

MOHUA SET TO PROVIDE FILLIP TO INDIAN STARTUPS IN THE SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT SECTOR

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

India's position as the 3rd largest startup eco-system in the world is set to get a further boost, with Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) preparing to provide an array of funding and incubation support to Startups to strengthen the sanitation and waste management sector.

On 20th September 2022, MoHUA will be **felicitating these 30 startups** at a conclave to be held at the **Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi**. The day-long conclave will also be a **platform to provide startups with a treasure trove of experience, knowledge and learnings** which would help them to navigate their way in this sector and successfully take their solutions to scale. As part of the day's deliberations, some Urban Local Bodies will be engaging in 'reverse pitches' to highlight specific ground level challenges, in a bid to motivate startups to work on finding innovative solutions to the challenges. Taking the long-term approach of the government forward, some Urban Local Bodies have also evinced interest in partnering with select startups and providing them with support in the form of space for setting up facilities, market buyers' linkages, etc, to pilot their solutions on the ground. The day-long event will also feature learning and networking activities, exhibition by the 30 Startups showcasing their solutions, discussion on policy initiatives for promoting Startups for Garbage Free Cities, and sharing of success stories by entrepreneurs & founders of Unicorns.

The Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban being implemented by MoHUA provides special focus to innovation and encouragement for startups in a bid to adopt locally innovated, implementable solutions and business models and promote circularity in waste management. In alignment with this long term approach, MoHUA had launched a Swachhata Startup Challenge under the ambit of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban, from January 2022 onwards, in partnership with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the DPIIT (Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade). The Challenge aimed to harness the entrepreneurial potential of the waste management sector in India and promote an enabling environment for enterprise development. Interestingly, a bottoms-up approach had been taken by MoHUA, through a Swachh Technology Challenge introduced in December 2021. The Technology Challenge invited entries and solutions from all stakeholders working in the sanitation sector, including NGOs, CSOs, academic institutions and startups. The winning entries received from startups in the Technology Challenge were allowed to participate in the subsequent Swachhata Startup Challenge in January 2022.

The Startup Challenge had sought entries from organisations in the Sanitation and waste management sector, across four categories, viz. (i)social inclusion, (ii) zero dump, (iii)plastic waste management and (iv) transparency through digital enablement. A total of 244 entries were received from aspiring startups, of which 30 startups were shortlisted by a jury pool of 20 members drawn from leading academic institutions and incubators, industry, and government bodies. Out of the 30, a total of top 10 winners have been identified, each of whom will be receiving seed funding and dedicated incubation support from French Tech, the French government's initiative to promote start-ups.

The Swachhata Startup Conclave is being organized as part of the *Swachh Amrit Mohotsav* being conducted by MoHUA, from 17th September 2022 to 2nd October 2022 when India is celebrating eight years of accomplishments of SBM-Urban, and as a run up to the first

anniversary of SBM Urban 2.0 to be celebrated on 1st October 2022. The Conclave is expected to see participation of nearly 600 attendees, including from leading startups and unicorns in the field, city administrators, investors, academia, government bodies and industries, sector partners, industry experts, representatives from DPIIT, Govt. of India, FICCI, CII, and other associations.

The felicitations will be done by the Hon'ble Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Kaushal Kishore. Secretary MoHUA Shri Manoj Joshi, H.E. Ambassador of France to India Emmanuel Lenain, and AFD Country Director Bruno Bosle will also be present at the Conclave.

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