iTNT Hub
Monthly Digest

An e-Newsletter from
Tamil Nadu Technology Hub

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Message from CEO

Innovation and entrepreneurship continue to gain momentum in Tamil Nadu, catalysing economic growth and societal progress. At the Tamil Nadu Technology Hub (iTNT), we remain steadfast in our mission of accelerating innovation through Industry-Academia collaboration.

We are proud to have recently onboarded 3000+ researchers from leading academic institutions across Tamil Nadu onto JIGSAW - our innovation platform for industry-academia-investor-startup partnerships. Through JIGSAW, we are facilitating the translation of university research into commercialized products and solutions at scale.

At iTNT, our aim is to accelerate the innovation flywheel by facilitating collaboration between innovators, entrepreneurs, academia and industry. We are committed to making Tamil Nadu a global innovation hub, powering the next wave of economic and job growth.

This monthly newsletter serves as a platform to showcase Tamil Nadu's burgeoning innovation landscape and highlight iTNT's efforts in nurturing the ecosystem. By covering the latest developments, insights, success stories and upcoming initiatives, we aim to inform, inspire and bring together key stakeholders to drive meaningful collaboration.

I extend my wholehearted congratulations to the team for publishing this monthly newsletter - a commendable effort to chronicle iTNT's pursuits in propelling innovation across Tamil Nadu. Kudos to the team for spearheading an initiative that will pave the way for meaningful collaborations in service of innovation!

Best Regards,
Tmt. Vanitha Venugopal
Chief Executive Officer
Tamil Nadu Technology Hub (iTNT)

Launch of iTNT's JIGSAW -
Where Innovation meets Opportunities

JIGSAW (Joint Innovation Gateway for Synergistic Startup-Academic-Industry-Investor Work), the innovation platform facilitated by Tamil Nadu Technology (iTNT) Hub. It fosters Industry - Academia collaboration and advancement, encompassing academia, industries, deeptech startups, venture capitalists and students as stakeholders.

The Innovation Portal was launched at the UmagineTN 2024 by the Hon'ble Minister for Youth Welfare and Sports Development Thiru. Udhayanidhi Stalin, in the presence of the Hon'ble Minister Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, Department of Information Technology and Digital Services, Thiru T.M.Anbarasan, Hon'ble Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises MSME, Government of Tamil Nadu, and other dignitaries who attended this magnificent event.

(Launch of Innovation Portal at UmagineTN)

At the core of JIGSAW's mission is the identification of innovative resources working in the deeptech domain through strategic engagement with academic institutions that nurture research in various fields. By tapping into this vibrant pool of talent and intellectual capital, JIGSAW ensures that the most cutting-edge ideas and solutions are brought to the forefront. Through a seamless process of technology transfer and partnerships, JIGSAW bridges the gap between research and action, allowing innovators to collaborate and transform ideas into impactful solutions. This collaborative approach not only accelerates the commercialization of research but also fosters a culture of innovation that drives positive sectoral advancement.

Central to JIGSAW's success is the concept of co-creation, wherein academic research findings are leveraged to address immediate industry challenges. By bringing together academia, industry professionals, and other stakeholders, JIGSAW facilitates a collaborative environment where innovative solutions can be developed and implemented. This not only solves industry challenges in the short term but also enables long-term growth and success.

Why JIGSAW?

Streamlined collaboration

JIGSAW facilitates seamless collaboration between Academia, Industry, Startups, Investors and Students by providing a centralized platform for registration, profile management, and innovation challenge submissions.

Innovation challenges

The platform enables industries to create and post challenges, which researchers, startups, and students can then submit proposals for, fostering a culture of innovation and problem-solving.

Robust analytics

JIGSAW offers a comprehensive analytics module that provides valuable insights into trends and statistics related to profiles, challenges, and proposals, allowing for data-driven decision-making and strategic planning.

One-on-one meeting facilitation

The platform's one-on-one meetings facilitates direct connections between startups and venture capitalists, enabling potential investments, partnerships, and knowledge sharing.

Digital Market Access Platform

The integrated Digital Market Access Platform empowers startups to showcase their products and services directly to industries, venture capitalists, academia, state government, and public sector undertakings, opening up new market opportunities and potential collaborations.

In conclusion, JIGSAW represents a paradigm shift in how academia, industry, deeptech startups, venture capitalists, and students collaborate to drive innovation and growth. Join JIGSAW today and become part of a community that is shaping the future of innovation. To get detailed insights into the platform, visit www.itnthub.tn.gov.in

Signing of MoU with Anna University Regional Campuses

iTNT Hub has taken a significant step towards nurturing the innovation ecosystem in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Anna University Regional Campus, Madurai, and Anna University College of Engineering, Tiruchirappalli. This collaboration aims to establish regional innovation hubs, fostering entrepreneurship and technological advancements beyond metropolitan areas.

Through this partnership, iTNT Hub will work closely with these renowned educational institutions to provide resources, mentorship, and support to budding entrepreneurs and innovators in smaller cities. The regional innovation hubs will serve as focal points for ideation, skill development, and knowledge sharing, enabling individuals to transform their innovative ideas into tangible solutions and viable businesses.

By expanding its reach into Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, iTNT Hub recognizes the untapped potential and talent that exists beyond urban centers. This initiative aligns with the government's vision of inclusive growth and empowerment, ensuring that opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship are accessible to all, regardless of geographic location.

MoU's with 26 institutions
to onboard researchers
to iTNT's JIGSAW Platform

(MoU signing between iTNT hub and Educational institutions at UmagineTN 2024)

In continuation to the JIGSAW Launch, iTNT has collaborated with 26 academic institutions across the state to onboard the researchers onto the platform, in addition to the 3565 researchers who had already registered.

iTNT Hub at
UmagineTN 2024 AT'TN

iTNT
TAMILNADU TECHNOLOGY HUB

Innovation Arena
| Techstars of TN

The Startup showcase at the Innovation Arena was a celebration of the indomitable spirit of Tamil Nadu's Emerging and Deep Tech entrepreneurial community. As visitors stepped into the arena, they were greeted by an infectious energy that radiated from the stalls of the state's most promising startups.

From pioneering healthtech solutions that promise to revolutionize patient care to groundbreaking ideas designed to revolutionize the technological advancement in Tamil Nadu, the startups showcased their cutting-edge offerings with palpable enthusiasm. Each stall told a unique story of passion, perseverance, and unwavering dedication to innovation.

Visitors had the opportunity to engage with the founders themselves, gaining first-hand insights into the challenges and triumphs that accompany the journey of building a successful startup.

This event not only provided startups with valuable exposure but also facilitated meaningful connections. Founders had the opportunity to engage with potential investors, collaborators, and mentors, fostering relationships that could propel their ventures to new heights. The atmosphere buzzed with the hope of possibilities, as Tamil Nadu's startup ecosystem showcased its potential to disrupt industries and drive economic growth.

What's brewing at iTNT Hub?

Two significant announcements marked a pivotal shift,
ushering in an era of innovation.

In a defining moment, iTNT Hub and the Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities Map (I-STEM) officially signed a Letter of Intent (LoI), formalizing a partnership with a shared goal – nurturing India's deeptech ecosystem. This strategic alliance combines complementary strengths and resources, catalyzing the growth and success of deeptech ventures. Together, they aim to translate cutting-edge innovations from laboratory concepts into real-world drivers of growth and positive change.

Another milestone was achieved through iTNT Hub's collaboration with STPI FinBlue for the eagerly awaited STPI FinBlue's Finteract Demo Day 2024

The collaborations were launched in the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including the Honorable Minister, Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, and Mr. Dheeraj Kumar I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Department of IT & DS, highlighting the unwavering commitment of the government and industry leaders to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

As deeptech ventures emerge from laboratories, poised to reshape industries and drive transformative change, such collaborations provide the necessary support, resources, and guidance to propel these ventures towards success.

The Perfect Pitch!

iTNT Hub's Pitch Fest at UmagineTN 2024 crackled with energy as aspiring entrepreneurs and student innovators took to the stage, their voices brimming with passion and their ideas sparkling with potential.

As the pitches unfolded, each participant captivated the audience with their unique vision, unveiling business concepts and products that promised to reshape industries and address pressing societal challenges.
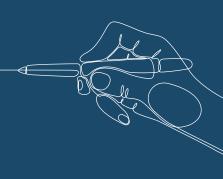

The judges' insights were invaluable, their comments and suggestions serving as beacons of wisdom to help refine pitches, identify growth opportunities, and navigate the inevitable challenges that accompany any entrepreneurial journey. With each critique, the participants' determination grew stronger, their resolve more steadfast, as they embraced the opportunity to shape their ventures into catalysts for change.

Investor Speed Geeking

iTNT Hub facilitated a platform for startups and investors to connect, fostering invaluable networking opportunities and igniting the spark of potential partnerships. More than 100 Startup-Investor Connects had happened during this 2-day event.

In a series of rapid-fire meetings, entrepreneurs showcased their business concepts, outlining their unique value propositions, market potential, and growth strategies.

This provided an opportunity for startups to directly connect with potential backers, enabling them to gain valuable feedback, secure funding, and forge strategic relationships that could propel their ventures to new heights.

Expert Masterclasses

Prof. Ashok Jhunjhunwala,
President, IITM Research Park, Incubation Cell

The expert talks were a treasure trove of knowledge and inspiration. Luminaries like **Prof. Ashok Jhunjhunwala**, President of IITM Research Park and IITM Incubation Cell, shed light on the thriving innovation ecosystem, igniting a sense of possibility in the hearts of aspiring entrepreneurs.

Ms. Akhila Rajeshwar, Executive Director of TiE Chennai, delved into the realm of deeptech ecosystem support, providing invaluable insights on navigating the challenges and leveraging the resources available to entrepreneurs. **Dr. Harilal Bhaskar** from I-STEM, GoI, emphasized the importance of empowering research collaboration in deeptech, opening doors to groundbreaking innovations.

Ms. Akhila Rajeshwar
Executive Director, TiE Chennai

Dr. Harilal Bhaskar
COO, I-STEM, GoI

Corporate leaders such as **Ms. Nithya Subramanian**, Head - Data & Analytics, AMEA, Kellanova, **Mr. Sukhpreet Singh**, CEO of TANSAM Centre of Excellence, **Mr. Pradeep Kumar**, VP of Strategy at Broadridge India, and **Mr. Kaushik Dey**, Head of Data Sciences and Quantum AI at Ericsson Research, provided valuable insights into the Challenges & Opportunities in Deep Tech, Deep Tech advancement, infrastructure support available and more.

Ms. Nithya Subramanian
Head - Data & Analytics, AMEA, Kellanova

Mr. Sukhpreet Singh
CEO, TANSAM Centre of Excellence

Mr. Pradeep Kumar
VP - Strategy, Broadridge India

Mr. Kaushik Dey
Head - Data Sciences and
Quantum AI, Ericsson Research

Mr. **Ashwin Ganesh** from WeFounderCircle and **Mr. Nithish Kumar** from Speciale Invest offered their unique perspectives on the deeptech investment landscape, guiding startups on how to attract funding and scale their ventures.

Mr. Ashwin Ganesh
WeFounderCircle

Mr. Nithish Kumar
Speciale Invest

Mr. Bala Murugan SP from Guvi.in, **Ms. Arasi Arul** from 60Plus, and **Mr. Arjun Vijay** from Giottus shared their inspiring entrepreneurial journeys, offering attendees a glimpse into the resilience and determination required to build a successful venture.

Mr. Bala Murugan SP
Guvi.in

Ms. Arasi Arul
60Plus

Mr. Arjun Vijay
Giottus

Product Launches

We witnessed a momentous occasion as the Hon'ble Minister for IT & DS, Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, launched a series of next-generation products, in the presence of Thiru. Dheeraj Kumar, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Government, IT & DS Department and our CEO Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, from pioneering startups. AtumX, Blinc Smart Homes, Acutro Technologies, Chimertech, Cloobot Tech Labs, and KYNHood Technologies unveiled their cutting-edge offerings, reaffirming the state's commitment to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

Bringing back Tech Legends to life through Holography

One of the most innovative and intriguing exhibit at the IT Pavilion was by India Speaks, utilizing AI voice-over coupled with holography technology that dynamically responds to commands and data fed into the system, adding an unparalleled level of interactivity and realism to the experience.

The response for the exhibit was phenomenal, attendees were mesmerized by the utilization of holography technology in bringing back the life-like presence of the tech legends like Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam and Steve Jobs, making it a standout attraction at the event. It also showcased the innovative potential of holography as a medium for entertainment and education.

For more details about the company, visit: www.indiaspeaks.ai

Entrepreneur journey gamified!

UMAGINETN 2024 offered an unparalleled tech experience, showcasing the technology capability and widespread advancements happening in the Information Technology sector in the state. The two-day event witnessed startups and innovators specializing in domains like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Large Language Models(LLM's), AR/VR, Meditech, Cleantech, Robotics, leveraging technology to address pressing challenges.

Among various exhibits, the Information Technology (IT) Pavilion stood as a standout attraction. One notable highlight was FocuzAR, offering a multitude of services using AR, VR, XR, Metaverse across various sectors. Notably, Xwall, a phygital interactive platform that transforms any solid surface into an engaging interactive space.
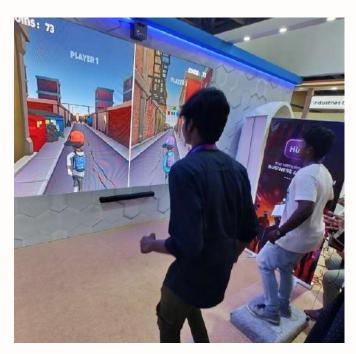

At the forefront of FocusAR's showcase was Xwall, creating awareness and educating visitors about the Tamil Nadu Government's initiatives and schemes in the Information Technology department through an interactive Q&A game.

Another highlight is the innovative use of gamification for education purposes. Entrepreneurs and startups were immersed in an interactive learning experience, educating them on navigating the emerging and deeptech startup landscape through the Subway Sprint Challenge.

FocusAR's exhibition at the IT pavilion during UmagineTN 2024 received an overwhelmingly positive response, reshaping education into an engaging "edutainment" experience by integrating technology with phygital experience.

For more details about the company, visit: www.focuzar.com

Event Gallery

A glimpse from
our past activities...

We have successfully concluded our first cohort of the '**Idea Validation Bootcamp.**' The program guided participants through various modules essential for entrepreneurship, including Product Development Lifecycle & Prototyping, Branding & Design, Business Model Development, and Investor Readiness and Pitching. This 8-week comprehensive bootcamp equipped participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the entrepreneurial journey effectively.

It was a privilege to have **Mr. S Krishnan, I.A.S.**, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, **Mr. Dheeraj Kumar, I.A.S.**, Additional Chief Secretary, Information Technology Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, **Dr. R. Velraj,** Vice Chancellor, Anna University, Chennai, and other senior government officials to discuss the way forward in propelling emerging and deep tech.

iTNT Hub welcomed a gathering of government officials, including **Ms. Archana Patnaik I.A.S**, Principal Secretary/Industries Commissioner & DIC, **Dr. T.G. Vinay I.A.S**, Director of DOTE, **Mr. Sivarajah Ramanathan**, CEO of StartupTN, **Mr. B Krishnamoorthy IOFS**, Managing Director of TANCAM, and **Mr. Vijayadeepan S M**, Chief Operating Officer of TANCAM. This interactive visit provided a platform for the officials to engage with our startups, fostering an exchange of ideas and innovative solutions.

We hosted officials from MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, GOI), including **Mr. Kuntal Sensarma, I.E.S.**, Economic Adviser & Group Coordinator, **Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Gupta**, Scientist-E, Software Industry Promotion Division, and **Dr. Nalin Srivastava**, Scientist-E, at iTNT Hub. Engaging with startups in Health Tech, Space Tech, AI, ML, IOT, AR/VR, they explored the forefront of innovation.

iTNT Hub participated in the Global Investors Meet that happened on 7th & 8th January 2024, spearheading conversations around AI through panel discussions and fireside chats with Industry experts and leaders.

We collaborated with ICT Academy conducted a sensitization session on **"A Deep Dive into Accelerating Deeptech and Emerging Technologies and Entrepreneurship"** exclusively for researchers from the academia side. This initiative garnered significant participation, with approximately 80 researchers from 44 institutions benefiting from the session. The program aimed to equip researchers with knowledge and tools to navigate the deep tech landscape, emerging technologies, and entrepreneurship.

iTNT Hub and Launch Pad - Western Sydney University, have officially joined forces to propel innovation and entrepreneurship in Tamil Nadu, India and Western Sydney, Australia. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was inked at iTNT, with **Professor Deborah Sweeney**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Enterprise and International, Western Sydney University, and Ms. Vanitha Venugopal, CEO, iTNT Hub, sealing this transformative partnership.

We hosted a meetup at our hub, fostering **cross-border collaborations between startups from Australia and Tamil Nadu**. Austrade led insightful discussions from the Australian front, while our talented startups from HealthTech, AR/VR, AI, and Robotics showcased their innovations.
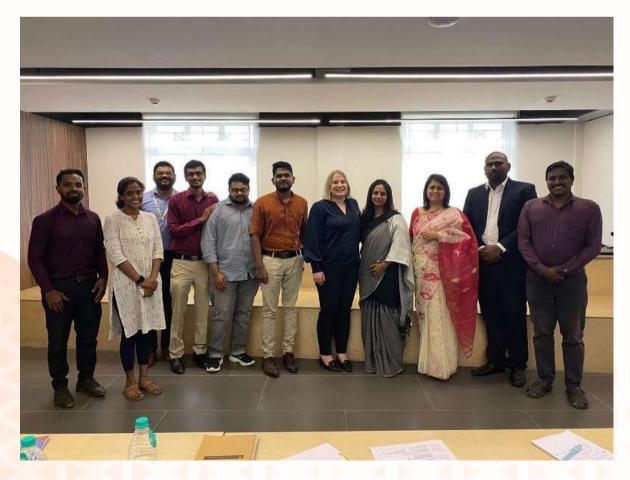
We facilitated an insightful session between delegates from Western Australia and the ecosystem players from TN. **Ms. Cr Christine Hamilton-Prime JP GAICD**, Councillor - Cyber & Innovation advocate, City of Joondalup, shared her perspectives on fostering **collaborative synergies between Western Australia and Tamil Nadu's startup ecosystem**. Western Australia's interests in sectors like cybersecurity, MedTech, and hydrogen align with Tamil Nadu's talented workforce, presenting potential avenues for mutually beneficial partnerships.

Going Global.

| iTNT Hub at Western Australia

iTNT Hub was invited to lead a delegation of ecosystem players and startups from Tamil Nadu to the **West Tech Fest** happening between 4th and 8th December 2023 in Western Australia. As part of the delegation, we took five startups from TN to explore the Australian market.

iTNT Hub signs Innovation Exchange Statement with WA

A standout moment materialized when the Governments of Tamil Nadu and Western Australia signed an Innovation Exchange Statement which commits to fostering collaborations and creating opportunities for Innovators and Entrepreneurs between the two states. The statement was signed by Hon'ble Minister **Mr. Stephen Dawson**, Government of Western Australia and **Ms. Vanitha Venugopal**, CEO, iTNT Hub.

Our Startups at West Tech Fest

Team iTNT Hub actively participated in a networking session at the West Tech Fest. The cruise to Fremantle provided a platform for valuable connections and collaborations. Five startups that were ready to enter global markets were handpicked and were taken along in this delegation.
All the startups had an opportunity to pitch their ideas at the Freo Startup Fest to the Australian audience and connect with potential investors during this visit.

One of the startups we took along, AtumX, received expression of interest for procurement of 15 pieces of their product – HEKA, the Robot Toy.

Meetings with Innovation Counterparts:

We fostered many valuable connections including **Dr. Jagadish (Jags) Krishnan**, Parliamentary Secretary to Premier, **Ms. Jodi Cant**, the Director-General at the Department of Finance, **Dr. Parwinder Kaur**, Special Advisor – S&T Plan, Government of Western Australia, and the members of the **Tamil Association of Western Australia (TAWA)**, who expressed their interests and insights in collaborating with us.

Productive meetings were held with SpaceCubed, WA Data Science Innovation Hub, WA Cyber Security Innovation Hub, Fugro SPAARC, and Australian Automation and Robotics Precinct to explore joint programs, acceleration, and cross-border startup support. An MoU with SpaceCubed is underway.

iTNT
TAMILNADU TECHNOLOGY HUB

Connect with Us

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www.itnthub.tn.gov.in

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#BUILDTHEFUTURE