

MeitY-IndiaAI CoE in Artificial Intelligence Thiruvananthapuram, Keralam with first cohort of 15 AI startups launched

CAIK by MeitY, Govt of India and Govt of Kerala with Digital University Kerala and Innovation Incubator Advisory is part of the Chief Ministers 100 day program

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“

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Shiv Shankar MS, OSD CAIK

IndiaAI Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence Thiruvananthapuram, Keralam ([CAIK](#)), along with the first cohort of 15 AI startups and two major partnerships, was launched on September 30 by Shri P. K. Kunhalikutty, Hon'ble Minister for Industries, IT and AI, Government of Kerala. Other speakers were Shri Seeram Sambasiva Rao IAS, Shri Prakash Kumar Additional Director IndiaAI Mission, Shri Sandip Kumar IAS, Prof Saji Gopinath Vice Chancellor, Dr Asharaf S, Shri Antony Satyadas, Shri V. V. Rajesh Mayor of Thiruvananthapuram and Shri Shiv Shankar M S OSD CAIK. The first cohort of AI Startups started their operations at the CAIK facility in Kabini, Technopark Phase IV. This marks a major step towards

building a strong Artificial Intelligence ecosystem in Kerala and contributing to India's sovereign AI capabilities.

Established under the IndiaAI Mission of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of Kerala, CAIK is managed by Digital University Kerala as the implementing agency and [Innovation Incubator](#) Advisory Pvt. Ltd. as the industry partner.

"This Centre of Excellence marks Kerala's most ambitious step yet toward leading India's AI revolution", said Shri PK Kunhalikutty, Hon'ble Minister of Industries, Commerce, IT and AI, Govt of Keralam. "The IndiaAI AI-CoE Thiruvananthapuram is more than an incubator—it is a sovereign AI engine for the nation. Our government is proud to champion a model that unites academic excellence, industry ingenuity, and public purpose to ensure that the AI built here serves every Indian citizen."

The AI Startup Studio and Garage will offer structured incubation and acceleration programs for AI startups over four years, provide startup studio 'jumpstart' tools — including the NerdAgent Agentic AI platform, synthetic data simulators, and cloud infrastructure credits — and establish sector-specific experience spaces. An Industry Veteran Fellow programme will bring senior professionals from fields including healthcare, disaster management and e-governance to mentor founders and reduce the risk of early-stage failure.

"Innovation Incubator Advisory brings to CAIK decades of experience building startup ecosystems across sectors where AI can truly change lives", said Antony Satyadas, CEO Managing Partner and Co founder of Innovation Incubator group of companies. "We are committing our best capabilities to ensure that every founder who walks through the doors of <https://caik.in> has a genuine shot at building a category-defining company. Kerala has the talent — we are here to give that talent every advantage."

The inaugural cohort of AI Startups, selected across the Centre's Pre-Incubation, Incubation and Acceleration programmes are Plenti, Lejit AI, VitalView AI, Keynos, Court Click, Audio Realities, Metanoa Labs Pvt. Ltd., Katidhan, Doculu, Glianomics, Tranzmeo, Pixolish, Resfeber, VibraSync and Open Healthcare Network. These startups span healthcare and MedTech, climate and AgriTech, legal technology, enterprise and document AI, industrial and critical infrastructure AI, Edge AI, indigenous intelligent-camera and perception technologies and other applied-AI areas.

"The first cohort reflects CAIK's emphasis on taking AI beyond experimentation and enabling technologies that can be translated into deployable products, scalable companies and solutions delivering public and economic value", said Shiv Shankar M S, Officer on Special Duty / CEO, MeitY-IndiaAI CoE Trv - CAIK. "CAIK is building an ecosystem around what AI founders need to succeed: finding the right go-to-market strategy, building long-term competitive moats, and developing practical playbooks for growth. We aim to bring together compute support, experienced mentors, research partnerships, pilot customers and investors, helping founders navigate the journey from a product to a sustainable business, with Kerala as their launchpad for Indian and global markets."

The AI-CoE will train 1,600 students, faculty, professionals, and researchers through accredited certification programmes covering Agentic AI, Machine Learning, and Applied AI. Forty Young Fellowships will be awarded to emerging innovators from academia and entrepreneurial backgrounds over four years. Sixteen hackathons and innovation sprints, conducted through a hub-and-spoke model, will build a pipeline of high-potential talent across Kerala and beyond. "Digital University Kerala was established to be exactly the kind of institution the IndiaAI Mission envisions as the academic anchor for a state AI centre", said Dr. Saji Gopinath, Vice Chancellor, Digital University Kerala. "Our role here is to translate cutting-edge research into real-world startup outcomes and to ensure that the talent pipeline flowing into Kerala's AI economy is among the deepest and most capable in the country. The AI-CoE is the clearest expression yet of our founding purpose."

The Centre will develop 40 responsible AI prototype solutions — including 20 industry-specific applications in healthcare, eGovernance disaster management, and governance credential management — and train 200 senior executives in responsible AI policy and governance over four years. The AI Powerhouse will provide the necessary compute and data backbone.

"What excites me most about the IndiaAI-CoE Thiruvananthapuram is its deliberate focus on promoting entrepreneurship in responsible, sovereign AI for India", said Dr Asharaf S, Principal Investigator, CAIK. "We are not just building AI startups — we are nurturing organizations capable of building India Scale responsible AI solutions with global relevance and reach. Digital University Kerala brings the research rigour and collaborations to pursue this opportunity".

"Kerala IT Mission is committed to providing the implementation backbone that will make the AI-CoE Thiruvananthapuram a world-class institution", said Sandip Kumar IAS. "We are building an ecosystem where infrastructure, governance, and partnerships come together seamlessly, so that Kerala's AI entrepreneurs have everything they need — from cloud compute to policy frameworks — to compete and win on the global stage."

Letters of Intent relating to collaborative AI initiatives between CAIK and Dr Azad Moopan AI & Robotics Center of Excellence at SAFI Institute of advanced studies as well as Cochin Cancer Research Institute. Mindful Machines, book authored by Mr Max P. Michaels was launched by the Honorable Minister. <https://mindfulai.foundation/publications/> . Two panels: "AI in Healthcare – From Innovation to Impact," moderated by Shri Hari Namboodiri, and "Keralam 2030 – AI for Future Ready Keralam," moderated by Max P. Michaels set the stage for the inauguration.

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