

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
DEPARTMENT FOR PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNAL TRADE**

RAJYA SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2306.
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 5TH AUGUST, 2022.**

STARTUPS IN NORTH EASTERN STATES

2306. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA:

Will the Minister of **Commerce and Industry** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) would help startups in meeting their capital requirement;
- (b) if so, whether Government is planning to encourage startups in North Eastern States with cooperation of State Governments and the response thereof; and
- (c) whether any special training with corporate support can be organized for startups in North Eastern Region to encourage young professionals, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(SHRI SOM PARKASH)**

- (a) & (b):** The Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) is being implemented by the Government with effect from 1st April 2021. It provides financial assistance to eligible Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) recognised startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialization. This enables the startups to graduate to a level where they will be able to raise investments from angel investors or venture capitalists, or seek loans from commercial banks or financial institutions. SISFS is disbursed to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India. The detailed Scheme guidelines are placed at **Annexure-I**.

As on 30th July 2022, of the corpus of Rs. 945 crore, Rs. 375.25 crore have been approved to 102 incubators under the Scheme. Also, 378 DPIIT recognised startups have been approved a total sum of Rs. 81.45 crore by the approved incubators under the Scheme.

Specifically, from the North Eastern States (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura), as on 30th July 2022, two incubators (one each from Sikkim and Assam) have been approved a total sum of Rs. 5 crore under the Scheme. Also, 9 DPIIT recognised startups from North Eastern

States have been approved a total sum of Rs. 1.15 crore by the approved incubators under the Scheme.

- (c): Startup India initiative was launched on 16th January 2016 with an objective to build a strong eco-system for nurturing innovation and startups in the country that would drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities. The details of various programs undertaken by the Government to promote startups across the country under Startup India initiative are at **Annexure-II**.

All the steps taken by Government to promote this initiative are inclusive and are implemented across States, cities, towns and rural areas. In addition, the Government has taken various initiatives, specifically for development of startups in North Eastern States. The list of some of these initiatives is at **Annexure-III**.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) & (b) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2306 FOR ANSWER ON 05.08.2022.**Guidelines for Startup India Seed Fund Scheme****1. Introduction**

Easy availability of capital is essential for entrepreneurs at the early stages of growth of an enterprise. Funding from angel investors and venture capital firms becomes available to startups only after the proof of concept has been provided. Similarly, banks provide loans only to asset-backed applicants. It is essential to provide seed funding to startups with an innovative idea to conduct proof of concept trials.

Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) aims to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialization. This would enable these startups to graduate to a level where they will be able to raise investments from angel investors or venture capitalists, or seek loans from commercial banks or financial institutions.

The Seed Fund will be disbursed to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India.

2. The Requirement

The Indian startup ecosystem suffers from capital inadequacy in the seed and 'Proof of Concept' development stage. The capital required at this stage often presents a make or break situation for startups with good business ideas. Many innovative business ideas fail to take off due to the absence of this critical capital required at an early stage for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialization. Seed Fund offered to such promising cases can have a multiplier effect in validation of business ideas of many startups, leading to employment generation.

3. Eligibility Criteria:**3.1 Eligibility Criteria for Startups**

The eligibility criteria for a startup to apply under the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme shall be as follows:

1. A startup, recognized by DPIIT, incorporated not more than 2 years ago at the time of application
2. Startup must have a business idea to develop a product or a service with market fit, viable commercialization, and scope of scaling
3. Startup should be using technology in its core product or service, or business model, or distribution model, or methodology to solve the problem being targeted
4. Preference would be given to startups creating innovative solutions in sectors such as social impact, waste management, water management, financial inclusion,

- education, agriculture, food processing, biotechnology, healthcare, energy, mobility, defence, space, railways, oil and gas, textiles, etc.
5. Startup should not have received more than Rs 10 lakh of monetary support under any other Central or State Government scheme. This does not include prize money from competitions and grand challenges, subsidized working space, founder monthly allowance, access to labs, or access to prototyping facility
 6. Shareholding by Indian promoters in the startup should be at least 51% at the time of application to incubator for the scheme, as per Companies Act, 2013 and SEBI (ICDR) Regulations, 2018
 7. Any startup will not receive seed support more than once each as per provisions of para 8.1 (i) and 8.1 (ii) respectively

3.2 Eligibility Criteria for Incubators

The eligibility criteria for an incubator to apply in the Startup India Seed Fund scheme are as follows:

1. Incubator must be a legal entity:
 - a) A society registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, or
 - b) A Trust registered under the Indian Trusts Act 1882, or
 - c) A Private Limited company registered under the Companies Act 1956 or the Companies Act 2013, or
 - d) A statutory body created through an Act of legislature
2. Incubator should be operational for at least two years on the date of application to the scheme
3. Incubator must have facilities to seat at least 25 individuals
4. Incubator must have at least 5 startups undergoing incubation physically on the date of application
5. Incubator must have a full-time Chief Executive Officer, experienced in business development and entrepreneurship, supported by a capable team responsible for mentoring startups in testing and validating ideas, as well as in finance, legal and human resources functions
6. Incubator should not be disbursing seed fund to incubatees using funding from any third-party private entity
7. Incubator must have been assisted by Central/State Government(s)
8. In case the incubator has not been assisted by Central or State Government(s):
 - a) Incubator must be operational for at least three years
 - b) Must have at least 10 separate startups undergoing incubation in the incubator physically on the date of application
 - c) Must present audited annual reports for the last 2 years
9. Any additional criteria as may be decided by the Experts Advisory Committee (EAC).

4. Experts Advisory Committee (EAC):

An Experts Advisory Committee (EAC) will be constituted by DPIIT, which will be responsible for the overall execution and monitoring of the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme. The EAC will evaluate and select incubators for allotment of Seed Funds, monitor progress, and take all necessary measures for efficient utilization of funds towards fulfilment of objectives of Startup India Seed Fund Scheme.

The Experts Advisory Committee (EAC) will comprise of the following members:

1. Chairman, an individual of eminence
2. Financial Advisor, DPIIT or his representative
3. Additional Secretary/ Joint Secretary/ Director/ Deputy Secretary, DPIIT (Convener)
4. Representative of Department of Biotechnology (DBT)
5. Representative of Department of Science & Technology (DST)
6. Representative of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeiTY)
7. Representative of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
8. Representative of NITI Aayog
9. At least three expert members nominated by Secretary, DPIIT from the startup ecosystem, investors, experts in the domain of R&D, technology development and commercialization, entrepreneurship and other relevant domains.

5. Guidelines for Assistance to Incubators

- 5.1 Experts Advisory Committee (EAC) shall evaluate incubators for grant assistance. A Grant of up to Rs. 5 (five) crore would be provided to a selected incubator in milestone-based three (or) more installments. The exact quantum of grant and instalments for each incubator will be decided by the Experts Advisory Committee (EAC) based on its evaluation
- 5.2 Incubators shall use the grant only for disbursement to eligible startups and shall not use the grant for facility creation or any other expenses
- 5.2 A component of Management Fee @ 5% of Seed Fund grant to the incubator will be provisioned (i.e. if an incubator is granted Rs. 1 crore of Seed Fund, then by including management fee @ 5%, the total assistance would be Rs. 1.050 crore)
- 5.3 The Management Fee provisioned for incubators shall not be used by the incubator for facility creation or any other administrative expenses. The Management Fee will be utilized for administrative expenditure, selection and due diligence of startups, and monitoring of progress of beneficiary startups
- 5.4 Installments shall be released to incubators upon submission of proofs of achievement of milestones as decided by EAC. Proportionate Management fee shall also be released with each installment
- 5.5 The quantum of first installment may be up to 40% of total approved commitment. When the cash-in-hand of the incubator goes below 10% of the total commitment by EAC, the Incubator may request for the next installment, which shall be released to incubator within 30 days of submission of proof of achievement of milestones
- 5.6 The grant should be utilized fully by the incubator within a period of three years from the date of receipt of the first installment of funds.
- 5.7 If the Incubator has not utilized at least 50% of the total commitment within the first 2

years, then the Incubator will not be eligible for any further drawdowns. It will return all unutilized funds along with interest.

- 5.8 Interest earned on all unutilized funds available with incubators shall be taken into account and adjusted at the time of next release.
- 5.9 The financing of beneficiaries will be done with efficiency and care. Selected incubators would be responsible for proper management and disbursement of the Seed Fund
- 5.10 Selected incubator shall maintain a transparent process of selection, monitoring, and disbursement mechanism for the fund. Seed Fund would be disbursed to selected startups after due diligence by the incubator
- 5.11 The incubators shall be responsible for providing physical infrastructure to the selected startups for regular functioning, support for testing and validating ideas, mentoring for prototype or product development or commercialization, and developing capacities in finance, human resources, legal compliances, and other functions. They are also expected to provide networking with investors and opportunities for showcasing in various national and international events. If the selected startup does not want to utilize the physical infrastructure of the incubator, the incubator shall offer all other resources and services to the startup
- 5.12 A startup selected by an incubator for assistance under this scheme shall not be charged any fees

6. Selection of Incubators

- 6.1 Online Applications will be invited from incubators across India to participate in the scheme on <https://www.startupindia.gov.in> or any other platform specifically designated for the purpose.

Incubators shall be selected on the basis of the following parameters:

- a. Fulfillment of eligibility criteria
- b. Quality of the team of Incubator
- c. Available infrastructure, testing labs etc.
- d. Composition of ISMC (as defined in para 7)
- e. Incubation support provided by incubator in last three years:
 - No. of startups incubated
 - No. of startups graduated, i.e. progressed from one stage of business development cycle to the next
 - No. of startups that raised follow on investments
 - No. of startups that crossed a revenue of Rs 1 Cr in last 1 year
 - 2-year survival rate of startups from the date of joining incubator
- f. Funding support extended to incubatees in last three years:
 - Investment agreements signed between incubator and startups
 - No. of startups invested in
 - Total corpus allocated to incubatees
 - Total investments raised by incubatees from external sources
- g. Mentoring provided to incubatees in last three years:
 - No. of mentors hired

- Average mentoring hours allocated per startup per month
 - No. of IP (patents, copyrights, designs, and trademarks) registered by incubatees
- h. Other support extended to incubatees in last three years:
- Industry/Corporate connects
 - Events held for stakeholder engagements
 - Participation in other events
- i. Number of startups that the incubator intends to support
- j. Quantum of funds applied for, along with fund deployment plan with timelines
- k. Any other relevant parameters that decided by the EAC

6.2 The Call for Applications for incubators will be open online throughout the year

6.3 Experts Advisory Committee (EAC) will convene at least quarterly to:

1. Evaluate the applications received during the period
 2. Select incubators for funds under the Scheme
 3. Decide the total amount of fund and number of installments in which it is to be allocated to each incubator
 4. Specify milestones to be achieved by each incubator for release of installments
- 6.4 EAC shall also monitor progress of incubators against sanctioned funds under the Scheme and take further actions as may be required
- 6.5 EAC may lay down improved guidelines for selection of incubators under the scheme from time to time

7. Selection of Startups

- 7.1 Each of the incubators applying for the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme will constitute a committee called the Incubator Seed Management Committee (ISMC), consisting of experts who can evaluate and select startups for seed support. The composition of ISMC would be as follows:
- i. Nominee of Incubator (Chairman)
 - ii. Representative from State Government's Startup Nodal Team
 - iii. Representative of a Venture Capital Fund or Angel Network
 - iv. A domain expert from Industry
 - v. A domain expert from academia
 - vi. Two successful Entrepreneurs
 - vii. Any other relevant Stakeholder

The final composition and members of ISMC of each incubator shall be approved by EAC and will be a critical parameter in selection of incubators

7.2 The startups shall be selected through an open, transparent and fair process, comprising,

inter-alia:

- i. An online call for applications shall be hosted on an ongoing basis on the Startup India portal
- ii. Applicants can apply for seed fund to any three incubators selected as disbursing partners for this scheme in order of their preference
- iii. All applications received will be shared online with respective incubators for further evaluation
- iv. The applicant may be asked to submit details on team profile, problem statement, product/service overview, business model, customer profile, market size, quantum of funds needed, projected utilization plan for funds, etc.
- i. The incubators shall shortlist applicants as per eligibility criteria given in para 3.1.
- v. Eligible applications will be evaluated by ISMC using the following criteria:

	Criteria	Details	Weightage (%)
1	Is there a need for this Idea?	Market size, what market gap is it filling, does it solve a real-world problem?	p
2	Feasibility	Feasibility and reasonability of the technical claims, methodology used/ to be used for PoC and validation, roadmap for product development	q
3	Potential Impact	Customer demographic & the technology's effect on these, national importance (if any)	r
4	Novelty	USP of the technology, associated IP	s

5	Team	Strength of the team, Technical and business expertise	t
6	Fund Utilization Plan	Roadmap of money utilization	u
7	Additional Parameters	Any additional parameters considered appropriate by incubator	v
8	Presentation	Overall assessment	w
			100%
Weightages for criteria (p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w) may be assigned by each incubator differently			

- vi. Incubator may shortlist applicants based on their evaluation for a presentation before ISMC
- vii. ISMC shall evaluate applicants based on their submissions and presentations and select startups for Seed Fund within 45 days of receipt of application
- viii. All incubators shall provide information about progress of evaluation of startups real-time to Startup India portal
- ix. Selected startups shall receive seed funding under the respective incubator that selects them as beneficiaries as per their preference shared during application (for example, if incubators at Preference 1 and Preference 2 both select a startup, the funding shall be given by Preference 1 incubator. If Preference 1 incubator rejects and Preference 2 incubator selects, the funding shall be given by incubator at Preference 2, and so on.)
- x. All applicants will be able to track the progress of their application on the Startup India portal on a real-time basis
- xi. Applicants who are rejected will also be notified through email
- xii. An applicant, if rejected once, may apply afresh

7.3 EAC may lay down improved guidelines for selection of startups under the scheme from time to time

8. Guidelines for Disbursement of Seed Fund to Startups by Incubators

8.1 Seed Fund to an eligible startup by the incubator shall be disbursed as follows:

1. Up to Rs. 20 Lakhs as grant for validation of Proof of Concept, or prototype development, or product trials. The grant shall be disbursed in milestone-based installments. These milestones can be related to development of prototype, product

- testing, building a product ready for market launch, etc.
2. Up to Rs. 50 Lakhs of investment for market entry, commercialization, or scaling up through convertible debentures or debt or debt-linked instruments
 3. Seed fund shall strictly not be used by startups for creation of any facilities and shall be utilized for the purpose it has been granted for
- 8.2 Not more than 20% of the total grant to an incubator shall be given as grants to start-ups by incubator. Rate of interest (as defined under GFR) on unutilized funds available with incubator would also be taken into account and adjusted at the time of next release by DPIIT.
 - 8.3 For startups being supported through convertible debentures, or debt, or debt-linked instruments, funds shall be provided at a rate of interest of not more than prevailing repo rate. The tenure should be fixed at the time of sanctioning the loan by the incubator, which shall be not more than 60 months (5 years). A moratorium of up to 12 months may be provided for the startups. Because of the early stage of the startups, this shall be unsecured and no guarantee from promoter or third-party will be required.
 - 8.4 The incubator shall execute a legal agreement with the selected startups before the release of the first installment. The incubators shall ensure that the necessary terms and conditions, including milestones, related to the Seed Fund are clearly detailed in the agreement
 - 8.5 Subsequent disbursement would be linked to the achievement of previously-specified milestones as per agreement between the startup and incubator
 - 8.6 Startups will receive the funds in their company bank accounts
 - 8.7 For grants, the first installment to any selected startup shall be released not more than 60 days from receipt of application from the startup. The startup shall submit the interim progress update and utilisation certificate to initiate the release of subsequent installment of grant.
 - 8.8 Startup shall submit final report and audited utilisation certificate at the end of the project duration. For failed ventures, the entrepreneur will share his/her learnings and the reasons for failure in the report and submit this along with the utilisation certificate for the fund amount
 - 8.9 The incubator or any of its staff members shall not charge any fee in cash or in kind from applicants or beneficiaries under the scheme for any process of selection, disbursement, incubation, or monitoring
 - 8.10 A grievance cell shall be set up at DPIIT for the scheme to address issues of applicants, such as delayed evaluation of applications, delayed disbursements by incubators, etc.
- 9. Accounting and Utilization of funds**
- 9.1 The incubator shall maintain an exclusive, project-specific Trust and Retention Account (TRA) with any nationalized bank. Funds under this scheme shall be released into that account in milestone-based three (or) more installments.
 - 9.2 Any net return received from beneficiary startup can be used for further funding in startups as per guidelines of this scheme (net returns shall include principal, interest, and profits). In case of no further funding of startups using this money for three years, this shall be returned to DPIIT

- 9.3 Each incubator shall report the funds sanctioned, received, and disbursed to each startup for each financial year
- 9.4 Incubators would also submit detailed report on status of utilization of funds and audited expenditure for each financial year

10. Indicators of Successful Implementation

- 10.1 The following shall be tracked and recorded by incubators for all beneficiary startups:
1. Progress of proof of concept
 2. Progress of prototype development
 3. Progress of product development
 4. Progress of field trials
 5. Progress of market launch
 6. Quantum of loan, angel or VC funding raised
 7. Jobs created by startup
 8. Turnover of startup
 9. Any other appropriate parameter
- 10.2 Selected startups shall furnish details on above parameters to incubator in all progress reports
- 10.3 The incubator shall provide the above information real-time to Startup Indiathrough their online dashboards and shall present the same to EAC on a quarterly basis
- 10.4 Incubator shall also report return on investment for each Startup. Appropriate matrix may be devised for this purpose.
- 10.5 It is understood that every startup cannot be successful

11. Repeat Incubator Applicants for Seed Fund

An incubator can reapply for funds under the Scheme when it has disbursed or committed its entire previously released grant

12. Progress Monitoring

- 12.1 Experts Advisory Committee (EAC) will review the progress of the scheme with the Incubators selected under the scheme
- 12.2 The Incubators will provide the reports as may be directed by the EAC for objective evaluation
- 12.3 In case of poor performance of any selected incubator, EAC may decide to discontinue seed fund support to the incubator and take further action as may be required
- 12.4 Appropriate legal action will be taken against the selected incubator in case it uses the grant for purposes other than those for which it has been awarded

ANNEXURE-II

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2306 FOR ANSWER ON 05.08.2022.

Programs Launched under Startup India initiative

The details of various programs undertaken by the Government to promote startups under Startup India initiative across the country are as under:

1. **Startup India Action Plan**: An Action Plan for Startup India was unveiled on 16th January 2016. The Action Plan comprises of 19 action items spanning across areas such as “Simplification and handholding”, “Funding support and incentives” and “Industry-academia partnership and incubation”. The Action Plan laid the foundation of Government support, schemes and incentives envisaged to create a vibrant startup ecosystem in the country.
2. **Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme**: The Government has established FFS with corpus of Rs. 10,000 crore, to meet the funding needs of startups. DPIIT is the monitoring agency and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) is the operating agency for FFS. The total corpus of Rs. 10,000 crore is envisaged to be provided over the 14th and 15th Finance Commission cycles based on progress of the scheme and availability of funds. It has not only made capital available for startups at early stage, seed stage and growth stage but also played a catalytic role in terms of facilitating raising of domestic capital, reducing dependence on foreign capital and encouraging home grown and new venture capital funds.
3. **Regulatory Reforms**: 52 regulatory reforms have been undertaken by the Government since 2016 to enhance ease of doing business, ease of raising capital and reduce compliance burden for the startup ecosystem.
4. **Support for Intellectual Property Protection**: Startups are eligible for fast-tracked patent application examination and disposal. The Government launched Start-ups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP) which facilitates the startups to file applications for patents, designs and trademarks through registered facilitators in appropriate IP offices by paying only the statutory fees. Facilitators under this Scheme are responsible for providing general advisory on different IPRs, and information on protecting and promoting IPRs in other countries. The Government bears the entire fees of the facilitators for any number of patents, trademark or designs, and startups only bear the cost of the statutory fees payable. Startups are provided with an 80% rebate in filing of patents and 50% rebate in filling of trademark vis-a-vis other companies.
5. **Self-Certification under Labour and Environmental laws**: Startups are allowed to self-certify their compliance under 9 Labour and 3 Environment laws for a period of 3 to 5 years from the date of incorporation.
6. **Income Tax Exemption for 3 years**: Startups incorporated on or after 1st April 2016 can apply for income tax exemption. The recognized startups that are granted an Inter-Ministerial Board Certificate are exempted from income-tax for a period of 3 consecutive years out of 10 years since incorporation.
7. **International Market Access to Indian Startups**: One of the key objectives under the Startup India initiative is to help connect Indian startup ecosystem to global startup

ecosystems through various engagement models. This has been done through international Government to Government partnerships, participation in international forums and hosting of global events. Startup India has launched bridges with over 15 countries (Brazil, Sweden, Russia, Portugal, UK, Finland, Netherlands, Singapore, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Croatia, Qatar and UAE) that provides a soft-landing platform for startups from the partner nations and aid in promoting cross collaboration.

8. **Faster Exit for Startups:** The Government has notified Startups as ‘fast track firms’ enabling them to wind up operations within 90 days vis-a-vis 180 days for other companies.
9. **Startup India Hub:** The Government launched a Startup India Online Hub on 19th June 2017 which is one of its kind online platform for all stakeholders of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in India to discover, connect and engage with each other. The Online Hub hosts Startups, Investors, Funds, Mentors, Academic Institutions, Incubators, Accelerators, Corporates, Government Bodies and more.
10. **Exemption for the Purpose Of Clause (VII)(b) of Sub-section (2) of Section 56 of the Act (2019):** A DPIIT recognized startup is eligible for exemption from the provisions of section 56(2)(viib) of the Income Tax Act.
11. **Startup India Showcase:** Startup India Showcase is an online discovery platform for the most promising startups of the country chosen through various programs for startups exhibited in a form of virtual profiles. The startups showcased on the platform have distinctly emerged as the best in their fields. These innovations span across various cutting-edge sectors such as Fintech, EnterpriseTech, Social Impact, HealthTech, EdTech, among others. These startups are solving critical problems and have shown exceptional innovation in their respective sectors. Ecosystem stakeholders have nurtured and supported these startups, thereby validating their presence on this platform.
12. **National Startup Advisory Council:** The Government in January 2020 notified constitution of the National Startup Advisory Council to advise the Government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities. Besides the ex-officio members, the council has a number of non-official members, representing various stakeholders from the startup ecosystem.
13. **Startup India: The Way Ahead:** Startup India: The Way Ahead at 5 years celebration of Startup India was unveiled on 16th January 2021 which includes actionable plans for promotion of ease of doing business for startups, greater role of technology in executing various reforms, building capacities of stakeholders and enabling a digital Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
14. **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS):** Easy availability of capital is essential for entrepreneurs at the early stages of growth of an enterprise. The capital required at this stage often presents a make-or-break situation for startups with good business ideas. The Scheme aims to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialization. Rs. 945 crore has been sanctioned under the SISFS Scheme for period of 4 years starting from 2021-22.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2306 FOR ANSWER ON 05.08.2022.

List of various initiatives undertaken by the Government specifically for development of startups in North Eastern States:

1. **Knowledge Exchange Workshops:** DPIIT organized knowledge exchange workshops for dissemination of good practices and mutual learning among States and UTs.
 - i. In year 2018, two-days knowledge exchange workshops were organized in leading incubators in the country. The workshops offered an opportunity for participating States and UTs to interact with each other, exchange best practices, interact with leading Startups, investors, and incubators. State Government officials from Assam, Tripura, Manipur, and Meghalaya participated in Hyderabad (Telangana). State Government officials from Nagaland and Sikkim participated in workshop in Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).
 - ii. In year 2019, State Government officials from Mizoram participated in workshop organized in Maharashtra. State Government officials from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland participated in workshop organized in Kerala.
 - iii. International Exposure Visits (2019): with the objective to enable the states to understand and assimilate best practices from these international ecosystems and assist in implementation of these practices in their respective ecosystems, visits across two locations – San Francisco, California, and Seattle, Washington in the months of September-October 2019 were organized. Officials from Assam were a part of this delegation.
 - iv. In year 2020, a 5-day virtual capacity building program was conducted in June 2021 as part of Knowledge Exchange Week 2021. The workshops saw participation from over 130+ state government officials from 34 States and Union Territories of India, including all the North-Eastern States.
2. **Startup India Yatra Initiative:** Startup India launched Startup India Yatra in 2017 to promote entrepreneurship in rural and non-metro regions across States. Under this program, grassroot Startup aspirants were provided incubation, mentorship, and funding support. As part of the program, bootcamps were organized in tier-2 and tier-3 districts of the state where participants attended ideation workshops and pitch their ideas.

As a part of this initiative, bootcamps were organized in Manipur, Assam, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland from January 2019 to March 2019. More than 6600 individuals from 44 districts of these 7 states were reached under Startup Yatra. 179 incubation offers were extended along with a funding support of Rs. 20.1 lakhs.
3. **WING:** As a part of DPIIT's program WING - a capacity development program for existing and aspiring women entrepreneurs was conducted in Guwahati, Assam on 27-28 February 2020 which saw participation from 45 attendees and, in Kohima, Nagaland

on 22-23 January 2020 which saw participation from 114 attendees across two parallel workshops. The participants were given mentoring sessions in the following areas:

- i. Venture Ideation and Business Model Validation
- ii. Governance: Legal/Compliance
- iii. Marketing/Branding: Creating differential
- iv. Finance & Financial Decisions
- v. Mastering Customer Acquisition Strategy & Scaling-up

4. **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (Startup Sensitization Training in Meghalaya & Assam):**

- i. **Meghalaya:** To commemorate 75 years of India's Independence, Startup India, DPIIT and PRIME Startup Hub Meghalaya under Department of Planning and Department of Finance, celebrated Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and collectively hosted a physical training session at the PRIME Startup Hub in Shillong on the 25th September 2021. The session was especially dedicated to the entrepreneurs of Meghalaya. Some of the successful entrepreneurs of the state shared their success stories, focusing on their journey, challenges, and how they overcame it. The need to tap the potential of agriculture in North-East India was also discussed. Close to 40 people participated in the program which also had Startup India, DPIIT representation on "Schemes & Benefits for Startups".
- ii. **Assam:** Startup India, DPIIT along with Assam Startup, participated in the Vanijya Utsav celebrations in Assam held on 22nd September 2021 at SRIMANTA SANKARDEVA KALAKSHETRA, Guwahati. Startup India presented on "Schemes & Benefits for Startups" and further participated in the Startup Bootcamp hosted for the incoming cohort 3.0 of startups chosen by Assam Startup. The Startup Bootcamp was held on 23rd September 2021, Assam Startup Nest. Around 30 startups and more than 100 delegates representing multiple government departments from the state of Assam participated across both the events. The sessions were instrumental in sensitizing the startups and the delegation present about the programs under the Startup India initiative.

5. **Incubator Capacity Building Engagement (Mizoram):** Startup India, along with Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development Monitoring Committee under Planning and Programme Implementation Department, has organized a consultation session with incubators from Mizoram on 22nd October 2021 as a part of Capacity Building Program. Startup India interacted with Mizoram University Incubation Centre and Mizoram University BioNest Incubator to understand their requirements and support them. More sessions to equip these incubators in further supporting the startups are to be scheduled in coming months.
