

Director, CSIR-NIIST, invites applications from eligible and interested start-ups and early-stage companies in the prescribed format for availing incubation services and support from NIIST Innovation Center at CSIR-NIIST Campus, Thiruvananthapuram.

The deadline for receiving the filled application is 10-04-2024, 05:30 PM. Application form, complete in all respect, may be sent by email to innovation@niist.res.in in pdf format. The total size of the attachments should not exceed 10 MB. Applications received via email only shall be considered for screening.

Important Dates

Applications Open	: 01-04-2024
Submission Deadline	: 08-04-2024, 05:30 PM
Preliminary Results	: 09-04-2024
Presentations (Short-listed)	: 11-04-2024
Final Results	: 11-04-2024
Incubatees Start Date	: 15-04-2024

About CSIR-NIIST

The National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST) in Thiruvananthapuram, operating under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), was initially instituted in 1975 as a CSIR Complex. It underwent a renaming to the Regional Research Laboratory in 1978 and subsequently to NIIST in 2007. NIIST's primary objective is to execute high-caliber research and development endeavors, focusing on the optimal exploitation of the regional resources and addressing key scientific challenges significant to national interests. As of the current date, NIIST's research and development spectrum encompasses multiple disciplines: Agro-processing and Technology, Chemical Sciences and Technology, Sustainable Energy Technologies, Materials Science and Technology, Microbial Processes and Technology, and Environmental Technology. The institute boasts cutting-edge facilities tailored for advanced research in these domains. Additionally, NIIST has developed pilot plant facilities specifically for research training and the development of processes/products in various focused areas of research. Moreover, NIIST plays a pivotal role in human resource development,

contributing to the education and training of postgraduate and graduate students. Further details are available at <https://www.niist.res.in>.

About NIIST Innovation Center

Realizing the significance of coping with the fast-paced start-up ecosystem, CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram has created an Innovation Center at its campus in Thiruvananthapuram. The Innovation Center at CSIR-NIIST envisions to provide and inclusive ecosystem to develop and translate scientific and technical knowledge into innovations and further into commercial and technopreneurial ventures. CSIR-NIIST aspires to be the leading innovation hub in the country for translational R&D and incubation, knowledge-based entrepreneurship, and value creation in market-oriented business strategies. The Innovation Center will cater to the demand for strategic evaluation, protection, licensing and transfer of technologies in an attempt to nurture start-ups and early-stage companies.

Objectives and Vision of the Innovation Center

With a global vision of "Concept to Commercialization", the new center is envisioned to handhold and mentor start-up companies and nurture them to achieve innovative products and markets. Ably assisted by the scientific excellence and technological pursuits of CSIR-NIIST, the Innovation Center catalyzes a one-stop solution for technology-driven innovations. The Innovation Center at CSIR-NIIST is committed to fostering technology-based entrepreneurship services and supporting startups, via the implementation of a dedicated incubation policy, providing guidance for a thriving innovation ecosystem. The Innovation Center focuses on catalysing commercially viable ideas, validating proof of concept, advancing technologies toward market readiness, and fostering new enterprise formation. Through these initiatives, the Center encourages ideation, supports the transition from concept to market-ready solutions, and contributes to the growth of entrepreneurial endeavours at CSIR-NIIST.

NIIST Innovation Center is a dedicated facility aimed at providing services towards nurturing technological innovation by providing comprehensive support to technology-oriented start-ups. The Center is designed as a vibrant ecosystem for incubation services, aiding in the holistic growth of start-ups by offering an array of services and resources. Its establishment underscores a commitment to cultivate an entrepreneurial culture, fostering a milieu conducive to the ideation, development, and commercialization of innovative ventures, either originating within the institute or aligned with the Center's core thematic focus.

The Center's strategic objectives encompass the following key areas:

- ❑ Facilitation of a dynamic interface entrepreneurs, founders, scientists, technologists and technocrats
- ❑ Establishment of a streamlined mechanism for speedy commercialization of in-house technological advancements
- ❑ Provision of comprehensive value-added services including intellectual property rights (IPR), legal, financial and technical advisory, tailored to the specific needs of the incubatees
- ❑ Development of a financially sustainable business model that leverages the shared use of CSIR-NIIST facilities to generate revenue

Focus Areas of the Innovation Center

The core focus of the Innovation Center is on fostering start-ups within technology-driven sectors. This approach is envisioned to enable emerging entrepreneurs to capitalize on CSIR-NIIST's vast reservoir of expertise by engaging with a network of mentors, including scientists, staff, research scholars, and peers from other start-ups and associated agencies. The primary goal is to ensure that start-ups derive tangible benefits from their incubation experience at the NIIST Incubation Center. CSIR-NIIST will also provide support for the start-ups wishing to develop and commercialize their own ideas. The Center particularly encourages incubation projects in the following priority areas, reflecting the institution's specialized expertise and research interests:

1. Materials and related areas
2. Sustainable Chemistry and Engineering
3. Pharma and related areas
4. Process Chemistry and Chemical Synthesis
5. Food, Spices and Oils, including Processing
6. Energy Materials, Devices and related areas
7. Functional Formulations and Coatings
8. AI – ML and related areas
9. Biotechnology, Fermentation, Enzymes and related areas
10. Agroprocessing and Technologies
11. Waste Management, Odour Control and related areas
12. Ayush and related areas
13. Metals, Alloys, Polymers, Ceramics and related areas
14. Analytical Services
15. Quality Control

Mode of Engagement with the NIIST Innovation Center

Mentoring and Hand-holding

Scientists and domain experts working at CSIR-NIIST will provide mentorship to the incubatees in their respective areas of expertise during incubation period at the Innovation center. Mentors will help in ideation, prototype development, product refinement, scale-up and commercialization.

Capacity Building and Training

CSIR-NIIST has state-of-the-art laboratories and infrastructure for conducting hands on training on various focus areas of the Institute. A number of skill development programs are also organized by CSIR-NIIST. Start-ups and early-stage companies may license technologies from CSIR-NIIST or incubate their ideas and develop prototypes and products in laboratory scale under the technical guidance of domain experts from CSIR-NIIST.

Intellectual Property Management

CSIR-NIIST shall support incubatees in protecting the intellectual properties emerging during the period of incubation at the Innovation Center on a case-to-case basis as per agreements with the Business Development Division of the Institute. Any charges incurred shall be borne in full or part by the incubatee depending on joint or shared IP possibilities. In case of joint IPs, mentors shall support patent preparation during incubation. Agreement with the incubatees shall detail the terms and conditions in this regard.

Funding Support

The Innovation Center and mentors shall assist the preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR), business plan, pitch preparation and project presentations to attract funding agencies, investors, angel investors or CSR funding on a case-to-case basis. The Center shall assist in bridging the incubatees and government and private funding agencies. The funding share shall be governed by the corresponding agreements executed between CSIR-NIIST and the incubatee on a case-to-case basis.

Incubation Services

The entitlements of the incubatee, depending of the type of incubation, are provided below:

Physical Incubation (Resident Incubatees)

- ❑ Support offered to start-up ventures having registered entities and have developed initial prototype or validated their products or services in the market with some initial customization or technology licensee from CSIR-NIIST

- ❑ Incubation service charges are to be paid in advance with an appropriate security deposit as per incubation agreement
 - ❑ Service Charges: Rs. 5000.00 per month, incl. amenities to be paid on the first working day of every month

Entitlements of a Resident Incubatee (as per executed agreements)

- ❑ Furnished office space (private) and Co-working space
- ❑ Gold Access to central analytical and testing services at CSIR-NIIST with 50% discount on existing industry rates (to be negotiated where rates are not available)
- ❑ Priority access to pilot plant and other R&D facilities for product/process development (Rates to be negotiated on case-to-case basis)
- ❑ Facilitation for analytical and testing services outside CSIR-NIIST (charges will be different from NIIST charges)
- ❑ Domain experts from CSIR-NIIST will provide one-on-one mentorship for collaborative technology development
- ❑ Internet services and access to library
- ❑ Business meeting space (with prior booking)
- ❑ Technology mentorship and support (as per agreement terms and conditions)
- ❑ Prototyping support (as per agreement terms and conditions)
- ❑ Assistance for funding from other agencies via joint project proposals or assistance in documentation and mentoring
- ❑ Connect to other agencies
- ❑ IP support for technology/projects jointly developed with CSIR-NIIST and negotiable rates for technology transfers (as per agreements with Business Development Division of CSIR-NIIST)
- ❑ General IP support (as per agreements with Business Development Division of CSIR-NIIST)
- ❑ Prototyping and field study support on a case-to-case basis, in consultation with domain experts from CSIR-NIIST
- ❑ Comprehensive guidance from CSIR-NIIST technology development team for commercialization (NIIST technologies)
- ❑ Access to training and skill development programs organized by CSIR-NIIST (upon payment of the prescribed fee for industries)
- ❑ Access to NIIST Canteen and parking space
- ❑ Printing and video conferencing facilities (Chargeable)
- ❑ Access to events organized by the Innovation Center (Registration may be required)

Virtual Incubation (Associate Incubatees)

- ❑ Support offered to start-up ventures having registered entities and do not require physical infrastructure at the Innovation Center, but only requires the intellectual support, technology and analytical/testing/pilot plant facilities from CSIR-NIIST or technology licensee from CSIR-NIIST
- ❑ Incubation service charges are to be paid in advance with an appropriate security deposit as per incubation agreement
 - ❑ Service Charges: Rs. 2500.00 per month, incl. amenities to be paid on the first working day of every month

Entitlements of an Associate Incubatee (as per executed agreements)

- ❑ Silver Access to central analytical and testing services at CSIR-NIIST with 30% discount on existing industry rates (to be negotiated where rates are not available)
- ❑ Priority access to pilot plant and other R&D facilities for product/process development (Rates to be negotiated on case-to-case basis)
- ❑ Facilitation for analytical and testing services outside CSIR-NIIST (charges will be different from NIIST charges)
- ❑ Domain experts from CSIR-NIIST will provide one-on-one mentorship for collaborative technology development
- ❑ Business meeting space (with prior booking)
- ❑ Technology mentorship and support (as per agreement terms and conditions)
- ❑ Prototyping support (as per agreement terms and conditions)
- ❑ Assistance for funding from other agencies via joint project proposals or assistance in documentation and mentoring
- ❑ Connect to other agencies
- ❑ IP support for technology/projects jointly developed with CSIR-NIIST and negotiable rates for technology transfers (as per agreements with Business Development Division of CSIR-NIIST)
- ❑ General IP support (as per agreements with Business Development Division of CSIR-NIIST)
- ❑ Prototyping and field study support on a case-to-case basis, in consultation with domain experts from CSIR-NIIST
- ❑ Comprehensive guidance from CSIR-NIIST technology development team for commercialization (NIIST technologies)
- ❑ Access to training and skill development programs organized by CSIR-NIIST (upon payment of the prescribed fee for industries)

- ☐ Access to NIIST Canteen and parking space (with prior appointment)
- ☐ Video conferencing facilities (Chargeable)
- ☐ Access to events organized by the Innovation Center (Registration may be required)

Pre-Incubation Services

- ☐ Support offered to PhD students of CSIR-NIIST only (in the final year of their PhD) only having an idea which can be converted into a start-up venture and have not incorporated into a company. The idea could be at the initial stage or developing a proof of concept.
- ☐ Pre-incubation support shall be offered to groups or teams for a maximum of six months, within which a Start-up has to be incorporated.
- ☐ Pre-incubation service charges are to be paid in advance with an appropriate security deposit as per incubation agreement
 - ☐ Service Charges: Rs. 1500.00 per month, incl. amenities to be paid on the first working day of every month

Entitlements of a Pre-Incubatee (as per executed agreements)

- ☐ Co-working space (with prior appointment, chargeable)
- ☐ Gold Access to central analytical and testing services at CSIR-NIIST with 50% discount on existing industry rates (to be negotiated where rates are not available)
- ☐ Priority access to pilot plant and other R&D facilities for product/process development (Rates to be negotiated on case-to-case basis)
- ☐ Facilitation for analytical and testing services outside CSIR-NIIST (charges will be different from NIIST charges)
- ☐ Domain experts from CSIR-NIIST will provide one-on-one mentorship for collaborative technology development
- ☐ Access to library
- ☐ Business meeting space (with prior booking)
- ☐ Technology mentorship and support (as per agreement terms and conditions)
- ☐ Prototyping support (as per agreement terms and conditions)
- ☐ Assistance for funding from other agencies
- ☐ Connect to other agencies
- ☐ IP support for technology/projects jointly developed with CSIR-NIIST and negotiable rates for technology transfers (as per agreements with Business Development Division of CSIR-NIIST)

- ❑ General IP support (as per agreements with Business Development Division of CSIR-NIIST)
- ❑ Prototyping and field study support on a case-to-case basis, in consultation with domain experts from CSIR-NIIST
- ❑ Access to training and skill development programs organized by CSIR-NIIST (upon payment of the prescribed fee for students)
- ❑ Video conferencing facilities (Chargeable)
- ❑ Access to NIIST Canteen
- ❑ Access to events organized by the Innovation Center (Registration may be required)

The incubatees shall be required to remit 3-months service fee as refundable caution deposit. Each Resident Incubatee shall be eligible of one exclusive office space, however, multiple consultancy/sponsored project and technology transfer opportunities shall be available for every incubatee.

Eligibility for Admission to the Innovation Center

The applicant should be a registered start-up or early-stage company with innovative and novel ideas to be translated into entrepreneurship. Applicants must have the ability to take novel technology-based business ideas to successful commercial ventures. There is no minimum educational qualification, however, the applicants should have demonstrated working knowledge and communication skills.

The following start-ups or early-stage companies are eligible to apply:

- ❑ Start-ups or early-stage companies willing to start entrepreneurship on available NIIST technologies via technology transfer or IP licensing
- ❑ Start-ups or early-stage companies wishing to further refine, modify, advance, or induce value addition to their products or technologies
- ❑ Start-ups or early-stage companies wishing to add new ventures
- ❑ Start-ups or early-stage companies wishing to avail NIIST services, facilities, support and/or handholding (analytical, standardization, consultancy, mentorship, technical, IP, management, skill development, etc.)
- ❑ Start-ups or early-stage companies registered as Private Limited Company, Partnership Firm, One-person Company or under Limited Liability Partnership are eligible

- ❑ A company, if promoted by an employee of government or organization, shall be granted incubation services only upon submission of 'No Objection Certificate' from the competent authority or employer
- ❑ A graduated start-up shall not be incubated again for the same start-up venture
- ❑ Incubation services shall be offered for 3-11 months initially and extensions shall be considered by the Management Committee on a case-to-case basis

The application has to be submitted to Director, CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram, in the prescribed format and the following documents have to be attached:

1. Registration Certificate (for Resident and Associate Incubatees)
2. Address Proof (Company)
3. Copies of Directors' Aadhar Card
4. Photograph(s) of Company Director(s)
5. Company's PAN Card and GST Certificate (as available)
6. Audited Financial Statements or other proofs (where (2) above is not available)
7. A brief write-up on the business, how the business is working towards innovation, potential for wealth and employment creation, and commercialization
8. Trademark or Copyright Registration (if available)
9. Registration/Authorization from Government Agencies, if available (Eg: Udyam, MSME, etc.)
10. No Objection Certificate from the competent authority or employer, if the company is promoted by an employee of government or organization and No Objection Certificate from the Supervisor and Director for students from CSIR-NIIST

Application Procedure

Only applications submitted by email will be accepted. Completed application, in pdf format, should be submitted by email to innovation@niist.res.in. Details pertaining to the application can be found at <https://www.niist.res.in>. The application consists of following requirements:

Step 1: Submit Application

In the initial phase of the admission procedure, prospective start-ups and early-stage companies are required to submit an application encompassing comprehensive details about the start-up. This includes information on team members, the current stage of the company, a business plan, and other pertinent documentation. The application has to be submitted in the prescribed format. Upon submission, the application will undergo an evaluation by the Innovation Center Management Committee.

The assessment of the proposal shall be conducted based on a range of criteria, including, but not limited to, the following factors:

- ❑ *Innovation and Uniqueness of the Idea:* Product idea and originality, technological sophistication, innovative aspects, timeline, and market potential. This criterion is valid for technologies licensed from CSIR-NIIST also
- ❑ *Profile of the Core Team/Promoters:* Background, expertise, and capabilities of the founding team and key promoters
- ❑ *Intellectual Property Considerations:* Existing intellectual property associated with the idea, its potential for new IP creation, or prospects thereof
- ❑ *Product/Start-Up Maturity and Market Entry Timeline:* Current stage of the product or start-up and the anticipated time required to enter the market
- ❑ *Commercialization Prospects:* Potential market demand, timeline for achieving break-even, and overall commercialization strategy
- ❑ *Scalability Potential:* Potential for scaling the product or service in the market
- ❑ *Financial and Commercial Viability:* Overall financial health and commercial viability of the start-up
- ❑ *Funding Requirements and Feasibility:* Required capital for development and growth, and the feasibility of securing such funding
- ❑ *Involvement of CSIR NIIST Scientists:* Extent to which CSIR-NIIST scientists and facilities are involved (advisory roles, collaborative research, testing, etc.)

Step 2: Presentation

Following the initial submission, the Innovation Center Management Committee shall scrutinize the applications based on documents submitted and the short-listed applicants shall be called for a short presentation for final selection of the Resident/Associate/Pre-Incubatees. The presentations shall be judged by the Management Committee in a sitting involving at least one external expert. The short presentation shall be followed by an interactive session, allowing for further clarification and discussion. Subsequent to the presentation, a final decision regarding the selection of the start-up for incubation will be reached. In cases where necessary, video conferencing may be permitted for valid reasons. Proposals involving collaboration or participation from CSIR NIIST staff, alumni, or students may receive preferential consideration during the evaluation process. Revision and pruning of the business ideas shall be possible based on the insights and queries that arise during the due diligence process. This step ensures a thorough understanding and evaluation of the start-up's potential and readiness for incubation.

Step 3: Result

The applicant will receive communication of the final decision within a timeframe of 1 week following the presentation and the results will be published on NIIST website. In the event of approval for incubation, the applicant will be presented with options including pre-incubation, physical incubation, virtual incubation as recommended by the Management Committee. Upon selection, the start-up company is required to enter into an agreement as per the terms stipulated by the Innovation Center. The decision of Director, CSIR-NIIST shall be final in this regard. The progress would be monitored regularly by the Management Committee and any violation of terms and conditions would lead to termination of the agreement.

Technologies Available at CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram

Prospective incubatees are requested to visit NIIST website (<https://www.niist.res.in>) or contact the Innovation Center or Business Development Division of the Institute for details regarding available technologies, facilities and collaboration possibilities.

General Format for Application

Instructions: Please limit the word count as prescribed in the format. It is requested not to make any changes in the template. Charts and figures may be used wherever possible. The deadline for receiving the filled application is 10-04-2024, 05:30 PM. Application form, completed in all respect, may be sent by email to innovation@niist.res.in in pdf format. The total size of the attachments should not exceed 10 MB.

Company Name	
Legal Status	Reg. No. :
	Date of Regn. :
	PAN No. :
	GST No. :
Complete Address	
Company Email id	
Company Phone No.	
Details of Directors/ Promoters	Name 1
	Address

	Email Phone (O) Phone (M) Name 2 Address Email Phone (O) Phone (M) Name 3 Address Email Phone (O) Phone (M)
No. of Employees	
General Focus Area	
Product/Process/ Technology	
Incubation Time Required <i>(in months)</i>	
Trademark or Copyright Regn. (if available)	
Description of products/ services for incubation <i>(Max 300 words)</i>	

Innovative Aspects

(Max 200 words)

**Publications or
Patents, if any**

**Involvement of CSIR or
CSIR-NIIST, if any**

End Use

(In bullet points, max 3)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Market Demand

(Max 100 words)

Prospective Customers <i>(In bullet points, max 3)</i>	1. 2. 3.
Details or market Research Conducted <i>(In bullet points)</i>	1. 2. 3. 4.
Major Competitors (if any)	1. 2. 3.
Competitive Advantages and USPs <i>(In bullet points, max 5)</i>	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Market Promotion and Distribution Strategies <i>(Max 200 words)</i>	
Source of Raw Materials / Components	

**Investment
Requirement and
Source of Finance**

(in Rs, Lakhs)

**Sales Volume and
Time for Breakeven**

**Scope for Employment
Creation**

(Max 100 words)

**Type of Incubation
Service Required**

(Retain all applicable)

- (a) Resident Incubatee
- (b) Associate Incubatee
- (c) Pre-incubation Service

**Requirements at
NIIST Innovation
Center**

(Retain all applicable)

- (a) Furnished office space
- (b) Co-working space
- (c) Access to central analytical and testing services
- (d) Access to pilot plant and other R&D facilities
- (e) Analytical and testing services outside CSIR-NIIST
- (f) One-on-one mentorship for collaborative development
- (g) Internet services
- (h) Access to library
- (i) Business meeting space
- (j) Technology mentorship and support
- (k) Prototyping support
- (l) Assistance for funding from other agencies
- (m) Connect to other agencies

	(n) General IP support (o) Prototyping and field study support (p) Comprehensive guidance from CSIR-NIIST (q) Access to training and skill development programs (r) Access to NIIST Canteen (s) Access to parking space (t) Printing facilities (u) Video conferencing facilities (v) Access to events organized by the Innovation Center
References, if any <i>(Include name, official address, email id and phone number)</i>	Name 1 Address Email Phone Name 2 Address Email Phone
Any Other Relevant Information	
Declaration	<p>Every information given above is true to the best of my/our knowledge and I/we understand that any information found incorrect at any point of time shall result in the termination of the agreement and/or legal actions as deemed by Director, CSIR-NIIST. We also understand that any information provided will be recorded in the database of CSIR-NIIST and will not be used for any other purpose by the Institute.</p> <p><Insert scanned signature></p> <p>Name</p> <p>Date</p>

The following documents should be attached as a single pdf and send along with the application form.

1. Registration Certificate (for Resident and Associate Incubatees)
2. Address Proof (Company)

3. Copies of Directors' Aadhar Card
4. Photograph(s) of Company Director(s)
5. Company's PAN Card and GST Certificate (as available)
6. Audited Financial Statements or other proofs (where (2) above is not available)
7. A brief write-up on the business, how the business is working towards innovation, potential for wealth and employment creation, and commercialization
8. Trademark or Copyright Registration (if available)
9. Registration/Authorization from Government Agencies, if available (Eg: Udyam, MSME, etc.)
10. No Objection Certificate from the competent authority or employer, if the company is promoted by an employee of government or organization and No Objection Certificate from the Supervisor and Director for students from CSIR-NIIST