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निदेशक, संवर्धन निदेशालय,
इन-स्पेस

Dr. Vinod Kumar
Director, Promotion Directorate
IN-SPACe

Sub: IN-SPACe Seed Fund Scheme:
Announcement of AI INSPIRED Opportunities in Space Sector

Dear Sir/Madam,

Greetings from IN-SPACe!!!

The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) has been formed under department of space (DOS), to promote, enable, authorize and supervise non-government entities (NGE's) to undertake space activities. As mandated, IN-SPACe would like to promote the excitement and benefits of space applications and explorations to common man i.e., अन्त्योदय |

In its endeavor to cultivate the national private space ecosystem, IN-SPACe announces new opportunities under its INSPIRED (INnovating Space Performance with Intelligent Resilient Engines Development) initiative. As part of this effort, IN-SPACe is launching the AI INSPIRED Opportunities in Space Sector program. The Announcement of Opportunity for the same is provided in Annexure-1.

The Seed fund Scheme is a pioneering program of IN-SPACe, that seeks to enable the aspirations of upcoming NGEs in the commercial space sector. Under this announcement of opportunities, we will provide the necessary resources, mentorship, and grant-in-aid to selected proposals to develop and scale solutions.

If you have innovative idea or project related to innovation in the area of AI INSPIRED Opportunities in Space Sector, we encourage you to apply and join us in our mission to innovate and execute. To apply for this seed fund scheme online, please visit our website at www.inspace.gov.in.

The detailed guidelines for the seed fund scheme are announced vide **IN-SPACe/PD/SAO/08** dated July 24, 2025 (refer Annexure 2 for details).

भारत सरकार, भारतीय राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष संवर्धन और प्राधिकरण केंद्र, बेंगलूरु 560094
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Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre
भारतीय राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष संवर्धन एवं प्राधिकरण केंद्र

We look forward to your applications with innovative ideas that uses space technology to drive progress and improve the quality of life for people and communities around the world.

The last date to receive completed applications is **March 20, 2026**.

16.02.2026

डॉ. विनोद कुमार/ Dr. Vinod Kumar

निदेशक, संवर्धन निदेशालय/ Director, Promotion Directorate

ಡಾ. ವಿನೋದ್ ಕುಮಾರ್ / डॉ. विनोद कुमार / Dr. Vinod Kumar
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Director, Promotion Directorate, IN-SPACe
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Department of Space, Government of India
ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಭಾರತ / बेंगलूरु-560094, भारत / Bengaluru - 560 094, India

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre

Annexure -1

Announcement of
AI INSPIRED Opportunities in Space Sector

(INnovating Space Performance with Intelligent Resilient Engines Development)

Feb 18, 2026

भारत सरकार,
भारतीय राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष संवर्धन और प्राधिकरण केंद्र
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Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre

1 Introduction

The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe), established under the Department of Space (DOS), is mandated to promote, enable, authorize, and supervise Non-Government Entities (NGEs) in the space sector. A core objective of IN-SPACe is to democratize the benefits of space exploration and applications, ensuring they reach the common man—fulfilling the vision of Antyodaya (serving the last person in the queue).

The global space sector is currently navigating a profound transition from hardware-intensive legacy systems to agile, software-defined architectures. Across the world, advanced spacefaring nations are rapidly deploying Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) to manage the exponentially increasing complexity of orbital operations. From autonomous collision avoidance in congested Low Earth Orbit (LEO) to the real-time processing of hyperspectral data, AI has evolved from an experimental capability to a foundational requirement for modern space infrastructure. As the density of orbital assets increases, the traditional **"human-in-the-loop"** model of ground control is becoming unsustainable due to latency and data volume. Foreign entities are already demonstrating **"Edge AI in Space"** capabilities to carry out On-board AI for real-time image processing, autonomously satellites navigation, dodging debris, and optimizing their own health without intervention from Earth. Simultaneously, in the **"Space for Earth intelligence"** domain, global leaders are leveraging AI to convert petabytes of raw satellite data into instant economic insights for agriculture, disaster management and many other applications. Meanwhile, in the **"Smart Access to Space"** segments, AI is revolutionizing launch operations by enhancing vehicle reliability through predictive maintenance and enabling real-time trajectory optimization.

To bridge the gap between conceptual innovation and mission-ready prototyping, IN-SPACe announces the **"AI INSPIRED Opportunities in Space Sector" Seed Fund Scheme**. This initiative aims to strengthen the Non-Government Entity (NGE) ecosystem by offering Grant-in-Aid support to startups. Its focus is on fostering solutions to high-value challenges at

the intersection of space and artificial intelligence, thereby enhancing the resilience, innovation, and efficiency of the space sector.

To ensure India's technological sovereignty and leadership, it is critical to develop indigenous AI solutions that can match these global standards of autonomy and efficiency. The complete AI architecture can be categorized in five layers. These layers are Application, Model, Chip, Space Infrastructure and Energy Layer. The Announcement of Opportunities are invited in all categories.

2 Purpose of this Scheme

India's space start-up ecosystem is witnessing a period of rapid expansion. However, during the nascent stages of development, these ventures require robust structural support to survive and scale. To bridge this gap, IN-SPACe is committed to providing comprehensive "handholding" to early-stage entities. This includes financial seed capital, mentorship from domain experts, access to world-class technical facilities, and the facilitation of Technology Transfer (ToT) from ISRO.

IN-SPACe invites competitive proposals from Start-ups and Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs) that possess innovative ideas at the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and Space Technology. Applicants must demonstrate a clear execution plan to develop and deploy these technologies to solve real-world challenges.

The core objectives of this scheme are:

a) **Indigenous Technology:** To foster "Atmanirbhar" (self-reliant) AI solutions specifically tailored for Indian space missions.

b) **Operational Efficiency:** Reduce mission costs by automating telemetry and command-and-control systems.

c) **Data Democratization**: Utilize Generative AI to make complex satellite data accessible to non-experts in agriculture, disaster management, and urban planning.

2.1 Tentative List of Technology Development Areas

To ensure targeted innovation and immediate strategic returns, the scheme invites proposals under three primary tracks. **Applicants must demonstrate how their solutions leverage AI/ML to solve critical challenges in these domains of space technology:**

Tracks	Domains
Edge Intelligence in Orbit	1. On-board AI for real-time image processing (Cloud detection, feature extraction etc). 2. Autonomous Collision Avoidance 3. Intelligent Station Keeping 4. AI-based prioritization of data for downlink 5. AI Crew Assistants 6. Intelligent Software Defined Radio 7. Adaptive Beam Forming for satellite communication optimization. 8. Anti-Jamming & Spoofing [In-Orbit] 9. Automated Target Recognition [Defence, Docking etc.] 10. Swarm Intelligence for optimal coverage and latency without ground intervention. 11. Intelligent Thermal Regulation in satellite. 12. Intelligent Anomaly Detection of subsystems 13. Autonomous Servicing & Manufacturing of orbital modules. 14. Biomimetic Robotics for inspection of orbital modules.
Space for Earth Intelligence	1. Agentic-AI or LLM-based interfaces for querying satellite archives (e.g., "Show me flood-prone areas from last week"). 2. AI for climate modeling and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) monitoring. 3. Autonomous prevention of Jamming and spoofing of signals on Earth 4. AI-enabled Maritime Domain Awareness

Indian National Space Promotion & Authorization Centre

	5. Autonomous Crop Yield Forecasting 6. Automated Pest & Disease Detection 7. AI-enabled Public Infrastructure Health & Encroachment 8. AI Based Climate Monitoring [AQI/Methane/Bio]
Smart Access to Space	**Ground Segment**
	1. Autonomous Debris tracking 2. Intelligent Range Safety 3. Autonomous Mission Planning & Scheduling 4. AI-enabled services, predictions, automation, outcomes related to satellite and Launch Vehicle operations
	Earth to Space Segment
	1. Gen AI-Driven Component Design 2. AI-monitoring of high precision manufacturing and quality inspection of space systems 3. Autonomous Precision Landing & Recovery 4. AI based Trajectory Optimization

However, proposals are not limited to the above-mentioned domains. Proposals having innovative ideas pertaining to the announced area will be considered. The following support shall be extended under each domain to the selected start-ups:

- Seed fund for transforming an ingenious idea into a prototype application and technology
- ISRO facility support including experimental EO data for validation of the concept.
- Mentorship support for the development of the concept
- Access to the data algorithm as transfer of technology from the Department of Space

3 Proposal Submission and Eligibility Criteria

The application for this AO should be made, in the prescribed form available on IN-SPACe Digital Platform (IDP) viz. www.inspace.gov.in. Please note the application will be accepted

through IDP only. Applicants are advised to submit the application as per the format, incomplete applications or applications not as per format shall be summarily rejected.

Please refer **IN-SPACe seed fund scheme for Indian space start-ups and small & micro enterprises (SMEs)**, for eligibility criteria, nature of financial assistance etc. The last date for proposal submission is March 20, 2026.

4 Selection Criteria

An Expert Committee (EC) constituted by the Chairman IN-SPACe, consisting of the members from IN-SPACe Board, IN-SPACe officials, Senior Government officials, industry, and venture capitalists shall evaluate the proposals as per the following broad guidelines:

a) The proposal should have the potential to meet the future or existing needs existing community and the Indian space sector with socio-economic benefits.

b) Development and commercialization of a new product/ process/ application through **indigenous** technology and innovation.

c) Significant and quantifiable **improvements** in the existing product/ process/ application.

d) The proposal should have the potential for scale-up.

The shortlisted proposals will be recommended for seed funds as well as other support by EC. Shortlisted applicants need to submit the applicable application fee for obtaining support in terms of facilities including experimental EO data, ephemeris and orbital data, mentorship and transfer of technology.

The proposals recommended for the transfer of technology, by EC shall be evaluated by the IN-SPACe technology transfer committee, and need to pay the required technology transfer charges to New Space India Limited if the technology is available and acceptable to the applicant.

5 Monitoring & Evaluation

The progress of the proposals selected against this AO shall be monitored by the Project Facilitation and Monitoring Committee (PFMC). PFMC shall consist of IN-SPACe Directors, Joint Secretary, Deputy Directors, and senior scientists from ISRO.

a) PFMC will review the progress periodically.
b) The start-up will provide the reports as may be directed by the PFMC after evaluation.
c) In case of poor performance of any selected start-up, PFMC may decide to discontinue seed fund and other support.

NB: *In case of any dispute the decision of IN-SPACe board shall be final and binding.*

6 Expected Outcome

- **TRL Advancement:** Advance technologies from initial Proof of Concept to prototype demonstration within relevant operational environments.
- **Intellectual Property Creation:** Create patents and proprietary algorithms to minimize India's reliance on foreign software licenses.
- **Commercial Viability:** Establish a clear roadmap for advancing the prototype toward market readiness.



Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre

Annexure-2

IN-SPACe/PD/SAO/08

July 24,2025

Guidelines for IN-SPACe Seed Fund Scheme for Indian Space Start Ups and Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE)

भारत सरकार, भारतीय राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष संवर्धन और प्राधिकरण केंद्र

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Headquarter, Bopal Ahmedabad -380058

email: director-pd@inspace.gov.in

Guidelines for IN-SPACe Seed Fund Scheme for Indian Space Start-ups Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE)

1. Introduction

As part of the reforms in the policy for commercial space activities, IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion & Authorization Centre) has been setup as a distinct agency within the Department of Space. As per the Gazette Notification dated 02.10.2021, IN-SPACe has the mandate to promote, enable, authorize and supervise Non-Governmental Entities (NGEs) undertaking space activities. To fulfill the above mandate IN-SPACe has conceptualized **"IN-SPACe Seed Fund Scheme for Space Start-ups and Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE)"** to promote start-ups in Space Sector in India.

IN-SPACe acknowledges that the commercial space sector being a niche and nascent industry may have unprecedented challenges in raising financing, particularly for research and development activities. It is the vision of IN-SPACe, to enable the aspirations of upcoming NGEs in the commercial space sector by providing them access to funding in their early stages, to finance the research and development of novel technologies in the space sector. It is the hope of IN-SPACe that through this gesture, not only can startups in the commercial space sector benefit from the funding itself, but the implicit endorsement in the startup's capabilities by IN-SPACe would lend credence to the startup's business plan. In order to give shape to this vision, IN-SPACe has formulated this scheme.

The scheme shall be administered by the Promotion Directorate of IN-SPACe.

2. Objectives of the Scheme

The core objectives of the scheme are:

i. to promote use of space technology by Indian industries
ii. to facilitate new and innovative technologies development in the space sector
iii. to create a framework to engage with space start-ups
iv. to encourage a culture of technology co-creation in space Sector



3. Eligibility

The eligibility criteria for a start-up to apply under the **"IN-SPACe Seed Fund Scheme for Space Start-ups and Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE)"** shall be as follows:

I. Only DPIIT registered Indian space start-ups and Micro & Small Enterprises (MSE)" registered with Ministry of MSME are eligible to apply.

II. Applicants must possess an innovative business idea to develop and demonstrate a product or a service with market fit in space domain. The product should have viability for commercialization with scope of scaling. In this regard, IN-SPACe reserves the right to call for and review the business plan in respect of such product and/or service and/or engage the services of any third party to review the same. Only if, in the discretion of IN-SPACe or any person so appointed by it, the business plan is viable and fulfils the requirements of commercialization or scaling or any other criterion that may be defined by IN-SPACe, will IN-SPACe consider taking further steps.

III. The applicants shall declare all the capital raised through grants, awards, equity or any other source at the time of application. IN-SPACe reserves the right to call for any other information from the Applicant as part of the process for evaluating an application.

IV. Indian ownership in the NGEi should be at least 75% at the time of first disbursement and shall not fall below 60% anytime during the project execution. Additionally, a single block investment by the foreign investor should be less than 25%.

V. Applicants should be using space technology as the core in its product or service. The management of the Startups/MSEs shall not be associated with any other subsidiary or parent company in India or abroad working on the similar product/technology either directly or indirectly for which the company has applied for the funding support through IN-SPACe.

VI. Promoters' and angel investors investment in the start-up/MSE at the time of disbursement of the milestone grant must at least match the grant being disbursed by IN-SPACe.

VII. Any additional criteria as may be decided by IN-SPACe in its sole discretion.

VIII. IN-SPACe reserves the right to accept or reject any application with or without assigning any reasons.



4. Nature of Financial Assistance

i. A grant of up to Rs. 1,00,00,000.00 (Rupees One Crore only) would be provided to selected start-ups and MSEs on milestone-basis, in three or more instalments.

ii. The exact quantum of grant and instalments for each selected applicant for the first installment will be recommended by the Experts Committee (EC). Subsequent, instalments shall be released to start up upon submission of proofs of achievement of milestones.

iii. The quantum off first instalment may be up to 40% of total approved commitment.

iv. The grant should be utilized fully by the start-up within a period of three years from the date of receipt of the first instalment of the assistance.

v. The applicant receiving grant under this scheme will be required to maintain proper accounts and submit fund utilization certificate, which shall be subject to verification/ audit by IN-SPACe or IN-SPACe appointed agency.

vi. Applicants shall submit final report and audited fund utilization certificate at the end of the project.

vii. The IPR generated under the program shall be owned by start-up.

viii. IN-SPACe reserves the right to impose any other terms and conditions as part of the grant and at the time of executing any agreement for providing such grant.

5. Application Submission and Selection Criteria

i. "*Announcement of opportunities*" for the seed fund scheme will be made from time to time by IN-SPACe on IN-SPACe Digital Platform (IDP) viz. www.inspace.gov.in along with timeline for application submission and processing etc.

ii. Please note that the application will be accepted through IDP only. Documents in support of the Application to demonstrate fulfilment of eligibility criterion will have to be uploaded through IDP only. Any document or information not submitted along with the application and/or not submitted through the IDP shall not be considered.

iii. An Executive Committee ("EC") will be constituted by the Chairman IN-SPACe, which will be responsible for the evaluation, selection of **IN-SPACe Seed Fund Scheme** Grantee. EC shall consist of members from IN-SPACe Board, IN-SPACe, Senior Government officials, industry and venture capitalists and/or such other persons as may be nominated by IN-SPACe in its sole discretion.

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre
भारतीय राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष संवर्धन एवं प्राधिकरण केंद्र

iv. EC shall also recommend the number of the Grantees not exceeding three for each announcement of opportunities. However, IN-SPACe shall finalize the number of seed fund Grantees against each announcement.

v. The EC shall evaluate the innovation and novelty of the proposal as per following broad guidelines:

   a. The proposal should have potential to meet future or existing needs of society and Indian space sector

   b. Development and commercialization of a new product/ process/ application through indigenous technology

   c. Significant and quantifiable improvements in the existing product/ process/ application

   d. Potential to scale up

   e. Feasibility of the realization of the product and the service using space technology.

vi. Progress of the proposals selected for grant-in-aid shall be further reviewed and monitored by Project Facilitation and Monitoring Committee (PFMC). PFMC shall consist of IN-SPACe Directors, Joint Secretary and Deputy Directors.

6. Monitoring & Evaluation

i. PFMC will review the progress periodically.

ii. The start-up will provide the reports as may be directed by the PFMC after evaluation.

iii. In case of poor performance of any selected start-up, PFMC can recommend discontinuation of the seed fund support and can recommend further action as it may deem fit.

NB: In case of any dispute the decision of IN-SPACe board shall be final and binding.

7. Expected Outcome

Fostering innovation and technology development in space sector by engaging Indian start-ups.