

Technology incubator Sandbox Startups invests in three Hubballi-based companies

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23rd Apr 2018

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Technology startup incubator [Sandbox Startups](#) has invested an undisclosed amount in three of its incubated startups. The incubator is recognised by Central government and has made the latest investment under the [NIDHI-SSS](#) (National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations-Seed Support System), an umbrella programme of the DST (Department of Science & Technology) of Government of India.



The funding is targeted at growth redirecting these companies to raise further funding from investors and financial institutions which will support innovative ideas to move from incubation to execution.

[Freshboxx Services Pvt. Ltd.](#), [Wide Mobility Mechatronics Pvt. Ltd.](#) and [Microchip Payments Pvt. Ltd.](#) are the three listed startups, who have been shortlisted out of over 30 startups.

Speaking on the development, CEO of Sandbox Startups CM Patil says,

Most entrepreneurs struggle hard to raise the angel or seed funding during the early stages and this fund from NIDHI-SSS is like a boon for entrepreneurs in the ecosystem. We at Sandbox Startups are building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in non-metros. Because of our geographical location, it is more difficult for entrepreneurs here to raise funds.

Speaking on the collaboration with the Department of Science, he adds,

"We are thankful to the DST for this fund allocation which would help Sandbox Startups, to invest against equity and build a self-sustainable model to help co-create an entrepreneurial culture in our ecosystem. With this funding mechanism in place, we can invite investment firms to co-invest in the startups associated with us, which in turn will help more mission-driven entrepreneurs."

1. Microchip payments Pvt. Ltd is a mobile-based payment application and point-of-sale device, enables users to make payments even without internet connectivity. Targeted at the rural geography and the MENA Region where internet penetration is low, the product gained appreciation from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), DCB Bank, and others.

Speaking on the idea behind Microchip payments, CEO & CTO

M Farhanuddin Firaq said,

Post demonetisation, we saw that one of the major problems that people faced in making online payments was due to poor internet connections. We started working on this idea and were supported and incubated at Sandbox startups Today, we are proud to say that we are the world's first company to build a completely non-internet powered digital transaction mobile application and a point-of-sale device.



This is the startup's first round of funding and it intends to invest the funds for overall growth.

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2. Eyeing Tier II cities, [Freshboxx Services Pvt. Ltd.](#) is a supply chain ecommerce startup. With fresh produce, it operates in both B2B and B2C segments with over 10,000 farmers under its umbrella. Incubated in 2015 by Sandbox Startups of the Deshpande Foundation, Freshbox will be investing new funds in bringing technology onto its platforms, says CEO Rohan Kulkarni,

We want to enable a unified supply chain from farms to stores and our next focus will be to leverage Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and data analytics for improved decision-making in understanding the needs of our customers. We are in talks with potential institutional investors to raise funds.



Prior to this the startup has raised two other angel rounds.

3. Offering end-to-end machine vision and inspection solutions tailored for various industries, [Wide Mobility Mechatronics Pvt. Ltd](#) was incubated at Sandbox Startups in 2016. The organisation provides internal inspection of products like food, electronics, and automobiles using non-destructive methods like X-Rays, cameras, and digital radiography.



Launched in 2008, **Deshpande Foundation's Sandbox Startups** is a global incubator and accelerator that supports for-profit ideas. Based in Hubballi, Karnataka, it intends to empower Tier II and Tier III cities with seed funding, co-working space, mentoring, network support, tech assistance, and go-to-market strategies. So far, the incubator has graduated 70 startups.

Founded in 1996 by Dr. Gururaj (Desh) and Jaishree Deshpande, **the Deshpande Foundation** is a non-governmental organization built to accelerate the creation of sustainable and scalable enterprises that have significant social and economic impact. With its presence in the United States and India, the foundation intends to provide a nurturing environment that can foster social innovation and entrepreneurship through its incubator and an evolving network of social entrepreneurs.