



Study tour of innovation hubs in Hyderabad partnered with the CGIAR Digital Innovation Initiative

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Trip Highlights

Visit to T-Hub with meetings with the CEO of T-Hub

T-Hub is India's largest incubator for startups. T-Hub is also set to collaborate with Facebook, Intel, Boeing, Microsoft and more to run programs supporting startups to link up with large corporations. Though promoted by the Telangana State government, day-to-day operations are completely left to a professional team, which reports to a Board of Directors drawn from the ecosystem.

The basic objective of T-Hub is to encourage young entrepreneurs' start-ups and scale up their operations. They can come up with a business idea for T-Hub, which will help them translate it into a product or service.

In six years, T-Hub has helped about 2,000 startups build teams and help them with products and finding markets. There are few than 100 Agtech startups at T-Hub.

T-Hub soon caught the imagination of young entrepreneurs in Hyderabad and across India. As it evolved, T-Hub began to focus on deep tech areas such as Blockchain, AI, Big Data, ML, IoT, and Mobility and brought in several industry partners to offer accelerators. As a result, the Telangana Government decided on a much larger campus to provide space for all the ecosystem players.

The Research and Innovation Circle of Hyderabad (RICH), a Government of Telangana initiative and the Hyderabad Science and Technology Cluster Lead for the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, serves as a strategic convenor, fostering collaboration among academic and research institutions, industry, entrepreneurs, and start-ups to enable the transformation of scientific research into impactful solutions that generate jobs, wealth and social good. RICH works in three verticals - Food and

Agriculture, Lifesciences, and Sustainability. To date, they have collaborated with over 250 start-ups, 41 of which are agri- startups, and established a network of more than 30 R&D organizations to support start-ups. It is also part of a thriving ecosystem that includes over 76 incubators and accelerators in Telangana.

Visit to T-Works

T-Works is India's largest prototyping center. T-Works is an initiative of the Government of Telangana that aims to create and celebrate a culture of hobbyists, makers, and innovators in India, who explore and experiment without the fear of failure.

T- works offer space for innovators to design and build their prototypes using state-of-the-art equipment, design tools, and mentoring across fields to facilitate their journey from idea to product.

Agri-business incubators at MANAGE and interactions with Agritech startups

MANAGE Centre for Innovation and Agripreneurship (CIA) is a Centre of Excellence in Agribusiness Incubation hosted at the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE). It is one of the leading Agribusiness Incubators in India that has incubated 310 and mentored 503 agripreneurs and startups working in areas including agro-processing, post-harvest technologies, value addition, farm mechanization, animal husbandry, fisheries, dairy, commodity trading supply chain management and agri-consultancy.

MANAGE also provides pre-incubation training programs to assist anyone with an agricultural business idea in areas such as idea development, understanding the agri-startup ecosystem and business development. With the boom in the agri-tech sector and more and more agricultural professionals getting into entrepreneurship, foundation

programs like pre-incubation programs will help to set them on the right path. The program is a 22-day capacity building program for aspiring agripreneurs & startups, consisting of 30 hours spread across 15 days followed by a week of one-on-one sessions.

Objectives of the program

- To guide interested people in idea generation.
- To assist people with business ideas in the agri-startup ecosystem.
- To provide them with foundational support in their entrepreneurial journey.

Intended benefits for participants.

- Gain information about the agri-startup ecosystem.
- An understanding of the opportunities for agripreneurs and agri-startups in the upcoming future.
- Support to develop products and services.
- Exposure to possible investors and information from MANAGE-CIA.
- Develop a technical understanding of the business.
- Assistance in preparing a business model.
- Learn modern marketing strategies.
- Familiarity with fundraising strategies and government strategies for startups.
- Learn effective ways of presenting to investors.
- One-on-one experience sharing sessions with existing startups.
- Use of the facilities provided by MANAGE-CIA.
- Mentor-Mentee Support Programme from MANAGE-CIA.

AgHub

AgHub is an agri-food innovation and entrepreneurship incubator built to a hub and spoke model chain. Based at Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU), Hyderabad, AgHub works with startup founders and students nurture entrepreneurship among startup founders and student entrepreneurs, reaching rural communities through innovation spokes at Jagtial, Warangal and Vikarabad in the State of Telangana.

AgHub facilitates access to infrastructure, research facilities, grassroots innovation ecosystem and other industry connections by providing market linkages, technology validation support, etc., through the research, education and extension strengths of PJTSAU.

AgHub currently supports 40 start-ups in areas including agro-processing, post-harvest technologies, value addition, farm mechanization, animal husbandry, fisheries, dairy, commodity trading, supply chain management, agri-consultancy and mechanization.

Indian Institute of Millets Research

The Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR) is a premier agricultural research institute engaged in basic and strategic research on sorghum and other millets under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). IIMR coordinates and facilitates millets research at the national level through and provides linkages with various national and international agencies.

The Institute has scaled-up value addition protocols through pilot studies for the use of kharif grain in the non-food sector, particularly feed, starch production and potable or industrial alcohol; and sweet-stalked sorghum in the production of syrup and ethanol.

Nutrihub, ICAR-IIMR startup programs are designed to foster innovation through access to cutting-edge technology and a network of leading industry leaders, mentors, and investors.

Nutrihub supports the growth of over 500 millet startups, connecting entrepreneurs with and other stakeholders (corporations, governments, academia, and investors) to bring transformative change.

ICAR-National Academy of Agricultural Research Management

The National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) was established by ICAR at Hyderabad in 1976 to address issues related to agricultural research and education management. In the initial years, the Academy primarily imparted foundation training to the new entrants of the ICAR Agricultural Research Service. Subsequently, its role expanded to include research, consultancy and capacity building for senior professionals in national and international agricultural research systems.

The association for Innovation Development of Entrepreneurship in Agriculture (A-IDEA) is a technology business incubator of ICAR-NAARM supported by the Department of Science & Technology (DST, GOI). a-IDEA, NAARM-TBI, ever since its inception, offered services in areas including capacity building, incubation services, business services, technology portfolio management and regulatory services, with the main objective of providing co-investment and supporting portfolio agriculture startups

Unmiti and Innomick Technologies

Unmiti developed a seed forecasting system for the International Crops Research Center for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). The system makes projections of demand for seeds by examining past and present performance levels, combined with an assessment of available seeds and markets.

Innomick Technologies is a startup whose strength is in early warning systems and weather information.

Meeting with the ICRISAT hub

The ICRISAT Innovation Hub (iHub) is a creative space where agricultural tech entrepreneurs, scientists, and technology experts can collaborate to innovate cutting-edge ideas across the whole agriculture value chain for smallholder farmers. The iHub promotes such intense collaborations between entrepreneurs and ICRISAT scientists.

Follow-up actions

The study tour highlighted the many opportunities to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and innovations between Indian AgriTech startups and their counterparts in Africa with potential for significant impact on food security. We identified a thriving innovation ecosystem in India working to address many shared challenges.

AGRA will work with partners to activate the recently launched South-South innovation platform by AIM, NITI Aayog in partnership with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rabo Foundation, to enable cross-border exchange of innovations, insights, and investments. The program will see Indian agritech startups exchange learnings and innovations with agritech startups in Africa, aimed at helping smallholder farmers to address the challenges they face.

The South-South Platform is a co-created effort to enable the exchange of knowledge and solutions. In this model, selected participants will receive support to enable their international expansion through direct industry linkages, target market and sector understanding, investor connects, insights to scale up across borders and the opportunity to receive financial grants to facilitate their solution adoption to benefit smallholder farmers in Asia and Africa.

Annex I: Mission photos



Meeting with CEO - National Academy of Agricultural Research Management



Meeting with ICRISAT ihub



Meeting with Innomick Technologie



Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR)