidiaries and associate companies for undertaking its developmental projects. A robust team comprises of Mrs. Rajashree Birla, Chairperson of The Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development, is the mentor; Mrs. Vishakha Mulye (Managing Director & CEO, Aditya Birla Capital Limited), Mr. Subhro Bhaduri (CHRO, Aditya Birla Capital Limited), and Dr. Pragnya Ram (Group Executive President, Group Head – CSR, Legacy, Documentation & Archives), serve as Directors. ABCF is committed to drive programs for inclusive growth and development of the underserved section of society. Its engagement is primarily fixated on women centric program in the areas of healthcare, education, women's empowerment, and sustainable livelihoods.

About Pilani Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Society (PIEDS): PIEDS is not-for-profit incubator of Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani establish with a grant from Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India. A robust team comprises of Prof. Valipe Ramgopal Rao, President, Prof. Sudhirkumar Barai, Vice President, and other members. It supports early-stage startups with deeptech solutions across sectors, women entrepreneurs, and startups working for / from Tier 2 and Tier 3 locations of Bharat.



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