



Government of India
Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

#startupindia

National Startup Awards 2023

Guidelines

Introduction

'Startup India' is a flagship initiative that aims to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate large-scale employment opportunities. Startup India Action Plan comprises of 19 specific action items spanning across areas such as "Simplification and handholding", "Funding support and incentives" and "Industry-academia partnership and incubation". Substantial progress has been achieved not only on the Action Plan but on many other initiatives beyond the Action Plan that have been undertaken for the development of the overall growth of startup movement in the country.

Actions taken so far have resulted in a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship taking firm roots across the length and breadth of the country. The results are visible across all fields of human endeavour and all sectors of the economy. The National Startup Awards have been conceptualized to further strengthen the startup ecosystem in the country.

National Startup Awards - Overview of the Previous Editions

The first-ever National Startup Awards ('NSA') were concluded in October 2020, to recognize and reward outstanding startups and ecosystem enablers that are building innovative products or solutions and scalable enterprises, with high potential of employment generation or wealth creation, demonstrating measurable social impact.

Despite the challenging times, the Indian Startup ecosystem has showcased unprecedented resilience and zest for innovation, which has played an important role in propelling the nation's socio-economic growth trajectory. As a successor to the first edition, National Startup Awards 2021 imbibed the philosophy of recognizing and rewarding outstanding startups and enablers that have demonstrated exceptional capabilities not just in terms of financial gains, but also for the measurable impact for the society.

In line with Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the third edition of National Startup Awards, NSA 2022 acknowledged startups and enablers that have been instrumental in revolutionising the development story of India and hold within them the power and potential to enable Prime Minister Modi's vision of activating India 2.0, fuelled by the spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Over the three editions, the National Startup Awards have witnessed overwhelming participation from 6,400+ startups, 130+ incubators, and 20+ accelerators, under various categories. 100+ startups, 4 incubators, and 3 accelerators have been recognised as winners in their respective categories and have been felicitated by the Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal at a specially curated event organized annually to recognize and reward the winners of these prestigious awards.

National Startup Awards 2023

The fourth edition of National Startup Awards, NSA 2023 will be one of the biggest award platforms to recognize, reward and promote as well as offer exclusive handholding support to a diverse set of startups. These startups are driving sustainable transformation of the Indian economy and generating measurable impact for the society. NSA 2023 aims to identify, support, and connect top startups within the country.

In line with 'Vision India @2047', where India focusses on becoming a developed economy, innovation is going to be the key for all important initiatives that we undertake. For this reason, it becomes essential to support these entrepreneurs and leverage their potential to enable India's vision for 2047, fueled by the spirit of Amrit Kaal across key themes.

The NSA 2023 aims to look beyond the conventional thought process of measuring the success of a startup with the financial gains for investors etc. to parameters such as impact for the society, solving key problems by developing some innovative solution/product, and creation of jobs (direct and in-direct) in the country, which is a paradigm shift in the approach.

The startups will be awarded across **20 categories**, which have been decided upon thorough deliberations on current Indian and global economic focus points. These categories range from innovations in aerospace, retail and disruptive technologies to more impact-focused categories. These categories have been accommodated to ensure that the best startups of the ecosystem are being awarded and to create a more cohesive and cross-functioning startup ecosystem.

Categories of Awards

One startup in each of the categories would be declared the winner.

S. No.	Award Category	Award Focus Area
1	Women-Led Innovation	Startups led by at least one-woman director
2	Impact in Rural Areas	Startups creating wealth, livelihood and improving lives through their innovations in rural areas
3	NextGen Innovator	Startups with student founders who have built innovative solutions at a young age
4	Indigenous Ingenuity Champion	Startups that have been manufacturing in India
5	India's Social Impact Champion	Startups working towards social impact in healthcare, Indic language, education, livelihood, or any other allied area
6	Excellence in Innovation from the North-East and Hilly States/UT	Startups with innovative solutions from Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Uttarakhand
7	Sustainability Champion	Startups focused on climate change, sustainability, waste management, renewables, or allied sectors
8	Champions of Cultural Heritage	Startups preserving or proliferating textiles, art, and tourism among others
9	Retail Innovator of the Year	Startups in retail technologies or food processing
10	Best Startup of the Year	Startup with the aggregate highest score amongst all categories
11	Rising Star Award	Early-stage startups with growth potential
12	Genesis Innovators of the year	Startups focused on disruptive technology, including, Deep-Tech
13	Accessibility Innovation Award	Startups working towards improving accessibility for people with disabilities (PwD)
14	Financial Inclusion Award	Startups working towards financial inclusion & literacy
15	AeroInnovate Award	Startups focused on aerospace, drones, or aviation solution
16	Excellence in Local to Global	Startups with an international consumer base
17	Independent Trailblazer Award	Startups who have been bootstrapped from their inception
18	PivotPro Award	Startups that have changed the existing business model and successfully revamped their business in the face of adversity

S. No.	Award Category	Award Focus Area
19	The Next Pioneer Award	Startups that have strong product-market fit, and are building a sustainable, successful business
20	Innovators for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	Startups working for adoption and promotion of innovative farming and production practices

Details of Awards

1. A cash prize of INR 10 lakhs will be awarded to one winning startup in each of the categories by DPIIT.
2. The winner and the finalists will be given opportunity to present their solutions to relevant public authorities and corporates for potential pilot projects and work-orders.
3. The winners and finalists will be given priority for participation in various national and international startup events where DPIIT is participating.

Eligibility Criteria of National Awards 2023 for Startups are as follows:

1. The startup should be a DPIIT recognized startup. The entity must submit their certificate of recognition.
2. The entity must submit the Certificate of Incorporation issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs or Certificate of Registration from the Registrar of Firms of respective state
3. The entity must have a hardware or software product or a process solution that is present in the market.
4. The entity must have all applicable trade trade-specific registrations (example: CE, FSSAI, MSME, GST Registration, etc.)
5. There should not have been any default in the last three years (FY 2019-20, 20-21, 21-22) by the entity or any of its promoters or any of their group entities.
6. The entity must submit audited financial statements (balance sheet, profit & loss account) for the last three financial years FY 2019-20, 20-21, 21-22.
In case your startup is less than 3 years old, please upload all available financial statements. Startups which are less than a year old and do not have audited financials, will be exempt from this requirement. In case of non-availability of audited financials for FY 21-22, provisional statements issued by Chartered Accountant may be provided.
7. The entity should not be completing 10 years of incorporation on or before March 31st, 2024.

Rules for National Startup Awards 2023

The following rules will be followed:

- I. Participation in the National Startup Awards is voluntary.
- II. Startups who have been declared winners under any sector/sub-sector or category in any of the previous editions of the National Startup Awards will not be eligible. However, the finalists of the previous editions may apply.
- III. Award application form is to be filled in English only.
- IV. One startup can nominate itself in maximum 2 categories.
- V. Finalists maybe subject to a legal due diligence review by independent third-party evaluators. If the individual/organization refuses to such a request, Startup India holds the right to select the next highest scoring nominee as the award winner.

- VI. By participating in the National Startup Awards, the startups agree to the Government of India's and its partners use of its name, URL, photos, and videos for promotional purposes on its website and other promotional material.
- VII. Any false information provided within the context of National Startup Awards by any entity concerning identity, mailing address, telephone number, email address, ownership of right, or non-compliance with these rules or any terms and conditions or the like may result in the immediate elimination of the entity from the awards process.
- VIII. The decisions of the jury and the evaluation agency shall be final and binding.
- IX. All support agencies, jury, shall sign (physically or digitally) a non-disclosure agreement with Startup India.
- X. DPIIT reserves the right at its sole discretion to cancel, terminate, modify, or suspend the National Startup Awards or not award any entity in any of the categories. DPIIT further reserves the right to disqualify any candidate/entity that tampers with the submission process, commits fraud or is in violation of criminal and/or civil laws.
- XI. Allowances shall not be paid to any entity for travel or presentation before jury

Registration - Instructions for filling the form

(A step-by-step guide to participate in National Startup Awards 2023)

Step 1: Register on Startup India and obtain DPIIT recognition

In case you are already registered on Startup India and have a DPIIT recognition number, ensure that all the details given on Startup India registration are correct as certain fields will auto-populate in the application form

Step 2: Go to 'National Startup Awards' tab on Startup India Website

Step 3: Click on 'Apply for National Startup Awards 2023' tab

Step 4: Click on 'Apply' under application closing countdown and select the category under which the startup wishes to apply. ***You will only be able to fill the form through the registered account of the recognized startup on the Startup India portal.***

Step 5: Check the auto-populated details in the participation form for National Startup Awards

Step 6: Fill in the details as mentioned in the application form

Step 7: Ensure to keep the following documents ready for upload:

- Certificate of Recognition issued by DPIIT
- Certificate of Incorporation/Certificate from the Registrar of Firms
- Memorandum of Association, Partnership deed or other government accepted proof as proof for a woman founder (if applicable)
- PAN card for founder/co-founder
- Aadhar card for founder/co-founder
- Startup Pitch Deck (Not more than 10 slides)
- Trade specific registrations
- Proof of Patent, IPR (if applicable)
- Audited financial statements for the past 3 years (Profit & Loss Statement, Balance Sheet and Income Tax Return) or Provisional financial statements issued by a Chartered Accountant, in case of non availability of audited financials for FY 2021-22.

- Please attach all relevant documents, MOUs or agreements that would make your application stand out, specially, to differentiate your application and to make it more relevant and specific for the applied category.
Eg : Proof of admission into academic institution or proof of graduation or any other relevant document for your application under 'Next Gen Innovator'.
Product proof of manufacturing and ownership certificates for manufacturing facility for your application under 'Indigenous Ingenuity Champion' and etc.
- 120 seconds video explaining your product or service (this video cannot be a YouTube link; it has to be made for application to National Startup Awards). The video should cover – business model, scalability, innovation, social & economic impact on environment
- Self attested documents with proof of active users, number of employees hired, R&D and prototype development, proof of funding raised, proof of TRL level of startup (if applicable)

Step 8: Ensure that all the uploads required comply with the size requirement as mentioned

Step 9: Click 'Submit'