

PARLIAMENT QUESTION: S&T RELATED SCHEMES AND EMPLOYMENT/SELF-EMPLOYMENT VENTURES

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The Ministry of Science and Technology is implementing various Central Sector schemes across the country with the objective of promoting research and development (R&D), innovation, entrepreneurship, technology dissemination, and inclusive socio-economic development.

These schemes are implemented through a competitive, proposal-based mechanism, and do not have State or district-wise budgetary allocations. Institutions, researchers, startups and innovators across all States and Union Territories, including Dadra and Nagar Haveli, are eligible to apply as per the prescribed guidelines of the schemes. Following are the major schemes being implemented.

The Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme is operational under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), with an objective to enhance private sector participation in R&D. The scheme supports low-interest & long-term financing in high-risk, high-impact R&D projects and startups. The Scheme covers sunrise sectors such as energy security and climate action; deep technologies such as quantum, robotics and space; artificial intelligence applications; biotechnology and biomanufacturing; pharmaceuticals and medical devices; digital economy, and other technologies critical for strategic and economic security of the country.

DST, under the National Quantum Mission (NQM) has supported the development of indigenous capabilities in quantum computing, quantum communication, quantum sensing, and quantum materials, along with the creation of an ecosystem with strong R&D and skilled manpower base in quantum technologies.

DST has supported research infrastructure schemes such as the Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure (FIST), Promotion of University Research and Scientific Excellence (PURSE), Sophisticated Analytical Instrument Facilities (SAIF), and Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI) to strengthen advanced research facilities in academic and R&D institutions.

The National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI) program of DST has supported innovation-driven and technology-based startups through prototyping, incubation, seed funding, and entrepreneurship development activities. Under NIDHI PRAYAS program, mentoring and financial assistance is provided to innovators and entrepreneurs, including women entrepreneurs, for proof of concept and prototype development, helping them to create their own ventures and employment. Under NIDHI EiR (Entrepreneur in Residence) program, entrepreneurial mentoring and financial support is

provided to students to pursue entrepreneurship, create ventures and employment.

Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) programmes, including INSPIRE–Million Minds Augmenting National Aspiration and Knowledge (MANAK), INSPIRE Scholarship for Higher Education (SHE) and Vigyan Jyoti, has been supporting meritorious youth, through scholarships and fellowships, to pursue studies in basic and natural sciences at the college and university levels and to take up research careers in basic and applied science disciplines, including engineering, medicine, agriculture, veterinary sciences etc.

Climate, Energy and Sustainable Technology (CEST) program has supported R&D in renewable energy, hydrogen and fuel cells, advanced energy storage, carbon capture and utilisation, methane mitigation, and technologies for hard-to-abate sectors.

National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM- ICPS), has established Technology Innovation Hubs (TIHs) in leading institutions with a focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, cybersecurity, and related areas.

Department of Biotechnology (DBT) supports research and development across the country through the Biotechnology Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (Bio-RIDE) scheme, covering Biotechnology Research and Development (R&D), Industrial and Entrepreneurship Development (I&ED), and Biomanufacturing & Biofoundry.

The State-wise details of the number of persons who have directly benefited under the specific schemes during the last two years are placed at Annexure-I.

The Government has taken several positive steps to ensure smooth implementation, effective outreach, and equitable access, particularly in rural, aspirational, and underserved regions. Following activities have been supported:

- Establishment of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Hubs for holistic development of Scheduled Caste (SC) and

Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities, aimed at livelihood creation and quality-of-life improvement.

- Technology awareness, demonstration, and adoption programmes at the grassroots level to enhance the outreach of R& D schemes.
- Establishment of Technology Enabling Centres (TECs) in universities to promote industry–academia–government collaboration, translational research, and local innovations.
- Capacity building, skill development, and entrepreneurship training to enable participation from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.
- NIDHI Inclusive Technology Business Incubators (NIDHI – iTBI) Program to promote entrepreneurship in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, with a focus on inclusiveness in terms of geographies, gender, persons with special abilities, etc.

Annexure-I

State-wise number of direct beneficiaries

S. No.	Name of States/UTs	Number of direct beneficiaries of the specific program (DST)		
		Entrepreneur- in- Residence (NIDHI–EiR) Programme	NIDHI– PRAYAS Programme	INSPIRE Programme (Scholarship, Fellowship & Faculty Fellowships)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1	21	288
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	--	--	15
3.	Assam	--	10	691
4.	Bihar	--	13	1270
5.	Chhattisgarh	--	2	2360
6.	Goa	3	1	95
7.	Gujarat	11	52	745
8.	Haryana	--	21	734
9.	Himachal Pradesh	2	2	888
10.	Jharkhand	--	2	194
11.	Karnataka	5	81	964
12.	Kerala	3	41	3093
13.	Madhya Pradesh	--	9	3401
14.	Maharashtra	11	71	1797
15.	Manipur	2	--	636

16.	Meghalaya	--	--	143
17.	Mizoram	--	--	51
18.	Nagaland	--	--	73
19.	Odisha	3	32	920
20.	Punjab	--	5	535
21.	Rajasthan	3	23	13052
22.	Sikkim	--	--	10
23.	Tamil Nadu	23	99	762

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		Entrepreneur- in- Residence (NIDHI–EiR) Programme	NIDHI– PRAYAS Programme	INSPIRE Programme (Scholarship, Fellowship & Faculty Fellowships)
24.	Telangana	5	44	490
25.	Tripura	--	--	42
26.	Uttarakhand	--	4	2089
27.	Uttar Pradesh	12	29	29246
28.	West Bengal	3	11	3875
29.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	--	--	4
30.	Chandigarh	--	1	136

31.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	--	--	2
32.	Jammu and Kashmir	--	4	284
33.	Delhi	2	14	775
34.	Pondicherry	--	--	20

This information was given by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

AK/SK

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