

POST EVENT PRESS RELEASE



UPSTART North East Startup Challenge 2016-17 Concluded Successfully

Guwahati January 20, 2017

Keeping in mind the nascent startup and entrepreneurship environment in North East India as well as in consonance with the Government of India's focus on building and creating home grown startups under the 'Startup India, Stand up India' scheme programme of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, which was announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi on August 15, 2015 and subsequently launched in early January, 2016, the North East Development Foundation (NEDF) and the Digital Empowerment Foundation along with the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), an institute of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, India, and with the support of the North Eastern Finance Development Corporation (NEDFi) in association with other relevant agencies come together to organise the 'UPSTART' North East Startup Challenge Program on January 20, 2017 at Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIEC) Campus, Guwahati. The event was successfully conducted on January 20, 2017.

The objective of '**UPSTART 2016-17**' was manifold - to provide a platform to amalgamate ideas with creativity, brainstorm, dream different, develop action plans, groom up the startup enterprises and lead projects that have potential to become popular brands from the NE region. It seeks to promote youthful entrepreneurship in the North East region for a wider publicity of entrepreneurial ventures through the Startup eco-system; Recognise Startup

entrepreneurs of the NE region for their pioneering leadership in the key sector areas of enterprise development; Promote the local and regional Startups throughout the country and abroad and popularize the products and services developed in the region in a broader scale; Connect the Startup entrepreneurs from NE with the various stakeholders - including investors, Resource-based organisations, Banks etc.; Facilitate a meeting ground for the creative minds to come together and infuse ideas with Startup innovations; Promote Startup community-building, knowledge-networking, generating venture capital, forming market linkages and business development; and Create a Community of Entrepreneurs for the NE region who would relentlessly pursue the entrepreneurial dream of making it big.

Nominations were invited in 12 categories: Agriculture & Allied Sector ; Health Services ; Food & Hospitality ; Education Services ; IT Solutions ; Generic Technology Solutions ; Organic services ; Social Sector Services ; Energy Services ; Handloom & Handicraft; Water & Natural Resources ; Tourism & Adventure Sports.

We received 69 applications / nominations for the 'Pitch your Business' and 'Pitch your Ideas' broad categories. Out of these we had screened down to 54 nominations for final presentation and pitching on January 20, 2017. The event recognized, awarded and felicitated the top three winners with cash incentive and felicitated the semi-finalists and the finalists. It also awarded and felicitated the top 3 'Pitch your ideas' winners. All these are initiated for motivating and encouraging the existing startups and the young ideas and prototypes.

There were 3 winners in the 'Pitch your Business' Category, who were provided cash prize incentive of Rs.100,000 (First Prize) to AgroPratyasha (in agriculture & Handicrafts category). The second prize or Rs. 60,000 was give to Spaces Facility Management (SFM) in the Facility management services. The third prize of Rs. 40,000 was given to Jeev Anksh (in agriculture & handicrafts category). There were six other semi-finalists as special mentions. They were – Poptales, Dawai Lo, Healbot, KK Agro, Awe Rides, and Fidgety Fingers. The winners and special mentions represented all the eight north eastern states of India and from Delhi and Bangalore.

The winners cash prize were supported by the North Eastern Finance Development Corporation (NEDFi).

There are another 3 winners in the 'Pitch & Win' category (only ideas and prototypes). The winners were – UV Disinfectant Chamber, Headway Dintel Club and Mass Buy Bounty.

The felicitation ceremony was attended by key guests including – Mr. B Paul Muktieh, Chairman cum Managing Director, NEDFi, Mr. Manoj Das, Director, IIE, Ms. Dipannita Jaiswal, CMD, DY365 New Channel, and the distinguished jurors.

The Jury Expert Panelists Who Decided the Winners Included - Sanjeev Sarma, Founder & Director, Webx; Mr. Ben Imchen, Ceo, Elysium Tech; Atreyee Borooah Thekedath , Founder Director Of Web.Com (India) Pvt. Ltd.; Gagandeep Sapra, Co-Founder & Advisor, Sproutbox | Makersbox;, Partha Pratim Goswami, Executive Vice President Of Yes Bank; Ragesh Keisham, Chairman & Managing Director Of The Suigeneris Agronomy Pvt Ltd.; Yashwanth Sandupatla , Investment Analyst At Ankur Capital Fund; Sudipt Sankar, CEO Of Livelihood Propulsion & Support Services (An Initiative Of Tata Trusts); Mr. Manoj Das, Director, Indian Institute Of Entrepreneurship (IIE); Rajeev Agarwal, Director, SM Group And Vice President Of Federation Of North Eastern Chambers Of Commerce & Industry (FINER); Dr. Sriparna B. Baruah, Faculty & Head, Centre For Industrial Extension And Consultancy At Indian Institute Of Entrepreneurship (IIE); Mr. Karma Bhutia, Ceo & Founder, Ishippo.Co; Tanushree Hazarika, Head Of The Eclectic Group Of Publications. , And Mark Laitflang Stone, Chief Executive & Managing Director Of Group Avenues.