IDEA GRANT (Student Innovator)

SEPTEMBER 2025

Introduction & Background

Innovation and entrepreneurship are increasingly recognized as essential drivers of economic growth, social development, and technological advancement. Universities, being hubs of knowledge and creativity, play a pivotal role in nurturing student-led innovations that can address real-world challenges. In line with this vision, the Center for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE), University of Kashmir, has launched the IDEA GRANT Scheme to empower student innovators with financial and institutional support.

The IDEA GRANT Scheme has been specifically designed for engineering students of the Institute of Technology (IoT) who are in the early stages of innovation, such as Ideation, Designing, or Proof of Concept. These stages are critical yet often underfunded, preventing many promising ideas from maturing into viable solutions. The scheme aims to bridge this gap by enabling students to progress towards building a Minimum Viable Prototype (MVP) that can later be scaled into impactful products or startups. The scheme may be extended to students of other University Departments/programmes who wish to avail this scheme and can support such student innovators through grants from their local funds.

Unlike traditional awards that simply reward ideas, the IDEA GRANT is a support-oriented initiative, offering both financial aid and a structured ecosystem of guidance and mentorship. The scheme provides:

- Expert mentoring and faculty guidance to refine ideas and execution strategies.
- Incubation support through access to space, infrastructure, and resources at IoT.
- Facilitating funding opportunities by connecting with funding agencies, sponsors, or CSR programs for securing higher-value grants.
- Patent filing assistance and support in startup registration for students with promising prototypes.

Through this initiative, CIIE aims to foster a culture of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship among engineering students. By supporting innovators at the grassroots level, the scheme seeks to ensure that bright ideas are not lost due to a lack of resources, but instead evolve into workable, sustainable, and market-ready solutions.

The IDEA GRANT is thus not only a financial support mechanism but also a **capacity-building platform**, equipping students with the skills, resources, and networks required to succeed in their entrepreneurial journey.

About the Scheme

The Center for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE), University of Kashmir, has launched the IDEA GRANT Scheme for Student Innovators to provide financial assistance and institutional support to engineering students of the Institute of Technology. The scheme is designed to support students in the Ideation, Design, or Proof of Concept stages, enabling them to progress towards developing a Minimum Viable Prototype (MVP).

This grant is not a prize for simply having an idea, but a means to help promising student innovators transform their concepts into workable prototypes. In addition to financial support of ₹1.00 lakh, the scheme also offers:

- Mentoring and guidance from experts and faculty.
- Access to incubation space and resources at the Institute of Technology.
- Seeking additional grants for the selected student innovators from various institutions and agencies or under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs.
- Assistance in connecting with and applying for higher-value grant schemes to further advance your career.

The IDEA GRANT thus aims to nurture creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship among students, helping them convert ideas into impactful solutions.

Objectives

The scheme seeks to:

1. Provide financial assistance to engineering students at the Institute of Technology for developing innovative ideas into Minimum Viable Prototypes (MVPs).
2. Support students during the Ideation, design, and proof-of-concept stages of innovation.
3. Facilitate mentoring and guidance from faculty members and domain experts.
4. Provide access to incubation space, infrastructure, and institutional resources at the Institute of Technology.
5. Assist student innovators in networking and applying for higher-value grant schemes to scale their innovations.
6. Nurture a culture of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship among students.

7. Enable students to transform innovative ideas into impactful and workable solutions that address real-world challenges.

8. Assist in patent filing for their product/idea and help them in registering their potential startups.

Eligibility

- Student Innovators at the Ideation, conceptualization, and design stage, as well as the proof-of-concept stage, are eligible to apply.

- Company registration is not mandatory during the application phase.

- Any student innovator enrolled in any B. Tech. or M. Tech. Program at the Institute of Technology, Zakura Campus, or those who have completed their engineering degrees through the Institute of Technology no later than 6 months of the invitation of Applications for the grant, however, such students have to give an affidavit that they shall work on the idea in the Institute of Technology for at least 6 months after the award of the idea grant.

- Student Innovators who have previously received an Idea Grant for the same team/same product/same idea are not eligible or are registered in other incubation centres are not eligible.

Call for Applications

- CIIE will invite applications for the IDEA GRANT (Student Innovator) to engineering students of the Institute of Technology.

- CIIE shall call for applications once a year or as required to solicit applications for the IDEA GRANT.

- The call for applications and the deadlines will be published through the Institute's website and social media platforms. The interested student innovators may visit https://iot.uok.edu.in/ to submit their applications.

- CIIE may conduct theme-based challenges in response to ecosystem demand.

Application Process

The applications will be invited through the CIIE website. The calendar of future processes will also be published. Once the application is open, the notifications will be pushed through social media channels. Only completed applications will be considered for shortlisting.

Application Support

All queries related to the application process may be emailed to ciie@uok.edu.in with the subject' IDEA GRANT (Student Innovator): Application - Startup Name/Product Name'.

Shortlisting

Shortlisting Process

The applications received by CIIE will first be scrutinised by CIIE officials. The shortlisting is based on the information provided in the application form. If the number of applications is extremely high, a pre-evaluation will be conducted by CIIE with a panel of experts, and eligible student innovators will be shortlisted for a final evaluation.

Shortlist Announcement

Innovators selected for idea presentation will be notified via email and published on the website at least one week prior to the scheduled Idea Pitch Day. Applicants who were rejected will also be notified through email. They may reapply with an improved application for the subsequent Idea Pitch Days.

Queries Regarding Shortlisting

Innovators who would like to know their shortlisting scores may request this information by emailing ciie@uok.edu.in with the subject 'Idea Pitch Day Queries: Shortlisting - Startup Name/Product Name'. The Idea Pitch Day coordinator will respond to the email within 7 working days with details

Selection - The Idea Pitch Days

Idea Pitch Days

The student innovator applicants (engineering students at the Institute of Technology) will make their final pitch on 'Idea Pitch Day' before an Expert Committee Panel, which will evaluate the proposals based on their merit. CIIE shall conduct Idea Pitch Days as per demand.

Selection Criteria

The pitch deck presentations/Applications submitted by the applicants (engineering students at the Institute of Technology) will be shared with the expert committee members one week in advance. During the Idea Pitch Day Event, applicants will pitch their ideas and execution plans to the expert committee.

Expert Committee

Typically, the screening panel will be a combination of:
- An Industry Expert or an Entrepreneur or both,
- A Domain Expert,
- A Financial Expert
- An Academician,
- Coordinator or Chairman of CIIE, and
- A Vice-Chancellor's Nominee

The minimum size of the panel shall be three, excluding the Vice-Chancellor's Nominee. The panellists are expected to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement and a Non-Conflict Agreement. If there are any conflicts of interest with any of the ideas being presented, the panellist may inform the CIIE team member who will be present to assist the panellists with the screening process.

Screening Process

The panel will listen to all ideas shortlisted for that particular Idea Pitch Day event. The applicant must present their idea and fund utilisation plan to the panel. For ideas worth pursuing, the Screening Panel may recommend the type of support and the purpose of utilizing the grant. If the committee recommends an idea, the innovator is eligible for a grant of ₹1.00 lakh from the University of Kashmir, as well as any grant secured for the recommended student (s) from other funding agencies, sponsors, or through the CSR initiative. The exact amount will be finalised based on the fund utilisation plan submitted by the applicant. The Screening Panel may also recommend interim and final milestones that the applicant must achieve. The evaluation rubrics for the idea grant are as follows:
- Team (*All Team members, if more than one, must be bonafide students of Engineering programs at the Institute of Technology*)
- Product Innovation
- Marketing
- Financials
- Idea Grant utilisation plan

Wherever necessary, the expert committee may also recommend a technical review of the idea to be done before the award of the grant. All such recommendations (including the

amount of grant that may be awarded for the idea) are to be marked in the assessment sheet and signed by the panel members at the end of all the idea presentations.

Sanction of Grants

The recommendations of the expert committee will be submitted to the Chairman, CIIE, for review and approval by the Vice-Chancellor. Applicants whose ideas are thus approved will be notified via email. The list of Idea Grant recipients will be updated on the CIIE website within two weeks after the Idea Pitch Day event. Student Innovators are eligible to apply for only one idea at a time, and no two grants will be sanctioned simultaneously. Further, a student innovator can be part of only one team at a time.

Honorarium for Panel Members

Members of the Expert panel will be paid an honorarium of Rs. 2,000/= for the Idea Pitch Day pitch and a travel reimbursement of Rs. 1,000/= for members who have to travel from outside the University Campus.

Innovation Grant Disbursal

Disbursal Process

The idea grant will be disbursed in single tranches. Generally, all of the granted amount is disbursed in a single tranche after the necessary documentation is collected, and any other grant secured by the university for the student/s shall be disbursed after the innovator submits an interim report and a utilisation certificate.
The fund for selected ideas from the Idea Pitch Day event will be released in one tranche. The mode of payment will be through account transfer to the bank accounts created for each selected Idea or the student incubator's bank account, or any other mechanism deemed fit by the Competent Authority.

Documents for Disbursement of the Idea Grant

The student innovators to whom the innovation grant has been sanctioned are expected to submit a detailed fund utilisation plan along with project milestones. The fund utilisation plan for the tranche should be clearly stated along with the interim outcomes expected to be achieved.
The list of documents to be submitted is as follows:
- Scanned copy of the passbook front page/bank statement of the account.
- Institute ID card of the student/s.
- Address proof of the student/s.

- College ID card copy of the student/s.
- Bonafide Certificate.

Margin Money

The success of entrepreneurs to a large extent also depends on his/her ability to raise funds in addition to their ability to build innovative and distinguished products. The fundraising cycles also act as validation of the ideas. To ensure that the recipients of the innovation grant also have the ability to raise funds to take the idea forward, CIIE will ask the student innovators to bring Margin Money to the project. Margin Money is the own contribution by a student innovator via revenues or investments. The Margin Money shall be 10% of the innovation grant, to be invested in the subsequent tranche if secured for the student/s from funding agencies, sponsors, or through various institutions under their Corporate Social Responsibility **(CSR)** programs.

Progress Assessment

The student innovators are expected to submit an interim progress update every month and a final report, along with a utilisation certificate, upon completion of the project. To initiate the release of the subsequent tranche of funds, if secured from funding agencies, sponsors, or through various institutions under their Corporate Social Responsibility **(CSR)** programs, the student/s shall have to pitch again. The progress and future plan will be reviewed by a committee of experts set up by CIIE. Where necessary, the innovator will be asked to present a demo.

Documents for Subsequent Tranche (if secured)

The release of the subsequent tranche will be subject to verification of the following documents and evaluation by the expert committee.
- Interim Progress Report,
- Utilisation certificate signed by the student/s innovator and approved by the CIIE Coordinator,
- Detailed Plan for Utilising the Balance Amount,
- Expected Outcome of the Project, and
- Verification of the Margin Money Deposition.

Application Support

All queries related to the application process may be emailed to ciie@uok.edu.in with the subject 'Idea Pitch Day Queries: Funding - Startup Name/Product Name'. The Idea Pitch Day Coordinator will respond to the query in 7 working days.

Funding Guidelines

Utilisation Purpose and Outcome

The idea grant fund cannot be used for the following purposes:
- Salaries for the founding team,
- Purchase of assets,
- Payment of rent and other utility charges,
- The purchase of costly equipment and devices (fixed assets, such as land, buildings, furnishings, laboratory space setup, computers/laptops, and high-cost software) is exempt; however, essential software/ tools and licenses are allowed.
- Patenting expenses (innovators may claim reimbursement through the Patent Scheme).

The fund utilisation plan is given hereunder:

Main Head	Sub Head
Product development (Capped Max 100%)	Manpower (Capped Max 50%)
	Fabrication Charges
	Purchase of Essential Equipment, Consumables & Raw Materials
	Usage Charges (Labs/Equipments/Tools, etc.)
	Honorarium to Mentors (Capped Max 10 %)
	Contingency (Maximum 10%)
Market Research & Identification (Capped Max 30%)	Market Research Activities (Studies, Field Trails, Customer Survey & Customer Validation, etc.) Marketing tools include: Digital Marketing, SEO, Branding, Promotions, Advertisements, and exhibitions. Business Development Activities such as Registration as a Startup, etc.
Others (Capped Max 10 %)	Certification & Validation, Travel, Compliance, etc.

Patent Filling

CIIE shall assist in **patent filing** for products or innovations developed by student innovators, with the University of Kashmir as one of the filers. The expenses for such patent filing shall be provided by the University of Kashmir.

Higher-Value Funding

Based on the progress and the outcomes achieved, the University of Kashmir will facilitate students in securing additional and higher-value grants from funding agencies, sponsors, and other sources. It will also seek additional grants for the student innovator (s) from various institutions under their Corporate Social Responsibility **(CSR)** programs.

Project Completion Report

Student Innovators are expected to submit the final report and an audited utilisation certificate at the end of the project duration. The completed projects will be called for bi-monthly demo days. These demo days will be attended by representatives from the University and investors. The subsequent support for the student innovator will be contingent upon the submission of the report and utilisation certificate.

Failed Projects

Not all ideas are expected to get market validation and take off. Projects might fail due to technical reasons or because the customer failed to adopt the idea or product. As a policy, CIIE believes that ventures might fail, but entrepreneurs never fail. For failed ventures, the innovator is expected to share their learnings and the reasons for failure in the report and submit this along with the utilisation certificate for the grant amount.

Applying Again

Yes, subject to approval from the Chairman of the Executive Committee at CIIE, an innovator with a previously failed venture may be eligible for an innovation grant for a new idea or project. The project report submitted by the innovator, which details the efforts taken and the reasons for failure, will be thoroughly reviewed along with the audited utilization certificate. If these are found satisfactory, the innovator may be considered again for the idea grant. The student Innovator will be eligible for the remaining grant amount.

Extendibility

CIIE will operate the scheme to students of other Departments of the University, subject to the condition that financial assistance for such grants is arranged by the respective department.

AGREEMENT FOR AVAILING IDEA GRANT

This agreement made this ..... day of ..... month of Two Thousand and Twenty ...... at Srinagar by and between:

Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE), a centre at the Institute of Technology, Zakura Campus of the University of Kashmir, having its office at Zakura Campus of the University of Kashmir, represented by its Chairman, ..., hereinafter referred to as "CIIE" (which expression shall unless excluded by or repugnant to the subject or context be deemed to include its successors and assigns) of the FIRST PART.

AND

Student innovators, namely:

Mr/Ms. .... Enrolment no: ....

Mr/Ms. .... Enrolment no: ....

Mr/Ms. .... Enrolment no: ....

Mr/Ms. .... Enrolment no: ....

Mr/Ms. .... Enrolment no: ....

represented by the team leader, Mr/Ms. .... Enrolment no: .... S/o ...., Address .... hereinafter referred to as "the Awardee" (which expression shall, unless excluded by or repugnant to the subject or context thereof, be deemed to include its successors in interest, liquidators, administrators, and permitted assigns) of the SECOND PART.

WHEREAS CIIE, University of Kashmir has a scheme to promote innovative ideas by supporting them through an idea grant up to Rupees One lakh for Ideation, Design, or Proof of Concept stages, enabling them to progress towards developing a Minimum Viable Prototype (MVP). The ideas presented during the idea pitch days conducted by the CIIE, University of Kashmir, will be evaluated by the Expert Committee, and grants under the scheme will be released according to their recommendations.

AND WHEREAS the Awardee has submitted a proposal to consider the idea ".." on the designated idea pitch day for the purpose of receiving grants under the aforementioned scheme.

AND WHEREAS the idea submitted by the Awardee was presented on Idea Pitch Day held on (....../...... /............), and the Expert Committee has recommended support of Rs .... against the Idea grant.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and mutual covenants hereinafter contained, the parties hereto agree as follows:

The amount of Rs. 1 Lack will be released by the CIIE, Institute of Technology, University of Kashmir, as per the eligibility requirements submitted by the awardee on execution of this agreement.

The amount of Rs. 1 Lack sanctioned under the scheme will be utilized by the Awardee only for the purpose for which it is sanctioned. The entire amount will be utilized for the purpose in accordance with the utilization plan and milestones submitted by the awardee, which will also form part of this agreement as an Annexure.

The awardee/s shall work on the idea in the Institute of Technology for at least 6 Months after the award of the idea grant.

The Awardee will submit a utilization certificate, certified by a Chartered Accountant, to the University of Kashmir within six months from the date of receipt of the amount.

Signed, sealed, and delivered on the same day as written above.

Signatures of all Student Awardees

    1.

    2.

    3.

    4.

    5.

                       Signature of Coordinator CIIE/Chairman CIIIE

Witness

    1.

    2.