



## Research Scholars' Summit 2026

Translating Innovative Research into Employment, Entrepreneurship and Startups

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026 | 9:15 – 11:15 am | DAE Convention Centre, HBNI, Anushakti Nagar

### Opening & Context

- Good morning to distinguished leaders from academia, industry, and my dear young scholars.
- I commend and thank members of CII and Homi Bhabha National Institute for curating a timely dialogue on translating research into real-world impact.
- The theme is particularly relevant as innovation, knowledge creation and entrepreneurship are imperative for sustained economic growth.
- This is extremely significant, especially at a time when geopolitical uncertainty and economic volatility are increasing global instability.

### India's Transition to Knowledge-Driven Economy

- India is proactively deploying measures to steadily transition from a factor-driven economy to an innovation-driven economy, supported by sound fiscal and monetary measures.
- India ranks 38th in the Global Innovation Index 2025 (World Intellectual Property Organization), reflecting a significant improvement from 81st in 2015.
- The Government of India has established the National Research Foundation (NRF) with an outlay of ₹50,000 crore (2023–28) to strengthen research capacity and promote industry–academia collaboration.
- Importantly, India now has 2 lakh+ DPIIT-recognised startups, indicating growing success in translating ideas into enterprises.
- Despite this progress, a critical challenge remains. A large share of doctoral and institutional research remains within publications rather than progressing into products, patents, or scalable ventures.

### Maharashtra: A Strong Research, Talent & Innovation Base

- Maharashtra is uniquely positioned to address this challenge.
- The state is a \$ 660+ Bn economy contributing to ~14% to India's GDP and remains the country's leading investment destination (31% FDI in in last 2 decades).
- Aligned with Viksit Bharat mission, Maharashtra aims to become a USD 5 trillion economy by 2047 and USD 1 trillion by 2030. This is supported by the following 4 themes – Growth Driven, Sustainable, Inclusive and Good Governance.

- These 4 themes are further divided into 100 initiatives out of which 16 are exclusively under the domain of Industries, Investment & Services department.
- Some of these initiatives include : -
  - Create 20+ fully autonomous industrial townships, attracting private investments through 'Invest Maharashtra;
  - Become the R&D capital of India for 24 focus sectors;
  - Drive sustainable manufacturing and decarbonization across sectors;
  - Make MMR a USD 600 Bn+ global fintech and financial services hub;
  - Establish Mumbai–Pune as a USD 50 Bn+ global hub for media-tech, AVGC;
  - Leverage GCCs to establish strategic value chains, employing 3Mn+ people;
  - Build India's largest deep-tech ecosystem with 50K+ patents;
  - Drive 'Emerging Districts Industrial Development' mission
  - Strengthen MSMEs and Services through dedicated Commissionerates etc.
- Maharashtra is home to 30,000+ startups, across deep-tech, biotech, AI, fintech and creative sectors.
- The state benefits from a strong talent pipeline, with ~7 lakh+ technical graduates annually, creating a strong base for research and innovation.
- Last year, the state published the following policies - Maharashtra Industries, Investment & Services Policy; Global Capability Centers (GCC); Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics Policy (AVGC-XR); Gems & Jewellery; Ship Building, Ship Repair and Ship Recycling; Bamboo Policy.
- This is in addition to the existing policies such as Logistics; Integrated and Sustainable Textile; Export Promotion; IT and IT Enabled Services.
- The state is also coming up with the following policies - Aerospace, Defence, Nuclear & Space Technology; MSME; Electronics, Fab & Semiconductors; API, Pharma, Bio & Medtech Policy; Circular Economy; BioE3; Leather & Footwear Policy; Garment & Apparel; Media & Entertainment

#### **Maharashtra: Integrated Innovation Ecosystem**

- Maharashtra is actively strengthening its research and innovation ecosystem through targeted fiscal and non-fiscal incentives and support.
- The state hosts premier institutions such as IIT Bombay, Homi Bhabha National Institute, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) ecosystem, Institute of Chemical Technology (ICT Mumbai) etc.
- The Mukhyamantri Research Fellowship, launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Devendra Fadnavis ji, provides a dedicated platform for research scholars to work directly on government projects.

- The Maharashtra Startup, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Policy 2025 aims to support 1.25 lakh entrepreneurs, recognise 50,000 startups, and deepen incubation, funding, and mentorship networks.
- The Startup, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Policy has provision for a dedicated ₹500 crore 'Maha Fund', improving access to risk capital for research-led and technology-driven startups.
- Maharashtra has instituted a ₹300 crore Emerging Technology Fund to provide early-stage capital sectors such as AI, drones, genomics, and space tech.
- Additionally, the Industries, Investment & Services Policy 2025 incorporates a focused R&D funding framework (corpus of ₹1000 crore), aimed at encouraging innovation within manufacturing & services.
- The state is progressing towards establishing a BioE3 Cell in coordination with Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission and Agharkar Research Institute, Pune, to catalyse bio-economy innovation.
- Through a landmark MoU at WEF 2026, Maharashtra (via MMRDA and Industries Department) and Tata Group are developing a ~\$11 billion Innovation City near Navi Mumbai Airport.
- The Innovation City shall offer plug-and-play ecosystem integrating R&D, startups, and advanced tech infrastructure.
- Complementing these initiatives, M-Hub is being developed in Kalamboli, Navi Mumbai as a flagship, PPP-based innovation hub to drive incubation, advanced R&D, and commercialization across Industry 5.0.

#### Message to Research Scholars

- To the young scholars present here - Your research has the potential to create jobs, build industries, and solve societal challenges. India needs not just researchers, but research entrepreneurs & innovation leaders
- The question is no longer "What is your research topic?" but "What problem are you solving, and how can it scale?"

#### Closing

- The convergence of policy support, strong talent, and industry demand creates a unique opportunity to transform research into economic value.
- Platforms like this Summit are critical to building bridges between knowledge and enterprise. I congratulate CII and HBNI for this initiative and look forward to meaningful outcomes from today's discussions.
- Together, we can ensure that India's research ecosystem becomes a driver of employment, entrepreneurship, and global innovation leadership. Thank You!