

Deep Dive

September 2024

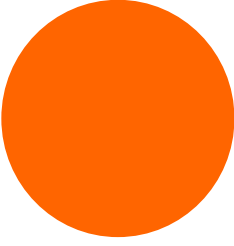


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Foreword

Dear pillars of the Tamil Nadu Emerging and Deep Tech Startup Ecosystem. I am pleased to get in touch with you once again through the September edition of Deep Dive, the e-newsletter of Tamilnadu Technology Hub. It was an eventful September as iTNT Hub took strides on stage and off stage to nurture the Research & Development & Innovation ecosystem of Tamil Nadu. The action-packed month started with the iTNT Industry Conclave and the curtain-raiser roundtable for the Tamil Nadu Deep Tech Policy.

We had Pitch Day for the top 10 innovations from more than 500 entries we got for the Unlock The Future Innovation Challenge and the winners of the first three places were given away cash prizes of Rs. 1.5 Lakh each. The prizes were given away by the Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology and Digital Services, Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan at the iTNT Industry Conclave, in the presence of the Additional Chief Secretary to Government, IT&DS Department, Thiru. Kumar Jayant, I.A.S.

We signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute - Tamil Nadu, to cooperate in various areas to support deeptech and emerging tech startups in Tamil Nadu. The MoU was exchanged with Mr. R. Ambalavanan I.A & A.S., Director of EDII-TN. We also visited Bengaluru and had discussions with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and Swissnex to support our startups.

iTNT enthusiastically participated in the Tamilnadu Startup Thiruvizha by StartupTN with our Pathfinder incubatees, where we created momentum for the emerging and deep tech startup and innovation ecosystem. At the Thiruvizha, I was privileged to elaborate the strides taken by the Government through iTNT Hub to nurture the country's first Innovation Network and launch innovative products by startups. The Hub welcomed investors for the highly engaging Special Interest Group panel discussion hosted by TiE Chennai on "Investing in Deeptech - Is this the Right Time".

The deadlines to apply for the 3rd Beacon bootcamp cohort, Pathfinder.AI incubation cohort and first cohort of our iAccelerate acceleration program have been extended till October 7th. The cohorts to shape the ambitious dreams of our visionary startups will begin this month. Spread the word with your emerging and deep tech entrepreneurs and stay tuned for updates on these exciting developments among others in September on our social media handles.

Let's #InnovateInTamilNadu and #BuildTheFuture



**Best wishes,
Vanitha Venugopal
CEO, iTNT Hub**



iTNT Industry Conclave



Tamil Nadu Technology Hub (iTNT) hosted a dynamic iTNT Industry Conclave that brought together industry leaders, experts, and startups at Taj Connemara in Chennai on September 6. The event served as a platform for networking and fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, with industry leaders & startups and created an opportunity to network, discuss industry challenges, and explore potential partnerships.

Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology & Digital Services (IT&DS), Government of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, the chief guest, brainstormed with industry leaders to nurture startup innovation in the emerging & deep tech sectors, and highlighted the role of Corporates in this space. Thiru. Kumar Jayant, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Government, IT&DS Department, Government of Tamil Nadu; and Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, CEO of iTNT Hub; also participated in the highly interactive Q&A session along with the Minister.



Tamil Nadu **Deeptech Policy**



Earlier that evening, a curtain-raiser roundtable on the “Tamil Nadu Deep Tech Policy” was chaired by Thiru. Kumar Jayant, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Government, IT&DS Department, and co-chaired by Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, CEO of iTNT Hub. Industry and subject matter experts from the deep tech sectors participated in the discussion for the policy that was announced by the Hon’ble Minister for IT&DS at the Demand for Grants session in the assembly in June 2024

Mr. Suresh Kalpathi, Chief Executive Officer, Veranda Learning; Prof. Satya Chakravarthy, ePlane.ai; Dr. Kanakasabapathi Subramanian, Senior Vice President, Product Development, Ashok Leyland; Mr. Kaushik Dey, Head of Data Sciences and Quantum AI, Ericsson Research; Mr. Kewyn George, Global Director - Information Services, Expeditors; participated in the roundtable and shared their thoughts on the definition of Deeptech and the Challenges in creating a Deeptech Policy for the State.

Mr. Jayasurya Francis, Director - India, Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC); Mrs. Srimathi Shivashankar, Corporate Vice President and Global Head - HCL EdTech Business; Mr. Ranganathan Varudhappan, Former Program Director, ISRO & Dy Director, SDSC, SHAR, Sriharikota; Mr. Bejoy Arputharaj, Co-Founder, PhantomFX; Mr. Vininder Baweja, Chief Digital & Information Officer, Saint Gobain; Mr. Janardhan K., Principal, Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund Management Corporation; Mr. Ram Meenakshisundaram, Chief Technology Officer, Virtusa; also participated.



Context Setting

Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, CEO, Tamilnadu Technology Hub

At the iTNT Industry Conclave Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, CEO of iTNT Hub, welcomed the dignitaries & set the context for the evening. "Tamil Nadu is rapidly establishing itself as a vibrant hub for deep tech innovation. With the Government's support and initiatives like iTNT, the State is fostering an environment conducive to the growth of startups and technological advancements," she said.

To further strengthen this ecosystem, we invite industries to collaborate with us in shaping a comprehensive deeptech policy. By working together, we can create a thriving environment where startups can flourish, driving economic growth and social development, the CEO said. She invited industries to partner closely to shape the Tamil Nadu Deep Tech Policy, which not only supports startups but also drives economic and social development.

Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, concluded with a thoughtful note "collective genius is the only way we can shape the world."



Keynote Address

Thiru. Kumar Jayant, I.A.S. Additional Chief Secretary to Government, IT&DS Department



"Tamil Nadu is actively working to create a comprehensive deep tech policy that addresses the unique requirements of the emerging deep tech landscape. By collaborating closely with industries, academia and startups the state aims to ensure that the policy is well-tailored to support innovation and growth," said Thiru. Kumar Jayant, I.A.S. Additional Chief Secretary to Government, IT&DS Department.

The senior bureaucrat felt that one of the key challenges in developing a deeptech policy is defining the exact nature of deep tech itself. The Government is engaging with various stakeholders, from small groups to larger industry bodies, to gain a deeper understanding of the specific needs and requirements of the deeptech sector, he said.

"By taking a proactive and collaborative approach, Tamil Nadu aims to position itself as a leading state in the field of deeptech. Through well-crafted policies and supportive measures, the Government seeks to create an environment that fosters innovation, attracts investment, and drives economic growth," Thiru. Kumar Jayant added.

Chief Guest Address

Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, Hon'ble Minister for IT&DS

Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan said that Tamil Nadu has a rich history of nurturing and exporting exceptional talent to the world. However, there is a growing recognition of the need to harness this talent domestically to drive innovation and economic growth. The State Government's vision of transforming Tamil Nadu into a trillion-dollar economy is fueled by a focus on entrepreneurship, especially in the Emerging and DeepTech sectors



The Hon'ble Minister added that to support this vision, the Government is implementing various policies and initiatives. These include standardised incentives and subsidies for companies and investors, as well as regulatory measures to ensure ethical and secure practices. "In the context of deep tech, the government is exploring ways to subsidise, incentivize, support, and accelerate innovation within the State," he noted.

To accelerate the growth of startups and incubated companies, industries were encouraged to leverage their resources and expertise to help startups scale up and market test their products. By fostering collaboration and supporting innovation, Tamil Nadu aims to create a thriving ecosystem that drives economic growth and positions the state as a global leader in technology and innovation, Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan added, before brainstorming with the industry leaders.

The Hon'ble Minister also gave away cheques for cash prizes to the tune of Rs. 4.5 Lakh to the winners of the top three places of the iTNT "Unlock The Future Innovation Challenge". Tamilnadu Technology Hub has chalked out a strategy to take these winning solutions into deep tech enterprises.



Healthcare startup M/s. Vyuhaa Med Data Private Limited won the prize for their solution on AI & IoT for Real-time Data Analysis and Decision Making. Sustainability startup M/s. Daijo Private Limited won the prize for their solution on Resource Consumption Reduction, while Climate Tech startup Climatequant Tech Private Limited emerged winner for their Supply Chain Transparency & Efficiency solution Carbon Compete.



'Unlock The Future' Innovation Challenge

iTNT Hub launched the 'Unlock The Future' Innovation Challenge, opening the doors to startups, all seasoned developers, aspiring entrepreneurs, and creative problem-solvers across the State in the Emerging and DeepTech landscape to come out with innovative solutions in the Climate Tech, Sustainability, Energy Generation, Healthcare, FinTech, and Smart Manufacturing sectors. The six-week-long Innovation Challenge concluded on a high note with the Pitch Day at the hub in the first week of September.

As many as 509 teams shared solutions in the six core problem statements: "Advanced Personalized Healthcare Using AI and IoT", "Smart Manufacturing with AI-Driven Predictive Maintenance", "Smart Home/ Village/ City Automation for Energy Efficiency", "Supply Chain Transparency and Efficiency", "Resource Consumption Reduction" and "Sustainable Waste Management".

This challenge not only rewarded the top three winning startups with a total cash prize of Rs. 4.5 Lakh, but also created a platform for contestants to showcase their ideas to industry experts and build their dream ventures. The winners of the first three places were recognized by the Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology & Digital Services, Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, at the iTNT Industry Conclave on September 6.

In the march towards the awarding ceremony, 10 finalists were shortlisted after a challenging process, for mentoring on September 2nd & 3rd and were prepared for the final pitch day on September 4th, before a jury comprising subject matter experts and investors. Furthermore, the winners and runners-up are being supported with incubation support by iTNT with the right tools, expertise, and support to accelerate their growth.

Mentorship



Mr. Kewyn George, a digital futurist and Global Director - Information Services at Expeditors, mentored the top 10 participants on the first day on Business Model Canvas and Market Analysis & Commercialization. He insisted on the facets of adaptability, uniqueness and commercialization of the product or service. He also elaborated on the multi-faceted process that requires strategic planning, resource allocation, and a deep understanding of market dynamics to successfully transform an idea into a profitable venture.



On the second day, Mr. Vijay Karunakaran, Founder & CEO at InGage & ReWin Health - Investment Board, started with technical mentoring. Mr. Vijay who is on the board of government bodies including Tamil Nadu Online Gaming Authority and Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund Management Corporation Ltd. addressed the participants from his wealth of experience in working with several ambitious projects and provided key pointers on how they can elevate their company to the next level, in an interactive session.



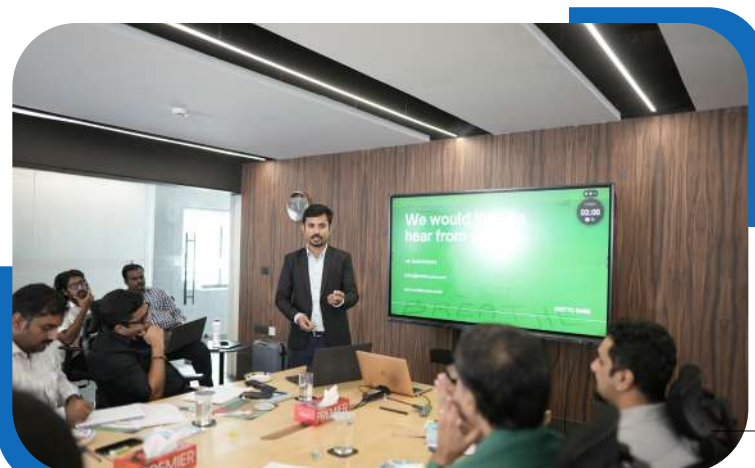
He also added that irrespective of the technology being used in your product or service, the most vital element is if your product/service is solving the problem or adding value to the user's life. On the same day, to prepare the participants for the pitch day, Mr. Nitish Kumar, Investment Analyst at Speciale Invest, guided them on the art of storytelling and pitch deck preparation. He gave key pointers on how one should present when each team rendered their mock pitch.



Each of the ten aspiring innovative teams took the stage, delivering a compelling pitch that showcased their unique products or services. Their presentations were met with keen interest and anticipation from the audience and judges alike. After a thorough evaluation and thoughtful deliberation, our esteemed panel of judges selected the winners. Their decision was based on a combination of factors, including innovation, market potential, execution strategy, and the overall impact of the venture.

Pitch Day

On the final Pitch Day, our esteemed panel of jury members convened to judge the innovation challenge. The jury comprised of Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, CEO of iTNT Hub; Mr. Janardhan K, General Counsel and Principal TNESSF Additional Charge, TNIFMC. Mr. Vijay Karunakaran, CEO of Ingage Group of Companies; Mr. Chandu Nair, Entrepreneur Advisor, The Chennai Angels; Mr. Chandrashekar Kupperi, Founder, ANOVA Corporate Services Pvt. Ltd; Mr. Kumar Sachidanandam, Co-Founder, Ydealogy Ventures; Mr. Prashant, CEO, IQ Tech Max; and Mr. Kaushik Srinath, Partnerships, The Chennai Angels.



The Winners

The jury announced the following startups as the winners of the “Unlock The Future Innovation Challenge”.

- Vyuhaa Med Data Private Limited
- Climatequant Tech Private Limited
- Daijo Private Limited

Climatequant Tech Private Limited:

Through their groundbreaking SaaS AI driven Supply Chain Sustainability enterprise platform, this startup is enabling businesses to measure, track, and reduce environmental impact, fostering a culture of sustainability across industries. CEO of the startup Mr. Sundar Kannan received the cheque for a cash prize of Rs. 1.5 lakh from the Hon'ble Minister for IT&DS Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan.



Daijo Private Limited:

In a world increasingly focused on eco-friendly solutions, Daijo is at the forefront of micro-mobility innovation. Recognizing the need for sustainable transportation options, they developed Pedaleze, a cutting-edge electric bicycle that combines advanced technology with a commitment to environmental responsibility. CEO Mr. Shivashankar Pathmanathan, and Sales and Marketing Head of the startup Saikumar Lingareddy received the cheque for a cash prize of Rs. 1.5 lakh from the Hon'ble Minister for IT&DS Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan.

Vyuhaa Med Data Private Limited:

This Healthcare Startup create CerviAI, an innovative Liquid Based Cytology (LBC) tool, offering a cost-effective and accurate approach to cervical cancer screening. Priced at a mere ₹400 per test, it provides a viable alternative to more expensive HPV testing, making it accessible to a wider population. CEO & COO of the startup Mr. Dhritiman Mallick received the cheque for a cash prize of Rs. 1.5 lakh from the Hon'ble Minister for IT&DS Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan.



The 'Unlock the Future: Innovation Challenge' hosted by iTNT Hub successfully fostered a vibrant ecosystem for startups.

Tamilnadu Startup Thiruvizha 2024

iTNT Showcases Emerging & Deep Tech Potential of Tamil Nadu



Tamilnadu Technology Hub (iTNT) had the opportunity to take the mandate of the organization to Innovate In Tamil Nadu and Build The Future at the Tamilnadu Startup Thiruvizha 2024, organized by Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission (StartupTN) on September 28th & 29th at Tamukkam Convention Centre in Madurai. The Hub team and its incubatees participated in multiple platforms, highlighting the role played by the Deep and Emerging Tech in Research & Development & Innovation.

Ms. Vanitha Venugopal said that Deep Tech solves global challenges by creating transformative impact through scientific breakthroughs. She highlighted the Beacon (bootcamp), Pathfinder (incubation), iAccelerate (acceleration), JIGSAW (innovation network), Fablab & Design Studio, Venture studio and international pavilion initiatives of the Hub.

Tamilnadu Technology Hub CEO Ms. Vanitha Venugopal addressed the gathering in a plenary discussion on “Startup Ecosystem - Government Interface” along with heads of Government Departments. The CEO elaborated on the role of the Hub in supporting startups, researchers, innovators, industries, investors and the government in the target technologies and sectors.

The CEO also mentioned iTNT’s collaborations with AWS, EDII, TANCAM, TANSAM, and other ecosystem players and highlighted the upcoming collaboration with StartupTN to promote R&D&I in the emerging and deep technology across Tamil Nadu and showcase success stories of DeepTech startups from tier 2 & 3 cities of the State.



Thiru. Sivarajah Ramanathan, Mission Director and CEO of StartupTN, moderator of the plenary session and panelists Thiru. R. Ambalavanan, IA&AS, Director of Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute -Tamil Nadu; Thiru. B. Krishnamoorthy, IOFS, Commissioner, Rehabilitation and Welfare of Non-resident Tamils and Special Secretary / Project Director of Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited (TIDCO), dwelt in great detail on the role of Tamilnadu Technology Hub in shaping the emerging and deep tech landscape of Tamil Nadu.

Earlier that day, Madurai MP Su. Venkatesan, the chief guest; Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Tmt. Archana Patnaik, Mission Director and CEO of StartupTN, Thiru. Sivarajah Ramanathan and dignitaries visited the iTNT stall, where they interacted with the iTNT team about the role played by the organization in shaping the future of emerging and deep tech innovation from Tamil Nadu.



The iTNT stall also showcased innovative products of four iTNT incubated startups. The space proved to be an opportunity for the startups to expose their innovative products and solutions to potential customers and to inspire ideation stage startups and aspirants to launch their dream ventures through iTNT. As many as 125 startups and ideators, including doctors, researchers and students learnt the various initiatives of iTNT Hub and expressed interest to be part of them.

Keynote Address

Addressing the entrepreneurs, students and other stakeholders of the startup ecosystem, Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan said that Tamil Nadu has the highest percentage of educated talented youngsters emerging out of institutions, however, there is a need to scale up industrial growth to employ the workforce. The State Government is taking strides to promote young entrepreneurs, and a policy was also altered to provide Government Orders to young entrepreneurs without tender process.

Delivering the keynote Address on the second day of the event, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology & Digital Services (IT&DS), Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan highlighted the need for startups and the various schemes offered by the Government of Tamil Nadu in promoting younger generations to develop startups. The minister also made note of the initiatives of iTNT Hub under the IT&DS Department to nurture innovation in the Emerging and Deep Tech space.



The State is also creating infrastructure and policies for technology-based enterprises, the minister said. Stating that the Government can only create a platform, he said that we need the spirit of youngsters to utilize them and scale up industrial growth. Emphasizing that the Tamil Nadu Government has been pushing for maximum R&D infrastructure in the State, the Minister said more work needs to be done towards turning existing patents of R&D into profitable ventures.

Emphasizing on digital transformation, he called it the need of the hour.

Forging Cross-Border Collaborations at Bengaluru

The Tamilnadu Technology Hub team led by Chief Executive Officer Ms. Vanitha Venugopal visited Bengaluru and initiated steps to forge collaborations with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and Swissnex.

A step towards collaborating with C-DAC

C-DAC is a premier R&D organization under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). The iTNT team had a productive meeting with Dr. Soundararajan P, Scientist E, Mr. MAV Gopal, Marketing Manager, and Ms. Anitha Rameshwari K, Scientist D, from C-DAC. The discussion was mutual and covered a wide range of topics, including potential collaborations in emerging technologies, and opportunities for innovation in the fields of electronics, computing, and advanced research.

Discussions were also made on ways for collaboration on sectors such as IoT, cyber security and quantum computing. Also, talks on providing support in training and access to startups incubated in iTNT in utilizing various resources provided by C-DAC. Both teams exchanged insights on signing a MoU, highlighting the importance of fostering technological advancements and exploring avenues for joint initiatives that could contribute to India's digital and technological growth.

They also explored possibilities of empowering startups through access to PARAM Utkarsh high performance computing system. This system offers Artificial Intelligence over Machine Learning & Deep Learning frameworks, Compute and Storage as a cloud service. This leads to reduced turnaround time, thereby increasing the innovation potential of Startups.



Initiating Partnerships with The Netherlands

The iTNT Hub team had a fruitful meeting with Ms. Anne Cremers, Deputy Consul General of the Kingdom of The Netherlands in South India; and Mr. Sujith Shyamanur, Senior Trade and Investment Officer at the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Bengaluru. The meeting explored fresh avenues through which a mutual partnership could be fostered for synergistic collaborations.

Opportunities for joint innovation programs to commercialize cutting-edge technologies were explored. This would support startups, SMEs, and enterprises in both regions, encouraging co-development of solutions, scaling innovations, and fostering a vibrant ecosystem for technology-driven growth. The collaboration would enable both countries to leverage each other's strengths, creating impactful outcomes in both local and global markets.

Access to digital soft landing program for startups incubated at iTNT which would facilitate their entry into the Dutch market and also provide market access programs for Companies in Netherlands and vice versa. This would support startups with resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities. This bilateral support aims to strengthen cross-border innovation and create a thriving environment for startups and established companies in the two countries.



iTNT x Swissnex

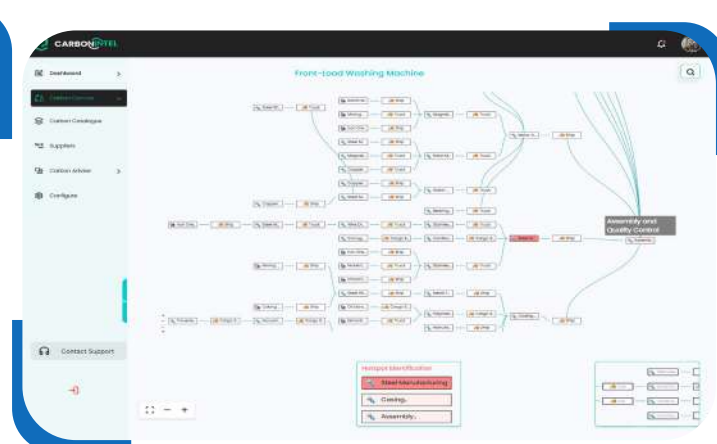
The team explored exciting collaboration with Swissnex, the Swiss global network dedicated to fostering connections in education, research, and innovation. The team interacted with Mr. Jonas Brunschwig, CEO and Consul General at Swissnex in India, Consulate General of Switzerland; and Ms. Deepika Prithviraj, Senior Innovation Manager at Swissnex.

This potential partnership aims to leverage the strengths of both nations in the realm of innovation, creating a platform for impactful cross-border collaboration. The key initiatives that were discussed include supporting open innovation by providing industry-relevant problem statements, offering a launchpad for startups and entrepreneurs to develop and scale solutions, and facilitating knowledge transfer on the R&D front.

Furthermore, the collaboration envisions an academia and industry training program, enabling researchers, students, and professionals to benefit from joint learning and development opportunities. This will be instrumental in driving innovation, fostering growth, and enhancing the overall ecosystem for both countries.



Founder Stories at iTNT: Carbon Compete Creating a future towards building a sustainable and climate conscious population



Creating a future towards building a sustainable and climate conscious population across the globe, Mr. Sundar Kannan the Founder & CEO of Carbon Compete, an enterprise SaaS AI driven Supply Chain Sustainability Platform, is revolutionizing the way we manufacture and consume products.

Through Carbon Compete, incubated at iTNT Hub, Kannan and his team are empowering businesses to measure, monitor, and reduce their carbon footprint at every stage of their supply chain. By leveraging advanced AI technology, the platform provides actionable insights and recommendations to optimize operations, minimize waste, and promote sustainable practices.

Kannan's vision extends beyond corporate sustainability. He believes that by fostering a culture of environmental responsibility within businesses, we can inspire individuals to make conscious choices and drive positive change on a global scale. Carbon Compete is at the forefront of this movement, paving the way for a more sustainable and equitable future.

Carbon Compete's AI-enabled Corporate GHG Module integrates seamlessly with your existing data systems, automating comprehensive GHG reporting across Scope 1, scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions. The AI-enabled Automated LCA Module transforms Life Cycle Assessments by reducing reliance on external consultants and significantly lowering LCA costs.

Through advanced AI-driven mapping and robust data integration, generate detailed LCA reports that provide accurate and affordable assessments for all products. Kannan envisions a future where consumers can look at the carbon footprint of the product they're consuming, labeled on the product itself. This would empower individuals to make informed choices and support companies committed to sustainability.

Sundar Kannan's Carbon Compete is a beacon of hope in the fight against climate change. By providing businesses with the tools and insights to reduce their carbon footprint, Carbon Compete is driving a shift towards a more sustainable and equitable future. His vision of a world where consumers can make informed choices based on the product's carbon footprint is a tangible step towards empowering individuals to contribute to a healthier planet.

As Carbon Compete continues to innovate and expand its reach, it is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable and climate-conscious world.

Events from September

Technology Transfer Workshop



Technology Transfer plays an impeccable role in shaping the Research, Development and Innovation landscape, especially in the Deep and Emerging Tech startup ecosystem. iTNT Hub hosted a Technology Transfer workshop on 11th September 2024 by Ms. Mahalakshmi, Executive Officer-IPR at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

The speaker provided an overview of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and their significance in technology transfer. They discussed various types of IPR, including patents, copyrights, and trademarks, and explained the importance of securing these rights to protect innovations. The speaker also highlighted the key drivers for technology transfer, such as the lack of manufacturing capacity, resources, or market distribution. Additionally, they explored common strategies like licensing and assignment to facilitate the transfer of technology between entities.

She also emphasized on Technology transfer as a strategic process that enables companies to leverage their intellectual property and drive innovation. By understanding IPR and employing effective technology transfer strategies, businesses can foster collaboration, expand their market reach, and contribute to technological advancements.

TiE Chennai SIG

Investing in Deeptech - Is this the Right Time?



TiE Chennai hosted a highly engaging Special Interest Group (SIG) panel discussion on "Investing in Deeptech - Is this the Right Time" at iTNT Hub on 13th September 2024. The event with iTNT Hub as support partner brought together industry leaders, investors, and startups to explore the emerging trends in investment, challenges, and opportunities in the DeepTech space.

The moderator Mr. Gopi Koteeswaran, Co-founder, Dzruptiv AI & Secretary and GC member TiE Chennai, iTNT Hub CEO Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, and panelists Mr. Manu Iyer, General Partner, Bluehill Capital; Mr. Arun Raghavan, Managing Partner, Arali Ventures; and Mr. Arjun Rao, General Partner, Speciale Invest, highlighted the immense potential of DeepTech as an investment avenue.

With a market size estimated to reach ₹ 9,00,000 Crore, DeepTech is poised to make a significant impact. The panelists, representing leading venture capital firms, shared their insights on the current state of DeepTech investments, the opportunities and challenges, risk management strategies, and the optimal timing for investment.

The Evolving Definition of Deeptech

The expert investors said that DeepTech, once confined to specific sectors, is now a horizontal field touching various industries. This expansion has broadened the investment opportunities and increased the potential for disruptive innovation. From their experience they acknowledged investing in early-stage startups, often before they generate any significant revenue. They highlighted the importance of identifying promising ideas and concepts, verified through underlying research and scientific validation. Investors seek startups with deeply specific specialists rather than generalists.



India's Favorable Market

India's DeepTech market, characterized by a large population and diverse industries, offers a fertile ground for DeepTech innovation. The panelists expressed optimism about the potential for growth and success in this market. Sometimes, the technology may be ahead of its time, and the market may not be ready to embrace it. However, they anticipate the emergence of the first DeepTech unicorn will create a ripple effect, opening doors for more exits and investments.

DeepTech presents a promising investment landscape with significant growth potential. By identifying promising early-stage startups, managing risks effectively, and capitalizing on India's favorable market conditions, investors can position themselves to benefit from the advancements in this cutting-edge field.



An engaging Q&A session followed the panel discussion, with potential investors and startups incubated at iTNT Hub getting enlightened on the expectations of investors from Deep and Emerging Tech startups.



iTNT Inks MoU with EdII - TN

In the strategic march towards making Tamil Nadu a global destination for Emerging & Deep Tech Startups and Innovation, Tamil Nadu Technology Hub (iTNT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute - Tamil Nadu on 20th September 2024. The MoU was exchanged between Mr. R. Ambalavanan I.A & A.S., Director of EDII, and Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, CEO of iTNT Hub. The two organizations agreed to cooperate in various areas to support deeptech and emerging tech startups in Tamil Nadu.



The key highlights of the MoU include:

- Incubation, Acceleration, Mentorship, Market Access, Investment support to Innovation Voucher Program (IVP) beneficiary startups.
- New Product Development Facilitation through Centres of Excellence (COEs) & access to network of state-of-the-art facilities
- Access to Specialized Facilities such as the IoT Lab, FabLab, and Digital Experience Lab and International Market Access

Mentor Meet - Insights from the experts

Mentor Meet is iTNT Hub's unique opportunity for emerging and deep tech startup founders and innovators to engage with experienced mentors through our monthly one-on-one mentorship sessions. The September 2024 edition of Mentor Meet was held at Tamil Nadu Technology Hub, Chennai, on the 22nd of the month. The Meet featured three seasoned mentors who shared their expertise and guidance with emerging entrepreneurs and innovators. Startups and innovators from diverse backgrounds get equipped with practical knowledge, empowering them to tackle challenges and seize opportunities for the next big leap.



Mr. Ram Lakshminarayanan, a seasoned Senior Manager of Partners at AWS, generously imparted his expertise on scaling operations. His insightful guidance focused on how burgeoning startups can effectively harness the power of AWS and cloud infrastructure to implement operational best practices and achieve sustainable business growth. One of our mentees, Mr. Pravish, founder of Swift Electronics, received invaluable direction on integrating AI and IoT into his innovative energy monitoring system, MinShakti. Mr. Lakshminarayanan also provided strategic insights on scaling up operations and crafting effective marketing strategies.



Mr. Eswar Kumar, Co-Founder of Nirvaaha, mentored participants on Valuation & Financial Strategy. With his extensive background in finance and entrepreneurship, his specialization helped startups understand the intricacies of business valuation, liquidation and develop robust financial strategies. Mr. Sriram, founder of Tealaa Innovations Private Limited, got expert guidance on valuation of his company and how to negotiate terms with possible investors for liquidation.



Mr. Chandramouli Sundaram, Senior Vice President at Maveric Systems, shared his wealth of knowledge on Data Analytics and Business Intelligence. Drawing upon his extensive experience in both the technology and consulting realms, he provided invaluable insights on how organizations can leverage the power of data to make informed decisions and gain a competitive advantage. Mr. Thirukkumaran Haridass, the visionary founder of Knowillence, received much-needed guidance on establishing a unified data warehouse, migrating reports and democratizing data access within his organization.

Several other participants, including PMCGS, Third i technologies, Vividobots and Likan clean cell innovations also found immense value in the Mentor Meet sessions, walking away with renewed confidence and clear strategies for their startups. The one-on-one interactions with industry veterans not only provided actionable advice but also sparked new ideas and perspectives.

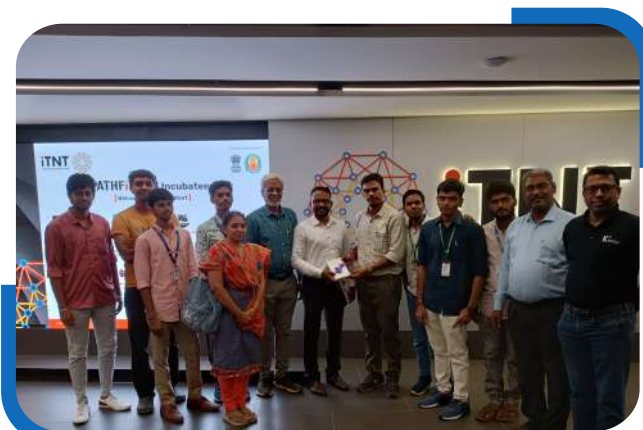
Founder Talk **Ft. Vibhakar Senthil, Torus Robotics**

Mr. Vibhakar Senthil, Co-founder of Torus Robotics presented an in-depth and inspiring talk on various aspects of building a successful venture on 25th September 2024. He drew from his wealth of experience and shared interesting stories with do's and don'ts for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Right from his Undergraduate years in Mechatronics Mr. Senthil was keen on experimenting theory into practical application. After founding Torus Robotics, initially they designed UGVs (Unmanned Ground Vehicle) for the defense sector for critical battlefield applications.

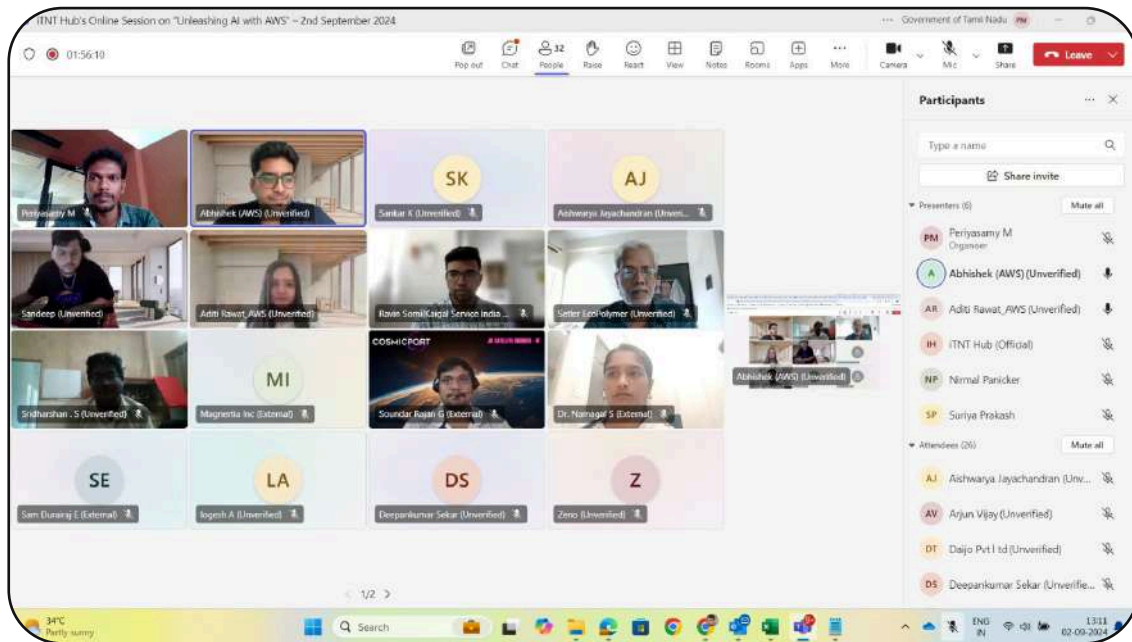
Currently torus robotics is driving the advancement of axial flux motor technology, aiming to revolutionize the EV industry with compact, lightweight and efficient powertrain solutions.

Mr. Senthil highlighted the various stages of funding and his Go-to-Market strategy from research, development and deployment. Explaining the journey from concept/ideation to revenue generation. The audience also received expert pointers on LOI generation post successful trials, TRL stages, Business plan and customer centric product development. He added that it is important to find customers that have a problem, know they have it and are actively seeking a solution.



He also touched upon much needed mental strength to bounce back from failures and keep moving forward with perseverance. Through his confidence he inspired the audience to take the big leap and be prepaid ahead of time to seize opportunities when they present themselves. He also insisted not to make decisions by intuition but to go by facts, figures and data.

Webinar on **Unleashing AI with AWS**



The webinar on 2nd September 2024 by Mr. Abhishek Mittal, Solutions Architect, Partner ISV & Startups at AWS on 'Unleashing AI with AWS' attracted over 50 participants including startups founders, innovators and aspirants. He introduced the transformative potential of AI and how startups can leverage AWS's AI/ML services. He started by explaining how various sectors such as Healthcare and life sciences, Industrial and manufacturing, Financial services, retail, media and entertainment could potentially innovate faster with the most comprehensive set of AWS's AI/ML services.

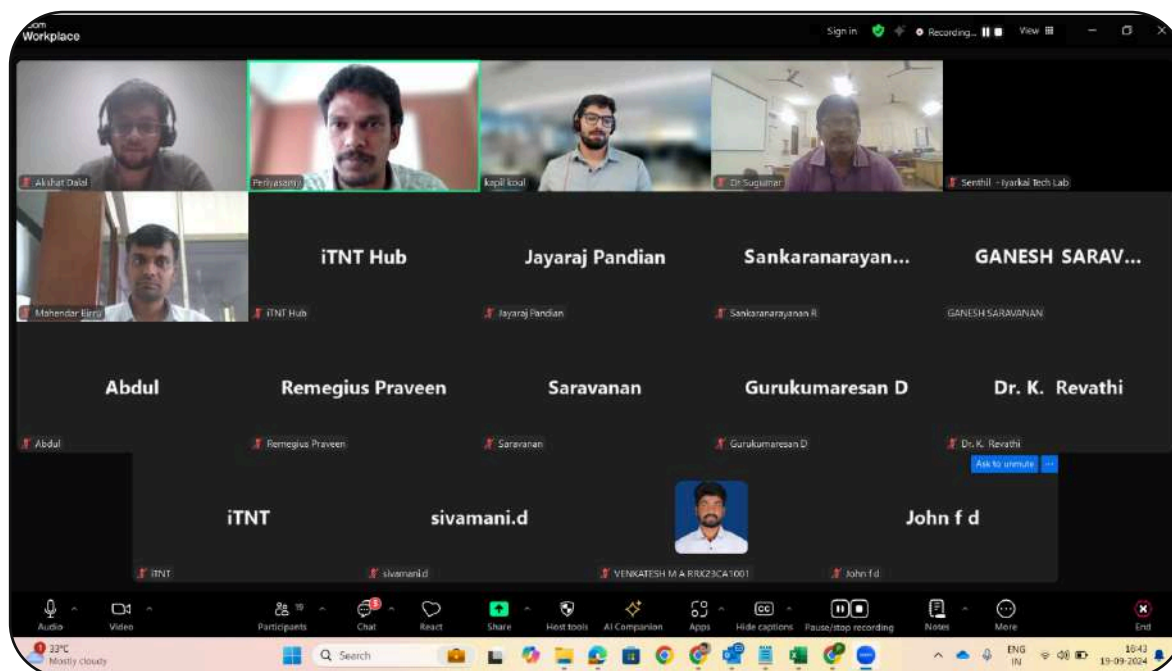
The speaker expounded on ways to optimize business processes, enhance customer experience, boost employee productivity and creativity. There was also a clear detailing on services such as Amazon Bedrock and Amazon SageMaker. With SageMaker you can Build, train, and deploy machine learning models for any use case with fully managed infrastructure, tools, and workflows.

And with Bedrock companies can build and scale generative AI applications with leading foundation models in a seamless fashion. These services are equivalent to creating a personalised virtual age

By leveraging the breadth and depth of AWS's AI/ML services you can add capabilities to your business applications or build your own models. The speaker also engaged and interacted with a diverse audience and answered all their questions.



Matlab Webinar: Accelerating the end-to-end AI Workflow



Matlab is a versatile programming language and environment widely used in engineering, science, and mathematics. iTNT Hub hosted a webinar on 'Accelerating the end-to-end Artificial Intelligence Workflow with MATLAB', by Mr. Akshat Dalal, EDG Associate at MathWorks, 19th September 2024. The resource person diligently explained how MATLAB can streamline the entire AI/ML development process.

From handling diverse data types to deploying models on embedded systems, MATLAB's versatile capabilities enable organizations to accelerate their AI initiatives. Key highlights include live data capture, efficient data preprocessing, model design and tuning, hardware-accelerated training, and seamless integration with various platforms. By leveraging MATLAB, organizations can achieve faster time-to-market for their AI/ML applications.



What's Brewing at iTNT Hub

BEACON Cohort 3.0

Take the first step towards turning your innovative idea into a successful venture with BEACON. This bootcamp is our 3rd Cohort that offers participants an immersive experience designed to refine and validate your startup concepts. Through a series of workshops, mentorship sessions, and networking opportunities, you will have a satellite view of what it takes to launch your dream startup.



iTNT TAMILNADU TECHNOLOGY HUB

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Head to the iTNT Hub website (<https://itnthub.tn.gov.in/index.html>) to learn more and apply. The last date for applying is extended till 7th October 2024. Join BEACON and be part of a community dedicated to fostering the next generation of innovative entrepreneurs.

PATHFINDER.AI - A launch pad for your AI ambitions

iTNT Hub has launched PATHFINDER.AI, an AI-focused startup cohort. If your startup is tackling cutting-edge AI applications in areas like natural language processing, computer vision or healthcare, PATHFINDER.AI is your perfect springboard. It is laser-focused on helping you achieve key milestones. You'll validate your AI-powered Minimum Viable Product (MVP), ensuring it solves real-world problems. Refine your business model for market dominance, and gain the skills and knowledge to secure funding to scale.



Calling **Emerging & DeepTech Entrepreneurs** for

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Co-working space &
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iAccelerate

Our Accelerator program is an intensive 12-week catalytic cohort to catapult early-stage startups to scaleup and emerge as successful ventures. We focus on startups at TRL 5 and above, providing comprehensive support for product validation, market analysis, fundraising, and market access. In this first Cohort within our dynamic ecosystem, you will connect with industry and subject matter experts, seasoned entrepreneurs, potential investors, and connect for market access beyond boundaries.

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Application Deadline
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The last date of applying is extended till 7th October 2024. Gain the momentum required to take your startup to the next level. Join us and chart your course to success.

DeepTech Insights

India's March Towards Deep Tech

As India embraces the deep-tech revolution, the next wave of technological breakthroughs will come from the labs and startups in this space. Deep tech refers to deep technology that involves path-breaking scientific research and innovation. It is not the innovation itself but refers to the category of start-ups that create an impact through scientific discovery and engineering, creating an enabling power for their users. Deep tech cuts across areas, including processing and computing capabilities of a higher nature that support decision-making.



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Deeptech in India will be a multi-decade Journey:

Rajan Anandan

Foundational support and patience hold the key to seeing large deep science and engineering-based global companies emerge from India in the decades to come, the managing director of venture capital fund Peak XV says. Rajan Anandan, managing director at venture capital (VC) firm Peak XV, also leads the VC firm's Surge programme for early and seed investments in startups. In an interview with Forbes India, he pointed out that deeptech in India is where software startups were in 2010 to 2012.



Scan to read the full article

Indian Tech Boom: \$229 Million in Funding in September

Indian startups raised \$229 million in September 2024, with growth-stage deals leading the way. Bengaluru maintained its dominance as a startup hub and sectors like fintech, e-commerce, and healthtech continued to attract investor interest. The second week of September 2024 witnessed a surge in funding activity for Indian startups. A total of 24 domestic startups secured over \$229 million in fresh funding, with six growth-stage deals accounting for \$182.65 million. This significant increase highlights the continued investor confidence in India's burgeoning startup ecosystem.



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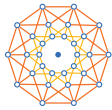
Nurix AI raises \$27.5 mn in funding round led by Accel, General Catalyst

Nurix AI, a startup that builds artificial intelligence solutions for companies, has raised \$27.5 million in a Series A funding round led by Accel and General Catalyst. Founded this year, the startup helps enterprises in integrating generative AI (GenAI) and solves issues related to system compatibility and data management. By building custom AI agents equipped with human-like voice and reasoning capabilities, the company intends to streamline operations while maintaining personalised, scalable customer interactions, said the statement.



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Qualifications: Embedded Engineer

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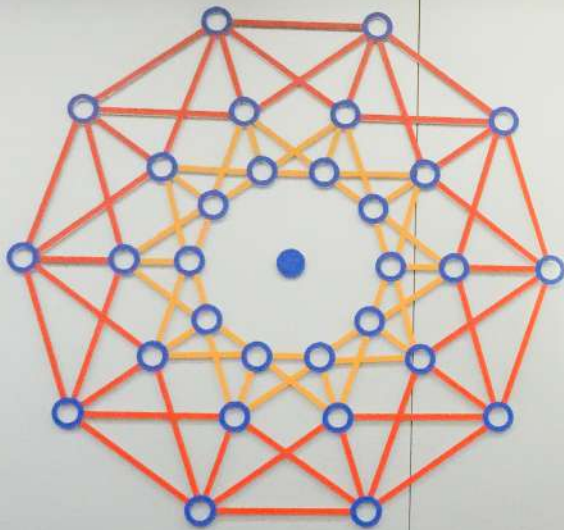
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