Sandbox Startups Is Set To Induct India's Largest Incubation Centre In Hubballi

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> ❝ Few months back Silicon Valley entrepreneur Gururaj "Desh" Deshpande, a known name in the business world, announced that his philanthropy arm, The Deshpande Foundation, will launch India's largest startup incubation centre yet at Hubballi (earlier Hubli) in Karnataka.

Now in a latest, India's largest startup incubation centre will finally be inaugurated on July 18 by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, at Hubballi in Karnataka. The incubation centre is being set up by Sandbox Startups, a flagship of Deshpande Foundation, and is aimed at solving the problems of non-metropolitan population.

The new facility, which has the capacity of hosting up to a 100 startups, is spread across 6.09 acres of land near the Hubballi Airport. The facility will have a range of prototyping facilities, including a Maker's lab with manufacturing and 3D printing capabilities as well as a fully operational Electronic Systems Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) centre.

In its offerings to startups, the incubation centre will provide a range of services from access to mentors, including many through a partnership with IESA (India Electronics and Semiconductor Association), network of founders, entrepreneurs and domain experts.

"Startups at the centre will be incubated through various stages of growth and will provide the startups a flexible configuration that will allow them to scale up in space as their needs and staffing grows," explained Deshpande.

In addition, Sandbox Startup Incubation Centre will work closely with startups and help them define their unique market proposition. The incubation centre will serve as a model to show how startups can grow in mid-tiered cities while providing technological solutions. Sandbox Startups is already actively recruiting new ideas and many startups are being incubated along with the launch of the incubation centre.

Conceptualized in 2008, Sandbox Startups provides incubation support to first-time entrepreneurs to test and pilot their business ideas and engage with early adopters, investment firms, government agencies, successful entrepreneurs and mentors.

In August 2014, Microsoft Ventures and the Deshpande Foundation together launched the Sandbox Startups incubator to support start-ups in Tier II and Tier III cities of India.

In July 2016, Sandbox Startups inaugurated a new incubation centre in the city of Belgaum, Karnataka. In partnership with the Karnatak Law Society's Institute of Management Education and Research (KLS IMER), the new Sandbox-IMER incubation centre welcomed four new startups into the program.

Since its inception, Sandbox Startup incubator has supported over 80 startups across various domains including Nanopix, Logistimo, NextDrop, AqauSafi Purification Systems and Chippersage Education, among others. It has been successful in creating wealth of over Rs 70 crore in the local economy.

It may also be recalled that, in April, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Dr Raman Singh inaugurated '36Inc' in Raipur, which is the first government-supported startup incubation centre in the state, and claims it to be second biggest centre in the entire country, after Hyderabad's T-Hub.

Additionally, last month, India's Union science & technology minister Harsh Vardhan announced that India will soon have its first international incubator coming up in capital city of Delhi, to promote innovation in the field of clean energy and stimulate research, innovation, and entrepreneurship for the global initiative on clean energy.