

NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY UPDATES FROM THE
TELANGANA INNOVATION CELL

GRASSROOTS INNOVATION SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS ECOSYSTEM



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LAB TO LIFE: REDEFINING ACCESSIBILITY AT THE 6TH ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SUMMIT

On January 4th, the Telangana Innovation Cell (TGIC), in collaboration with BVRIT, The Good Talk Factory (TGTF), and Youth4Jobs, successfully hosted the **6th edition of the Telangana Assistive Technology (AT) Summit** at T-Hub, Hyderabad. Scheduled to coincide with World Braille Day, the summit signaled a strategic pivot from theoretical innovation toward the 'Last Mile', the critical phase of transitioning lab-scale prototypes into functional tools for the elderly and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). This year's focus underscored a commitment to ensuring that high-potential technology does not remain stagnant in research phases but instead reaches the citizens who rely on it for daily independence.

The event featured a significant milestone as **Smt. Anita Ramachandran, IAS, Secretary, WCDSC**, led the distribution of custom-engineered products from GrailMakers, Glovatrix, and Alien Innovations directly to end-users. This transition from laboratory development to human impact serves as a testament to the state's philosophy that the true value of technology is measured by its ability to foster real-world inclusion. As Smt. Ramachandran noted, addressing the needs of the 18 lakh children with disabilities across the state requires this level of cutting-edge innovation, positioning the government as a catalyst that leverages private-sector expertise to remain at the forefront of global accessibility standards.

Beyond the immediate social impact, the summit highlighted the role of assistive technology as an economic equalizer. By fostering independent living and creating clear pathways to employment, these innovations empower individuals to contribute meaningfully to the economy, ultimately driving national growth. Prateek Madhav, CEO of AssisTech Foundation, and Meraj Faheem, CEO of TGIC, both emphasized that the goal is now to move beyond successful pilots toward sustainable, large-scale deployment. By unifying startups, policy experts, and the community, Telangana is engineering an ecosystem where technology is the primary driver for social and economic integration.





FROM VILLAGE TO VENTURE: INNOVATION PANCHAYAT KARIMNAGAR EDITION



On **January 23rd**, the Karimnagar IT Tower became the focal point for grassroots entrepreneurship as the Telangana Innovation Cell (TGIC) hosted '**Innovation Panchayat,**' a strategic initiative designed to decentralize the state's startup support system. By bringing the resources of the capital directly to the districts, the program acted as a critical link for over 60 aspiring entrepreneurs and rural innovators from **Karimnagar, Siddipet, Mancherial, Bhupalpally, Peddapally, Sircilla** and **Jagtial** districts. The initiative is built on the core principle that a founder/innovator's location should not dictate their access to professional mentorship or market opportunities, effectively ensuring that the distance from Hyderabad is no longer a barrier to scaling a breakthrough idea.

The event was marked by a series of high-impact mentoring tracks in sectors ranging from Agriculture and Health to Education and Technology. Under the guidance of **District Collector Pamela Satpathy, IAS**, and **TGIC CEO Meraj Faheem**, participants engaged in a mentorship session where they received direct feedback on product development, idea validation, marketing strategies and market compliance. This hands-on approach allowed local talent to move past theoretical concepts and tackle the specific technical and regulatory hurdles that often stall early-stage ventures. As Smt. Satpathy noted, the challenges faced during the implementation phase are essential for identifying loopholes and refining products for real-world sustainability, urging innovators to prioritize value addition over a simple dependency on funding.

Beyond the technical workshops, the program served as a vital touchpoint for integrating rural talent into state-run support structures. By replicating a proven model previously successful in Mahabubnagar, TGIC is systematically building a predictable roadmap for district-level entrepreneurs to thrive. Meraj Faheem emphasized that the goal is to provide local innovators with the exact professional resources required to transition from a pitch to an impactful reality. This decentralized approach ensures that the state's innovation ecosystem remains inclusive, drawing on the diverse creative potential found across every district in Telangana.



BRIDGING THE GAP: TGIC LAUNCHES ITS NEW MENTOR POOL NETWORK

At Telangana Innovation Cell (TGIC), we believe the most resilient innovations in India aren't happening in corporate boardrooms—they are happening in the grassroots of Telangana. Our districts are teeming with first-time innovators who possess raw grit and local ingenuity. However, to transform a grassroots solution into a globally scalable enterprise, that grit needs a strategic runway.

In January, we officially launched our search for the TGIC Exclusive Mentor Pool. This isn't just a database of advisors; it is a curated network of Architects of Change.

WHY A MENTOR POOL?

The 'rawest' stage of an innovator's journey is the most critical. First-time founders from our districts often lack access to high-level business frameworks, technical roadmaps, and market entry strategies. By formalizing this Mentor Pool, TGIC is creating a direct channel for industry veterans to handhold these innovators through their most impactful developmental milestones.

OUR VISION: A LEGACY OF IMPACT

Our vision is to move beyond passive mentorship. We are creating a structured environment where mentors don't just "give advice" but work alongside the Government of Telangana ecosystem to shape the future of our state's economy.

By professionalizing mentorship through our newly developed SOPs, we are ensuring that the knowledge of seasoned experts becomes the foundation for the next generation of rural entrepreneurs.

The overwhelming response we've seen this month proves one thing: the ecosystem is ready to give back. We are not just building startups; we are building a legacy of innovation that starts at the very roots of Telangana.



BREAKING THE CREATIVE CEILING: TGIC WELCOMES MEESCHOOL TO THE MAINSTREAM STARTUP ECOSYSTEM



At Telangana Innovation Cell (TGIC), we have always maintained that innovation knows no sectoral bounds. While Telangana leads the nation in Agri-Tech, HealthTech, and SaaS, we recognize that the next frontier of economic growth lies in the #CreativeEconomy.

On January 28, 2026, marking the National Startup Month celebrations, we took a definitive step toward this future by officially partnering with MEESCHOOL for the launch of their incubator at T-Hub. Founded by **Pratibha Pulijala** and Suneel Pulijala, **MEESCHOOL** is bridging the gap between artistic talent and entrepreneurship, ensuring creative professionals are ecosystem-ready.

The launch event, presided over by **Meraj Faheem** (CEO, TGIC) and attended by leadership from the Telangana Innovation Ecosystem and industry experts, marks the integration of Media and Entertainment into the mainstream startup fold.

"Innovation is as much about storytelling and creative expression as it is about code and hardware," said Meraj Faheem, CEO of TGIC.

"Through our partnership with MEESCHOOL, we are ensuring that creative talent is no longer on the fringes of the ecosystem but is equipped with the institutional support and business rigor necessary to scale into sustainable enterprises."

A standout moment was the launch of SHE NARRATES, a purpose-driven initiative aiming to empower 10,000 girls through drone cinematography and storytelling.

Strengthened by new industry-academia MoUs with Atal Incubation Centre - GNITS, St. Martin's Engineering College, and Ashoka School of Business, the incubator is now strategically positioned to transition 'Cinepreneurs' into sustainable, market-ready business owners."

By bringing Media & Entertainment into the heart of our innovation framework, TGIC's partnership with MEESCHOOL is opening doors for creators to access the same mentorship, institutional support, and market pathways as any tech startup. This ensures that creative ventures have the structural foundation needed to scale within the 'Rising Telangana' vision."

SUSTAINING THE MOMENTUM: TGIC JOINS HANDS WITH AIC GNITS TO POWER SECOND CONSECUTIVE TECHSTARS STARTUP WEEKEND IN HYDERABAD

Building on the successful revival of the world-renowned Techstars Startup Weekend last year, the Telangana Innovation Cell (TGIC) has once again stepped in as the State Innovation Partner for the second consecutive year. Hosted at the Atal Incubation Centre (AIC-GNITS) from January 30th to February 1st, 2026, the event signaled that the '54-hour sprint' is now firmly back as a staple of the Hyderabad innovation calendar.

FROM REVIVAL TO EXCELLENCE:

The 2026 edition proved that the appetite for high-intensity entrepreneurship in Telangana is only growing. While last year was about bringing the coveted format back to the city, this year was about deepening the technical focus. With over 80+ participants—ranging from industry professionals to innovation cell coordinators, and from professors to students—the weekend transformed into a specialized laboratory for Artificial Intelligence.



As the Govt. Ecosystem Partner, TGIC joined hands with AIC GNITS in amplifying the event’s reach and ensuring long-term institutional alignment. Through targeted communication and community outreach. By tapping into its extensive network, we facilitated a high-caliber mentor pool that guided teams to move beyond conceptual AI toward validated, market-ready business models.



Techstars Facilitator - **Rahul N**



The Art of Pitching by **RJ Ashish**



Design Masterclass by **Abhishek**

TOP 3 TEAMS OF TECHSTARS STARTUP WEEKEND HYDERABAD



Team **Rehabease**



Team **Shaura**



Team **Intellio.ai**

THE IMPACT:

Techstars Startup Weekend AI – Hyderabad served as a high-impact launchpad for the next generation of AI-driven ventures.

The intensive 54-hour format culminated in the creation of 11 functional MVPs from scratch, showcasing the immense potential of AI integration across vital sectors. From smart agricultural solutions and traffic management systems to accessible education, food hygiene, and streamlined tourism for first-time travelers, the diversity of solutions reflected a deep-seated commitment to solving real-world challenges.

Participants walked away with validated ideas, co-founder relationships, and a practical understanding of the AI landscape.

For many, this marked their first tangible step into entrepreneurship, while for others, it provided a significant push toward market readiness.

We applaud AIC-GNITS for this initiative and for providing the fertile ground where these ideas could take root. The success of the weekend reinforced a singular, clear takeaway: when the right people, the right problems, and a supportive ecosystem converge, innovation follows.



FINAL OUTCOME

11 FUNCTIONAL MVPS FROM SCRATCH

INNOVATION MEETS EMPATHY: TGIC BACKS VAAGDEVI'S MENTAL HEALTH INNOVATION SPRINT (MENTIS)



At the Telangana Innovation Cell (TGIC), we believe that the most impactful technologies are those that solve deeply human challenges.

On January 30–31, TGIC served as the Ecosystem Partner for MENTIS—a first-of-its-kind Mental Health Innovation Sprint hosted by Vaagdevi College of Engineering in Warangal.

Guided by the theme "Innovate • Empathize • Impact," MENTIS provided a platform for young minds to design meaningful solutions for the evolving mental health landscape.

SCALE AND OUTCOMES:

- **Massive Participation:** 260+ students forming 52 interdisciplinary teams from over 15 colleges.
- **Interdisciplinary Solutions:** Teams integrated AI, Technology, and Healthcare to tackle challenges in education, sustainability, and social impact.
- **Rewarding Excellence:** A ₹20,000 prize pool was awarded to 12 winning teams who demonstrated the most viable and empathetic solutions.

As an Ecosystem Partner, TGIC played a pivotal role in the sprint's success through:

- **Outreach & Promotion:** Leveraging our digital handles to drive visibility and registrations.
- **Innovator Nominations:** Identifying and bringing in talent to ensure high-quality participation.
- **Ecosystem Connectivity:** Connecting student-led initiatives with mainstream innovation standards.

MENTIS was conceptualized and executed by InnerWhispers and Nau Vaagdevi, a student-led community committed to mental health dialogue. The sprint challenged participants to integrate Technology, AI, and Healthcare to address sustainability and social impact. Whether utilizing AI for emotional support or designing sustainable healthcare pathways, the focus remained on creating real-world empathy.

By supporting initiatives like MENTIS, TGIC continues its mission to decentralize innovation—moving beyond the state capital to empower student leaders in districts like Warangal to lead the conversation on social-tech innovation.

NEWSLETTER TEAM

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ABOUT TGIC

Telangana Innovation Cell (herein referred to as TGIC) is an initiative by the Information Technology and Industries & Commerce Department, Government of Telangana. TGIC was set up in 2017 under the State Innovation Policy with a vision— to build and nurture the Culture of Innovation in the State of Telangana. Today, it acts as the first response of the State Government for identified grassroots innovators, start-ups, entrepreneurs, and innovation catalysts to foster an inclusive innovation ecosystem with State-as-a-whole-approach.

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TGIC
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