Organised By:

SCHOOL OF INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP
KIIT Deemed to be University U/S 3 of the UGC Act, 1956

In Association with:

KiiT Alumni Cell

KiiT Research & Development Cell

KAINOΣ

2026

National Student Innovation & Entrepreneurship Challenge

Nov 2026 to March 2027



ECOSYSTEM PARTNERS

KIIT Technology Business Incubator

Startup Odisha

BHUBANESWAR
FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

KISS STI HUB

IA
INDIA ACCELERATOR

knest

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ABOUT

KAINOΣ moves undergraduates beyond idea generation, into a structured journey of finding, testing and pitching a solution to a real problem. Participants learn by working on a real problem and get more guidance as they progress. Participation is wide and virtual at the start; intensive mentoring and national exposure are reserved for the most promising teams.



Designed by KSIEL

With the KIIT Alumni Cell and the Research, Development and Innovation Cell, powered by KIIT-NEST

Free to enter

No registration fee at any stage, and one registration covers the whole programme

Truly national

With the KIIT Alumni Cell and the Research, Development and Innovation Cell, powered by KIIT-NEST

OBJECTIVES

Create a national platform for undergraduates to identify and address real-world problems through innovation

Build practical capability in problem discovery, user understanding, solution design, validation, MVP thinking and pitching.



Offer a structured pathway that takes promising ideas from a problem statement to a well-developed

Connect high-potential teams with mentors, practitioners and founders in an innovation-oriented ecosystem.

Sustain engagement with promising innovators beyond the competition, through KSIEL and KIIT-NEST.

PROGRAMME

THREE PHASES. ONE JOURNEY.



Phase - I | Nov Onwards

SPARK | National Opportunity Hunt

Virtual and built for mass participation. Teams find a real problem, gather evidence and frame a first solution

2500 Teams → 500 Shortlisted



Phase - II | Nov 2026 - Jan 2027

BUILD | Six Zonal Build Labs

Virtual or hybrid. Masterclasses, mentoring, validation, business model and MVP thinking, ending in a zonal pitch.

500 Teams → 50 Shortlisted



Phase - III | Feb - March 2027

RISE | National Finale at KIIT Bhubaneswar

In person. Venture gallery, mentor clinics, the national pitch and a newproblem rapid challenge.

50 finalists → National Champion

SCALE

FIRSTEDITIONTARGETS

200+ · 10,000+
institutions reached and undergraduate students engaged

2,500 teams
register and enter SPARK

500 teams
teams mentored in BUILD, across six zones

50
national finalists at RISE



At least
30 States/UTs
represented.

Six zones:
North, West, Central, East, South and Northeast.

ELIGIBILTY

OPEN TO EVERY UNDERGRADUATE IN INDIA

- Final-Year undergraduates at recognised Indian highereducation institutions, from any discipline
- Teams of 2 to 4 with one Team Lead; interdisciplinary teams encouraged
- Teams may come from one institution or span two
- Existing student projects, prototypes and early student-led startups are welcome, with disclosure; prior awards carry no scoring advantage
- No registration fee at any stage



OPEN-INNOVATION THEMES

- Health, Life Sciences & Well-being
- AgriTech, Food Systems & Blue Economy
- Climate, Environment & Circular Economy
- AI, Digital & Cyber-enabled Solutions
- Education, Skills & Future of Work
- Mobility, Smart Cities & Infrastructure
- Financial Inclusion & Social Innovation
- **Open Innovation:** any well-evidenced problem

PARTICIPATION

WHAT A TEAM DOES AT EACH STAGE

Stage	What Teams Do	What They Submit	How They Prepare
 SPARK	Pick a real problem, identify the people affected, gather evidence, understand the gap and frame a first solution	Problem card plus a 90-second video pitch	Jury rubric; 500 teams go to BUILD
 BUILD	Masterclasses and mentor clinics on validation, value proposition, business model, MVP/PoC, IP awareness, impact and pitching	3-minute zonal pitch to a jury	8 to 10 teams per zone go to RISE
	Finalist immersion, venture clinics, sessions with founders and industry leaders, and a rapid challenge on a new problem	Final national pitch	National Champion and category awards

SPARK entries are judged on problem significance, user understanding, evidence, originality, feasibility and clarity



TAKEAWAYS

WHAT EVERY PARTICIPANT WALKS AWAY WITH



Real innovation skills Problem discovery, user research, validation, business models, MVP thinking, IP awareness and pitching



Tracked mentoring Zonal mentor pools for 500 teams; intensive venture clinics for the 50 finalists



Recognition at every stage Certificates for SPARK and BUILD completion and for every finalist, plus jury and mentor feedback



National exposure Finalists meet founders, industry leaders and a national jury; travel, stay and meals are supported



₹5 lakh in awards 24 awards, including a ₹1.2 lakh National Champion prize, zonal and category awards

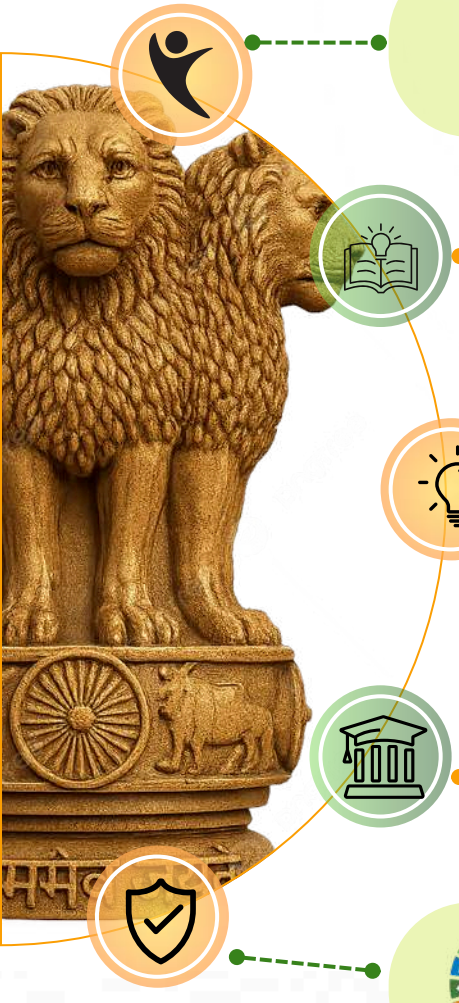


A path beyond the event Promising teams can continue with KIITNEST for validation, incubation and mentoring

NATIONAL ALIGNMENT



WHAT EVERY PARTICIPANT WALKS AWAY WITH



VIKSIT BHARAT@2047
A VISION OF A DEVELOPED INDIA

Grows a youth-led pipeline of problem-solvers and future founders from 30+ States/UTs, not only from metro campuses

nep 2020

Experiential, multidisciplinary learning: students of any discipline learn by working on a real problem over months

#startupindia

Moves student ideas towards MVP/PoC, with a pathway into validation, incubation and venture development at KIIT-NEST

INSTITUTION'S INNOVATION COUNCIL
(Ministry of HRD Initiative)

Mobilises campuses through E-Cells and IICs, giving their members a structured national challenge to work towards

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Outcomes mapped to SDG 4 Quality Education, SDG 8 Decent Work, SDG 9 Industry and Innovation, SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities and SDG 17 Partnerships

WHY KAINOΣ

NOT A WEEKEND HACKATHON

Criteria	Typical hackathon or ideathon	KAINOΣ
Duration	One to two days	Five months, October 2026 to February 2027
Starting point	A given theme; build fast	Teams discover and evidence a real problem first
Who joins	Mostly coders and tech students	Any undergraduate discipline; mixed teams encouraged
Support	Brief mentor drop-ins	Masterclasses and tracked mentoring with milestone reviews
Judged on	The demo on the day	Problem, user evidence, validation, business logic and impact
Afterwards	Prizes, then it ends	A pathway into validation and incubation with KIIT-NEST



PRICE MONEY

& RECOGNISATIONS

National Champ 1 Team	₹ 1,20,000
National Runner up 1 Team	₹ 80,000
National 2nd Runner up 1 Team	₹ 40,000

Zonal Excellence Award
10 Awards

Category Awards
10 Awards

Final/ Impact Recognision Award
1 Awards

PARTNER UP

WORKINGTOGETHER

Mentors and speakers
Founders, industry and domain experts for masterclasses and mentor clinics

Outreach Share
ΚΑΙΝΟΣ with institutions, student networks and innovation cells

Jury and reviewers
Experts for zonal and national evaluation, including the finale



Real problems
Problem statements or a themed challenge track drawn from your sector

Continuation pathways
Incubation, pilots, internships or further mentoring for promising teams

Ecosystem exposure
Sessions that introduce finalists to the wider startup and business community

Partner titles and any use of names or logos are agreed in writing with each organisation, in line with its own brand guidelines.

Let’s build India’s next generation of innovators, together.

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