

ICAR-IARI Launches 'SHITIJ 2.0' Incubation Programme for Startups in Plant Health & Precision Agriculture



The poster for the ICAR SHITIJ 2.0 Startup Incubation Program features a dark background with a green plant growing on the right side. At the top left, the text 'ICAR SHITIJ 2.0' is written in large, bold, green letters, with 'STARTUP INCUBATION PROGRAM' in white below it. To the right of the title is the ICAR logo. Below the title, it says 'Call for Applications for Startups & Entrepreneurs'. The poster is divided into several sections: 'Focus Areas' with icons for 'Plant Health' and 'Precision Agriculture'; 'Who Can Apply' with two bullet points: 'Open to Indian citizens passionate about contributing to agriculture' and 'Agri Startup with a Prototype/Minimum Viable Product (MVP)'; 'Why Apply?' with six icons representing 'Expert Mentorship', 'Business & Technical Mentoring', 'Access to Infrastructure & Facilities', 'Pilot Opportunities & Market Linkages', 'Industry Connect', and 'Facilitation for Funding'; 'Partner Institutes' listing seven ICAR institutes; 'Application Window Closes 24 JULY 2026'; a 'REGISTER NOW' button with a QR code; and a footer with 'SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION FUND (NAIF), ICAR' and the website 'www.pusakrishi.in'.

ICAR SHITIJ 2.0
STARTUP INCUBATION PROGRAM

Call for Applications for **Startups & Entrepreneurs**

Focus Areas

- Plant Health
- Precision Agriculture

Who Can Apply

- Open to Indian citizens passionate about contributing to agriculture
- Agri Startup with a Prototype/Minimum Viable Product (MVP)

Why Apply?

- Expert Mentorship
- Business & Technical Mentoring
- Access to Infrastructure & Facilities
- Pilot Opportunities & Market Linkages
- Industry Connect
- Facilitation for Funding

Partner Institutes

- ICAR - Indian Institute of Agricultural Research, New Delhi
- ICAR - Indian Institute of Vegetable Research, Varanasi
- ICAR - Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Bengaluru
- ICAR - Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode
- ICAR - Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research, Hyderabad
- ICAR - National Research Institute for Integrated Pest Management, New Delhi
- ICAR - National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru

Application Window Closes
24 JULY 2026

REGISTER NOW

SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION FUND (NAIF), ICAR

www.pusakrishi.in

*Terms and Conditions Apply

The **ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR-IARI)**, New Delhi, has launched **SHITIJ 2.0**, an incubation and mentorship programme for agri-startups working in the areas of **Plant Health and Precision Agriculture**.

The programme is being implemented under the **Incubation Fund of the National Agricultural Innovation Fund (NAIF) Scheme** through the ICAR Agribusiness Incubation Centre network. Under the programme's Hub-and-Spoke framework, **ICAR-IARI will serve as the Hub-ABIC** for Plant Health and Precision Agriculture, supported by seven ICAR institutes functioning as Spoke institutions.

SHITIJ 2.0 aims to identify and nurture innovative agri-startups by providing structured business incubation, scientific mentorship, technology validation, capacity building and scale-up support. The programme will connect selected startups with ICAR scientists, incubation experts, industry professionals and academic experts to help transform promising innovations into viable and scalable enterprises.

Focus Areas

The programme will support innovations related to:

Plant Health

Solutions addressing plant protection, crop diseases, insect pests, biological inputs, plant nutrition, integrated pest management, crop diagnostics and other technologies that contribute to healthier and more productive crops.

Precision Agriculture

Technology-enabled solutions involving sensors, artificial intelligence, drones, automation, remote sensing, digital advisory systems, data analytics, smart farm machinery and other tools for precise and efficient agricultural management.

Important Dates

- **Launch of Programme and Registration:** 3 July 2026
- **Last Date for Registration:** 24 July 2026
- **Outreach, Awareness Programmes and Boot Camps:** 3–24 July 2026
- **Pre-Screening Meeting:** 30–31 July 2026
- **Selection Committee Meeting:** 4–6 August 2026
- **Final Result Announcement:** 11 August 2026
- **Online Incubation and Mentorship Programme:** 20 August–19 October 2026

Hub-and-Spoke Institutional Network

Under the programme, **ICAR-IARI, New Delhi**, will function as the Hub-ABIC, in collaboration with the following Spoke institutions:

- ICAR-National Soybean Research Institute, Indore
- ICAR-Indian Institute of Vegetable Research, Varanasi
- ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Bengaluru
- ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode
- ICAR-Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research, Hyderabad
- ICAR-National Research Institute for Integrated Pest Management, New Delhi
- ICAR-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru

This institutional network will provide startups with region-specific and domain-specific technical expertise, mentoring and validation support.

What Does SHITIJ 2.0 Offer?

Selected startups will receive:

- Structured online incubation and mentorship
- One-to-one mentoring by scientists and subject-matter experts
- Business model and market strategy development
- Technical assessment and technology validation support
- Masterclasses and capacity-building sessions
- Support for field trials, pilot testing and product refinement
- Industry, mentor and institutional linkages

- Need-based physical incubation and mentoring support
- Linkages with suitable government schemes and funding opportunities

Applications will be evaluated on the basis of **innovation, feasibility, scalability, market relevance and potential impact**. Shortlisted applicants will undergo further assessment by a Startup Selection Committee comprising experts from incubation, industry and academia.

Programme Structure

The selected startups will undergo a **two-month online incubation and mentorship programme**. This will be followed by **need-based physical incubation and mentoring support**, during which startups may be assigned to suitable Spoke institutions based on their technical requirements, geographical relevance or sectoral specialization.

Apply Now

Application Link:

<https://pusakrishi.accubate.app/ext/form/23814/1/apply>

Innovators, entrepreneurs and agri-startups developing solutions in Plant Health and Precision Agriculture are encouraged to apply and benefit from the scientific expertise, institutional infrastructure and nationwide incubation network of ICAR.