

- LEADS

Odisha: The Global Growth Hub

Scaling Industries & Startups | Bridging Industry & Academia

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th October 2026, 10.00 am, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

“Driven by innovation and enterprise, India’s startups are shaping a self-reliant and resilient economy.”

Shri Narendra Modi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India



Executive Overview

Entrepreneurship, innovation and industry–academia collaboration have emerged as powerful drivers of economic growth, technological advancement and employment generation. In today's knowledge-driven economy, startups are transforming industries through disruptive technologies and scalable business models, while stronger engagement between educational institutions and industry is accelerating research commercialisation, technology transfer, skill development and workforce readiness.

India has established itself as the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, with more than 2 lakh recognised startups, over 120 unicorns and 21 lakh direct jobs created. Supported by initiatives such as Startup India, Digital India, Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat, the country continues to foster innovation across sectors including Artificial Intelligence (AI), DeepTech, HealthTech, FinTech, Agritech, Manufacturing, Clean Energy and Digital Services.

Odisha is rapidly emerging as a leading innovation and entrepreneurship hub in Eastern India through progressive policies, Startup Odisha initiatives, incubation support and a growing network of universities, research institutions and industry partners. With over **3,000 recognised startups** and a strong focus on women-led enterprises, youth innovation and regional inclusion, the State is well positioned to leverage industry–academia collaboration to create globally competitive enterprises and future-ready talent.

To strengthen this ecosystem, ASSOCHAM is organising **O-LEADS 2026**, a **two-day flagship event**, in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha, in October 2026**. The event will bring together **500+ delegates, 200+ startups, 75+ exhibitors, 40+ eminent speakers, 30+ investors and venture capital funds, and incubators and accelerators**, along with key Government, industry, academia and innovation ecosystem stakeholders from India and abroad.

A key highlight of the event will be the **O-LEADS Startup Excellence Awards 2026**, presented by the ASSOCHAM Odisha State Development Council, recognising outstanding achievements in innovation and entrepreneurship. Complementing the awards, the Industry Academia Connect will facilitate partnerships in research, technology transfer, internships, startup incubation and skill development, creating a collaborative platform that advances Odisha's vision of becoming a leading destination for innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable economic growth in line with **Viksit Odisha and Viksit Bharat 2047**.

Background and Strategic Context

Innovation today thrives when industry, academia and startups work together. Academic institutions generate research, skilled talent and new ideas; industries provide market insights, infrastructure and commercial opportunities; while startups transform innovation into scalable products and solutions. This collaboration accelerates technology transfer, enhances employability, promotes research commercialisation and drives sustainable economic growth.

As Odisha strengthens its position as an emerging hub for manufacturing, technology and entrepreneurship, there is a growing need for a platform that connects businesses, universities, research institutions, investors, policymakers and startups. Such

engagement can foster collaborative research, internships, product development, startup incubation, funding opportunities and industry-ready innovation.

The **O-LEADS 2026** has been conceived to bridge these stakeholders through knowledge exchange, startup showcases, investor interactions, B2B networking and strategic partnerships. By bringing the entire innovation ecosystem together under one roof, the event aims to accelerate entrepreneurship, strengthen industry–academia collaboration and position Odisha as a leading destination for innovation-led growth.

Vision

To position Odisha as a leading hub for startups, innovation, industry and academia by fostering a collaborative ecosystem that drives entrepreneurship, technology adoption, investment and sustainable economic growth.

Mission

To strengthen partnerships among large industries, MSMEs, startups, incubators, academic institutions, research organisations, investors and policymakers to accelerate innovation, promote research-to-market transformation, create high-quality jobs, attract investments, generate wealth and enhance Odisha's global competitiveness as a preferred destination for enterprise and innovation.

Objectives

The **O-LEADS 2026** aims to create a collaborative platform that strengthens entrepreneurship, innovation and industry–academia engagement while supporting Odisha's vision of becoming a leading innovation-driven economy.

The key objectives of the Summit are to:

- Position Odisha as a leading startup and innovation hub in Eastern India.
- Strengthen collaboration between industry, academia and startups.
- Showcase innovative startups, research and emerging technologies.
- Facilitate startup–investor and industry partnerships.
- Promote research commercialisation and technology transfer.
- Enable market access and business growth opportunities.
- Encourage student, youth and women entrepreneurship.
- Foster national and international collaborations.
- Recognise excellence through the **O-LEADS Startup Excellence Awards 2026**.
- Support the sustainable growth of Odisha's innovation ecosystem.

Odisha's Startup Ecosystem Advantage

Odisha is emerging as a dynamic hub for innovation, entrepreneurship and knowledge-driven growth, supported by progressive policies, a conducive business environment and a strong network of startups, academic institutions, research organisations and industry partners. The State is actively fostering collaboration between industry and academia to promote innovation, strengthen research capabilities and create a skilled workforce aligned with future industry needs.

With expanding opportunities across sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, HealthTech, FinTech, Agritech, Renewable Energy, EV & E-Mobility, Aerospace & Defence, Tourism, Education and advanced manufacturing, Odisha provides an enabling environment for

startups and institutions to co-create impactful solutions. Its strategic location, improving infrastructure, growing industrial base and emphasis on inclusive entrepreneurship further reinforce its position as an emerging centre for innovation and investment.

The **O-LEADS 2026** seeks to showcase these strengths by bringing together startups, industry leaders, investors, academic institutions, researchers and policymakers on a common platform. The event will promote collaboration, research commercialisation, technology transfer and startup growth while positioning Odisha as a preferred destination for entrepreneurship, innovation and industry–academia partnerships. A key highlight of the event will be the **O-LEADS Startup Excellence Awards 2026**, recognising outstanding achievements and inspiring the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs.

Expected Outcomes

The O-LEADS 2026 has been designed to foster collaboration among startups, industry, academia, investors and policymakers while supporting Odisha's vision of becoming a leading innovation-driven economy. The programme seeks to:

- New investment and funding opportunities for startups.
- Stronger industry–academia partnerships and MoUs.
- Increased startup–corporate and startup–investor engagement.
- Enhanced technology transfer and innovation adoption.
- Greater market access and business networking.
- Promotion of research, skilling and talent development.
- Actionable policy recommendations for ecosystem growth.
- Higher visibility for Odisha as an innovation destination.
- Recognition of outstanding startups and incubators.
- Long-term strengthening of Odisha's startup and innovation ecosystem.

Programme Components



Programme Structure

Day 1

Innovation, Startups & The Knowledge Ecosystem

Focus: Incubating ideas, scaling startups, enabling market access, and taking Odisha's innovations and enterprises to global markets.

- ❖ Inaugural Session
- ❖ High Level Govt. Dignitaries
- ❖ Release of Knowledge Report
- ❖ Panel Discussions
- ❖ Industry Reverse Pitch – Industry Challenges, Startup Solutions
- ❖ Networking Lunch
- ❖ Pitching of Selected Startups
- ❖ Award Ceremony- O-LEAD Awards
- ❖ VC & Angel Investor Interactions
- ❖ Startup & Innovation Exhibition

Day 2

Industry–Academia Connect, Research & Industrial Innovation

Focus: Bridging academia and industry through future-ready skills, collaborative research, technology transfer, innovation, and stronger industrial partnerships.

- ❖ Plenary Session
- ❖ Panel Discussions
- ❖ Industry – Start-up- Academia
- ❖ Award Ceremony- O-LEAD Awards
- ❖ Networking Lunch
- ❖ Startup & Innovation Exhibition
- ❖ Valedictory
- ❖ Media & Networking Interactions

Speakers Profile



The Participants

- ❖ Senior Government Representatives
- ❖ Startup Founders & Co-founders
- ❖ Industry Leaders & CXOs
- ❖ CEOs of Leading Companies
- ❖ MSMEs & Large Enterprises
- ❖ Angel Investors & Venture Capital Funds
- ❖ Private Equity & Investment Firms
- ❖ Incubators & Accelerators
- ❖ Universities & Higher Education Institutions
- ❖ Academic Leaders & Researchers
- ❖ Faculty Members & Innovation Cells
- ❖ Students & Student Entrepreneurs
- ❖ Technology & Innovation Experts
- ❖ Corporate HR & Talent Leaders
- ❖ Foreign Delegates & Trade Representatives
- ❖ Banks & Financial Institutions
- ❖ Startup Ecosystem Enablers & Mentors
- ❖ Media & Knowledge Partners
- ❖ International Business Delegations
- ❖ Professionals, Innovators & Entrepreneurs

Partnership & Promotion

The O-LEADS 2026 offers strategic partnership, sponsorship, exhibition and branding opportunities for organisations seeking to engage with startups, investors, industry leaders, academia, research institutions, policymakers, incubators and ecosystem enablers. The event provides a unique platform to showcase thought leadership, strengthen stakeholder relationships, enhance brand visibility and contribute to Odisha's growing innovation ecosystem.

ASSOCHAM will promote the event through its national and regional networks, media outreach, digital campaigns, industry associations, startup communities and institutional partners, ensuring extensive visibility and meaningful engagement for all participating organisations.

Particulars	Platinum Partner 10 Lacs	Diamond Partner 5 Lacs	Gold Partner 4 Lacs	Silver Partner 3 Lacs	Associate Partner 2 Lacs	Startup Partner 2 Lacs
Inaugural Session Slot	Y	Y	-	-	-	-
Technical Session Slot	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Venue Branding – Logo in Hall on side wing, registration Desk	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CEO Roundtable	Y	Y	-	-	-	-
Social Media Leaders Quote	Y	-	-	-	-	-
Pre-Program Social Media & Website Logo promo	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Post even souvenir Promo	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	-
Display POD 2x 2	Y	-	-	-	-	Y
Complimentary Entry	8	5	4	4	3	3
Introduction to Media	Y	-	-	-	-	-
Special Thank You Panel	Y	-	-	-	-	-

Plus GST as applicable

Exhibition POD

Amount	Facilities
Rs. 40,000/- + 18% GST	• 2 x 2 Mtr Ready Octa-norm stall • Two chairs • One table • Four spotlights • One dustbin • One plug point • Fascia with organization name • Three delegate passes



Partnership Benefits

- ❖ Strategic brand visibility and recognition
- ❖ Speaking and thought leadership opportunities
- ❖ Exhibition and innovation showcase space
- ❖ Access to startups, investors and corporates
- ❖ Connect with academia and research institutions
- ❖ Participation in B2B and networking meetings
- ❖ Investor and venture capital engagement
- ❖ Industry–academia collaboration opportunities
- ❖ Digital, print and on-ground branding exposure
- ❖ Engagement with policymakers and ecosystem leaders

Startup Excellence Awards 2026

Presented by the **ASSOCHAM Odisha State Development Council**, the **O-LEADS Startup Excellence Awards 2026** are a flagship initiative to recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements by startups and ecosystem enablers driving innovation, entrepreneurship and business excellence. The Awards will be conferred during the **O-LEADS 2026**, providing a prestigious platform to honour organisations that have demonstrated exceptional innovation, scalability, sectoral leadership and impact.

The Awards feature 10 sector-specific categories, with two honours under each category—**Startup of the Year** and **Emerging Startup of the Year**—recognising both established and early-stage ventures. In addition, a dedicated **Incubator of the Year** award feature 6 sector-specific categories will acknowledge excellence in startup mentoring, incubation and ecosystem development. By bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, investors, academia, researchers and international stakeholders, the Awards aim to celebrate entrepreneurial excellence, inspire innovation and strengthen Odisha's position as a leading hub for startups and technology-driven growth. For detailed eligibility criteria, evaluation parameters and nomination guidelines, applicants are encouraged to refer to the **O-LEADS Startup Excellence Awards Note**.

Media and Promotion Strategy

A comprehensive multi-channel strategy will be deployed:

- **Print & Broadcast Media:** Coverage in 70+ outlets
- **Post-Event Documentation:** Photo gallery, media clippings, press brief to govt. stakeholders and a post event report.

About ASSOCHAM

The **Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)** is India's apex national chamber since 1920. It advocates actionable policy suggestions to strengthen the Indian economy by leveraging its extensive membership reach of over 450,000 companies, comprising of large corporates, SMEs, and now, Startups. With over 70 Sector and State Councils, ASSOCHAM works closely with government, industry, academia and research institutions to promote policy advocacy, investment, innovation and sustainable economic growth. By organising high-impact summits, business forums, policy dialogues, awards and knowledge platforms, ASSOCHAM continues to foster entrepreneurship, strengthen industry–academia collaboration and support India's vision of becoming a globally competitive, innovation-driven economy.



For any further clarification(s), please contact the undersigned:

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