IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation

DISHA (Developing Innovations for Successful Harnessing and Adoption)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is NM-ICPS?

Answer: NM-ICPS stands for the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems(CPSs). This mission is being coordinated by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. There are 23 Technology Innovation Hubs (TIHs) under the NM-ICPS and the hub at IIT Indore is one of them with a focus on the technology vertical of System Simulation, Modelling & Visualization. Each TIH is leading activities in a particular technology vertical. For more details, please visit: https://www.nmicps.in/

2. What is IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation?

Answer: The TIH for System Simulation, Modelling, and Visualization of CPS was set up at IIT Indore. The hub is aptly christened, DRISHTI CPS for **Driving Innovation through Simulation Hub for Technologies in interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems**. It is registered as a Section 8 company as IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation.

For more details, please visit: http://drishticps.iiti.ac.in/.

3. What is the DISHA initiative?

Answer: DISHA (Developing Innovations for Successful Harnessing and Adoption) initiative has been launched to accelerate the market adaptation of new technologies cultivated in an academic laboratory. The entry stage for projects/startups in DISHA is technology readiness level (TRL) from 3 and above i.e at and beyond the proof-of-concept stage. It is designed to reduce and mitigate the constraints in terms of time, budget, and resources which impede the transformation of the prototype to market ready products. The DISHA initiative of IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation aims to identify, fund, and mentor deep-tech innovations to aid in their commercialization journey, transforming groundbreaking ideas into reality through startup creation.

For more details, Click Here

4. What are we looking for?

Answer: We are in search of CPS technologies where proof-of-concept has been established, and a prototype is ready. Prototype shall be evaluated for (i) innovation, (ii) technical and practical feasibility, (iii) market potential, and (iv) societal/economical impact (v) startup initiation within a time frame of 3-6 months.

This program is **not** designed to be a stop gap arrangement to support researchers in their academic pursuits not resulting in commercializable products and technologies.

5. Who can apply?

Answer: The scheme is launched and open to faculty, researchers, and students associated with approved higher education institutes across India, including Principal Investigators (PIs) with market-ready products or technologies aimed at commercialization. Startups already incorporated as Private Limited or LLP by eligible faculty, researchers, or students are also welcome to participate.

6. What are the advantages of the DISHA Program?

Answer: Support in terms of (i) Financial and (ii) Connections for technology pilot. (iii) Assistance with patent filing and startup registration. All patents will be filed by IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation as filing agencies with innovators are per Invention Disclosure Form provided to the PI(s)/Founder(s). We are open to joint filing with the Host Institute of the PI(s). The investment required for filing of Patents shall be borne by DRISHTI CPS. (iv) Technical and business mentoring. (v) Credits for tools (AWS, Zoho, etc.) for early-stage product testing. (v)Support for entrepreneurial activities, equipment procurement, and travel expenses will be provided in accordance with the allocated budget heads as approved at the time of proposal budget approval, changes, if any, shall be subject to approval.

7. What are the focus areas?

Answer: Simulation, Modeling and Visualization for Cyber Physical Systems

Priority Application areas (but not limited to): Digital Healthcare and Intelligent Manufacturing and other complementary and related domains emphasizing System Modelling, Simulation, and Visualization.

8. How to submit your entry?

Answer: Upload the required details and a presentation as per provided format in the online form.
Apply for DISHA program

9. What is the deadline for submission of concept note?

Answer: Applications are open till **09 February 2025**. Applications will be reviewed regularly even before the end date. We encourage you to apply as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

10. What will be the evaluation process?

Answer: Entries will be shortlisted based on the mandate fit with focus area and application sectors, innovation, estimated market size for the technology, funding requirement and time to market. If required, you may be asked to submit more details of the innovation. Applications undergo peer review by faculty/technical experts/investors. Shortlisted candidates deliver up to 10-minute presentation followed by up to 15-minute Q&A session.

11. What about the IPR norms?

Answer: IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation encourages the filing of IPR and commercialization of the outcomes of all projects/startup/technologies/products supported by the foundation. IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation will file the IP recognizing the Principal Investigator (PI)/Co-PI and other inventors as mentioned by the PI. In case there are industry partners involved in the project and have agreed *a priori* to support the project, joint IP filing with these partners may also be considered. Similarly, joint filing with Host Institute of the PI is also agreeable. The investment required for filing of Patents shall be borne by DRISHTI CPS. In case of Commercialization, the revenue will be shared as per pre-agreed terms. Specific queries are further enumerated in the Sanction order for successful applicants.

12. What will be the total duration of the project?
Answer: The maximum duration of the project under this scheme is up to one year (The duration and extension of the timeline of the project are as per the NMICPS timeline and review of work progress under the Technology Development Program of the IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation).

13. What are the eligibility criteria for applying for a project under this scheme?

Answer: Applicants must develop technologies within academic laboratories or working in consonance and under mentorship of Faculty from Higher Education Institutes specifically in domains mentioned above. Only Registered Private Limited Companies or LLPs are eligible, with existing LLPs required to convert into Private Limited Companies for compliance and equity

transfer to the IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation. Startups must be incorporated within 3-6 months of project approval. Principal Investigators (PIs) should demonstrate market clarity and assess potential competitors during their presentations. Startups should be registered with Startup India and having a valid DPIIT registration before transfer of funds, if selected. Applicants must have market clarity and consider competitors during their presentations. Startups will undergo equity transfer and revenue sharing/royalty agreements with IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation. Additionally, the project proposal must be duly endorsed by the host institute/organization. Projects with potential for patenting, real-life applications, startup registration, and commercialization will be given preference.

14. What documents will be required for the final onboarding process in the case of an established startup by a faculty member or student?

Answer:

a. Support Letter on Host Institution's LetterHead Or Undertaking & Authorization from Competent Authority of the startup on the startup Company letterhead is required as per Draft provided by DRISHTI CPS. Institute overhead shall be provided to the Institute to support the innovation further.

b. Incubation Cum Grant Agreement & Mentoring Equity Shares holding Agreement will be provided.

c. A Sanction Letter will be provided to the Startup/Innovators.

d. Host Institution will get 10% amount as Institute Overhead. This amount shall be over and above the grant amount transferred to the Startup.

e. Funds will be directly transferred to the current account of the startup and the overhead amount will be transferred to the Host Institute account.

15. What documents will be required for final onboarding if the faculty member or student has not yet established the startup?

Answer:

a. Endorsement Letter from the Host Institute.

b. Sanction Letter will be provided to the Host Institution with the following terms & conditions:

       a. The faculty or student must register their startup within a 3-6 months time frame from the start date of the project.

  b. If they are unable to register within the given time frame then, the balance funds will be returned to IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation along with Project Report and Utilization Certificate as per due format.

  c. DRISHTI CPS has the right to extend the above mentioned tenure/close the project based on its reviewers feedback.

c. We will disburse the required funds for the initial 6 months & the Host Institution will get 10% Institute overhead on the tranche transferred.

d. Once the startup is registered and certified by DPIIT as a registered startup entity DRISHTI will disburse all the remaining funds to registered startup & Host Institution will get remaining Institute overhead for the same.

e. After the registration of the startup, Incubation Cum Grant Agreement & Mentoring Equity Shares holding Agreement will be provided.

f. IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation will enter into a pre-incorporation and mentoring equity agreement, which will remain valid for a period of 24 months from the date of signing. This agreement will include the following provisions:

  a. **Equity Against Grant:** After the formation of a startup within the specified timeframe under this guideline (i.e., within 6 months), IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation will take mentoring equity as mentioned in this guideline.

  b. **Equity in Case of Delay:** If the applicant is unable to form a startup within the given timeline, the Foundation will retain the right to take equity whenever the startup is incorporated, as long as this agreement remains valid.

g. In case faculty or students change their Host Institution then the current Host Institution will provide a No Objection Certificate & return the remaining funds to the IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation. PI needs to sign a new sanction letter between the new Host Institution & IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation and the terms and conditions initiating in the above-mentioned points must be followed by them. Please note that the current Host Institution gets institute overhead for the utilized funds by the faculty or student under that period only in which the project was under the same Host Institution.

h. The Applicants/Faculties/Students/Startups must have to accept all the terms and conditions and satisfy all the eligibility criterias mentioned above before the final presentation. All agreements need to be signed before transfer of funds.

16. What are the equity transfer and revenue sharing terms?

Answer:
a. **Equity Transfer:**
   - Between 0.5% to 2% mentoring equity for every ₹10L grant depending on the stage of the startup.

b. **Revenue Sharing:**
   - For commercialization and business opportunities facilitated by DRISHTI CPS, typically, it will range from 10% to 30% of the startup's Profit after Tax (PAT) from the said deal.
   - For additional follow-on funding introduced/supported/facilitated by DRISHTI CPS through its network of investors, we shall seek Success Fee against the deal, typically, it will range from 2% to 5% of the follow-on investment amount.

17. Why are equity and revenue sharing necessary?

Answer: In line with NM-ICPS guidelines, equity and revenue sharing are essential to ensure the hub's long-term sustainability and provide enhanced support to projects and startups.

18. Can the project proposal have a Co-PI? Should the Co-PI also be an affiliate member?

Answer: Yes, it is possible to have one Co-PI associated with the project. The PI and Co-PI both should also be an affiliate member of IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation.

19. What is an affiliate program?

Answer: The Affiliate program will help in identifying interested and relevant students, faculty members, scientists and industry professionals in the field of CPS. The Affiliate program is expected to provide several benefits to affiliate members that include support for technology development and commercialization. Details of the affiliate program are available on the TIH website. All successful applicants (PIs/Co-PIs) are onboarded as affiliate members of IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation. For more details of the affiliate program, click here

20. What is the budget for undertaking a project under this program under different budget heads?

Answer: Selected proposals will receive financial grants of up to ₹50 lakh, with the possibility of additional grant support of up to ₹50 lakh based on progress and performance. This amount excludes a maximum of 10% overheads for the host institute (applicable only to academic

organizations). The Principal Investigator (PI) will have complete flexibility in utilizing the funds across various budget heads, such as manpower, contingency, consumables, and equipment.

PIs must include a detailed justification and plan for budget utilization in their proposals, along with a comprehensive cost breakdown. Note that the maximum allowable salary for one manpower position paid from the funding support is ₹50,000 per month.

Non-recurring budget head includes any capital expenditure. It is discouraged to propose capital assets of more than 10% of the total grant in case of non registered startups. Higher non-recurring budgets can be considered in the case of registered startups , if deemed essential. No investments in land/building works and repairs etc thereof are allowed from this program fund.

Proposals with additional partial financial support from the industry are highly encouraged, as this will be considered an asset to the proposal. The disbursal of funds will be in single tranche/multiple tranches, as agreed upon by the PI/Co-PI and the IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation as well as based on fund availability under the NM-ICPS program

21. What are the norms of the equipment to be purchased under this scheme?

Answer: The PIs will have flexibility (after proper justification) to use the grants provided under different budget heads including equipment. The procured equipment should be purchased as per the purchase policy of the host institute when funding is being deployed through the HI. No immovable property/construction/repair work of land and building is allowed through this fund. Equipment purchased under this (except computers and peripheral items), if any, will be owned by IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation and the host organization. The equipment should be made available for IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation affiliate members, if required, at a nominal cost even after completion of the project. PIs are encouraged to utilize the procured equipment for conducting skill development courses and are welcome to conduct these courses under the aegis of IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation through different calls under skill enhancement programme.

The host institute needs to declare the equipment and list it with IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation shared national resources. The host institute will make the utilization policy and charges. All affiliate members should be given priority in utilization and a minimum of 50% discount would be provided to such members.

22. Is there any limit on the number of proposals from one institute/university for the DISHA?

Answer: No.

23. Can one PI submit multiple projects?

Answer: No.

24. What is the process of review after the project is selected?

Answer: The project is part of the National Mission, and effective utilization of funds and resources is of paramount importance. The Principal Investigator (PI) is required to regularly monitor the project's progress to ensure its effective execution and the timely achievement of deliverables. It is expected that the PI will maintain a monthly progress report for the project, which should be made available to IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation upon request.

Participation in evaluations scheduled by IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation is mandatory. If the project's performance and outcomes are deemed unsatisfactory, IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation reserves the right to terminate the award. Details regarding the report format and additional documentation requirements will be shared with the PI in due course.

25. What will be the procedure for receiving the money (Sanctioned Amount) from DRISHTI CPS Foundation?

Answer: On receiving the sanction of the proposed project, the PI will have to enter agreements that must be signed before fund transfers with IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation and share the detailed budget plan with quotation of equipment that needs to be purchased. Further, details of the manpower required during the term of this project should also be emphasized. The sanctioned money would be transferred directly to the host institute's account/Startup account as per the case. The institute overhead shall be transferred to the Host Institution.

26. Can PI get consultancy fees under this project?

Answer: No. As the PI shall hopefully become founder of a for-profit startup in due course of the program, no additional consultancy fees shall be paid for the project to the PI but on other matters, complete freedom is given to the PI. The most important aspects of the project are outcomes (Technology, startup registration, successful commercialization, end user implementation, patents, revenue generation, etc.)

27. What if a PI or student leaves/changes the host institute during the execution of the project?

Answer: This situation should not normally arise, and it is expected that the project is completed within a maximum of 12 months. The funding will be stopped, and the host institute has to inform

IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation. Further, the host institute has to ensure that any unspent money should be returned to IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation within a period of 1 month along with the Utilization Certificate (UC) and any equipment purchased under this scheme. If a PI or student changes the host institute, then the current host institute provides a No Objection Certificate, UC & returns the remaining funds to the IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation. PI needs to sign a new sanction letter between the new Host Institution & IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation and the terms and conditions initiated by DRISHTI CPS must be followed by them. **Please note that the current Host Institution gets institute overhead for the utilized funds by the faculty or student under that period only in which the project was under the same Host Institution.**

28. What are the selection criteria and process?

Answer:

- Applications undergo peer review by faculty, technical experts, and investors.
- Shortlisted candidates deliver a 10-minute presentation followed by a 15-minute Q&A session.

IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation's DISHA grand challenge under Technology Development Programme is competitive in nature. We look for innovative ideas and/with registered startups with potential for commercialization in the field. The possibility of filing a patent, end user application, and cost of the solution are some of the criteria for the evaluation. Clarity, technical depth, feasibility, relevance to CPS, involvement of system simulation, modeling and visualization, will also be considered. All the ideas will be evaluated by various experts before IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation sanctions any proposal. The decision of the IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation will be final and no queries will be entertained about the decision.

29. Can a PI/Co-PI themselves identify an industry or end user and involve it in his/her application?

Answer: Yes, most welcome. We intend to widen our network of participating end users.

30. Do we need to acknowledge the support in our publications/website and marketing material?
Answer: Yes, it is mandatory. One should use following text in acknowledgment:

"We acknowledge the support received from IITI DRISHTI CPS Foundation under the aegis of National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical System (NMICPS), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India."