

## Guidelines for Innovation and Start-Up Competition in Higher Education Institutions

(Issued by the Higher Education Department, Government of Odisha)

### 1. Introduction

The Higher Education Department, Government of Odisha, envisions fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among its students by organizing a multi-level Innovation and Start-Up Competition. This initiative will encourage students across colleges and universities to propose creative solutions to local challenges, develop life-easing innovations, or conceptualize viable start-ups and business ideas. The competition will create a pipeline of innovative thinkers and support them through structured guidance, financial assistance, and training. For these purposes, Higher Education Department, is launching a groundbreaking initiative to revolutionize the educational landscape and foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. The Innovation and Start-Up Competition is designed to empower students across colleges and universities in Odisha to think creatively, develop innovative solutions, and turn their ideas into viable start-ups and business ventures.

### 2. Objective

The program seeks to address local challenges, simplify living and business processes by promoting (i) startup ventures (ii) developing entrepreneurial skills (iii) empowering students with resources and financial support to achieve regional and sectoral development.

### 3. Scope

The competition is open to all students enrolled in higher education institutions across Odisha, including colleges, universities, and other affiliated institutions. Participation is compulsory for all institutions and students.

### 4. Themes

Participants may submit ideas under the following categories:

1. Solutions to Local Problems: Proposals that address specific issues faced by the local community.
2. Ease of Living/Ease of Doing Business: Innovations that simplify daily activities or business operations.
3. Start-Up and Business Ideas: Concepts with potential for commercial viability.

### 5. Competition Structure

The competition will be conducted at three levels: Institution-Level, University-Level, and State-Level.

#### 5.1 Institution-Level Competition

- Participants: All students of the institution.

- **Organizing Body:** Institutions are responsible for conducting this round. Competitions will be organised under the supervision of Principals of the concerned colleges/Chairpersons of PG Council of Universities.
- **Evaluation:** By a three-member panel formed by the institution (faculty members, local entrepreneurs, and alumni).
- **Submission Guidelines:**

Students must submit a detailed proposal, including:

1. Title and category of the idea.
2. Problem statement and proposed solution.
3. Feasibility, scalability, and impact of the idea.
4. Implementation plan.
5. Proposals must not exceed 2,000 words.
6. A Synopsis within 500 words.

(A self-declaration by the participants to the effect that the proposal submitted is original and to be countersigned by the teacher/mentor guiding the student. This certificate has to be submitted mandatorily with the proposal.)

- **Selection Process:** The institution evaluates submissions based on creativity, feasibility, and impact potential to be decided by a 3-member panel of which 1 must be external.
- **Selection:** Top 3 proposals are to be forwarded to the respective university.

### 5.2 University-Level Competition

- **Participants:** Top 3 proposals/participants from each affiliated institution/Chairperson PG Council
- **Organizing Body:** Universities, under the supervision of Registrar/ Chairperson PG Council in coordination with Higher Education Department.
- **Evaluation Panel:** Comprising senior faculty members, entrepreneurs, and domain experts.
- **Selection Process:** Universities form a panel of 3 experts (including 1 external member) to evaluate the proposals.
- **Selection:** Top 5 proposals are to be forwarded to the state level competition.

### 5.3 State-Level Competition

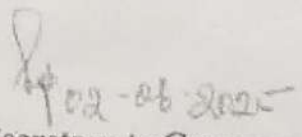
- **Participants:** Top 5 proposals/participants from each university.
- **Organizing Body:** Odisha State Higher Education Council (OSHEC), Higher Education Dept., Government of Odisha.
- **Evaluation Panel:** Experts from academia, industry, and government.



## Annexure 1

### Timeline for the Innovation and Start-up Competition, 2025

20 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Notification for Innovation and Start-up competition at institutional level and sensitizing the students for participation
1 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Competition start date at institutional level (both UG and PG). (1. each college with UG and PG will be taken as 1 unit and will select 3 candidates, 2. for universities, all PG departments under Chairperson, PG Council will be taken as 1 unit and will select 3 candidates, 3. For universities where both UG and PG courses are continuing in same campus, all UG departments will be taken as 1 unit and all PG department will be taken as 1 unit. They will select total 3+3=6 proposals to state level competition)
31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Submission of detailed proposals (max 2000 words) with a brief synopsis of 500 words by the students to the Principals/Chairperson of PG Council.
7 <sup>th</sup> August 2025	Refinement and monitoring of the proposals by mentors at college level
15 <sup>th</sup> August 2025	1. Declaration of result (best 3 proposals) at institutional level with provision of prizes by Principal / Chairperson, PG Council 2. Notification of single point contact officer and 1 coordinator at university level
23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2025	Submission of synopsis along with detailed contact address of the candidate to university from institutional level
15 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	Screening / Shortlisting / Selection (by physical interaction with participants) of proposals at university level (best 5 proposals)
By 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	Fine tuning of the selected proposals at university level in consultation with the mentors wherever necessary
22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2025	Submission of the proposal to OSHEC from university
30 <sup>th</sup> October-7 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	Screening and shortlisting of proposals by OSHEC
3 <sup>rd</sup> week of November 2025	Selection of proposals (10 nos.)
4 <sup>th</sup> week of November 2025	Felicitation of the winners at state level function

  
 Special Secretary to Government  
 Dept. of Higher Education