

BPCL's Startup Initiative: Project Ankur

"Startups are the engines of exponential growth, manifesting the power of innovation". As a part of Government of India's Startup initiative and also to support innovation & entrepreneurship, BPCL's Startup initiative, christened "Project Ankur". It was started in 2016 with an initial corpus of Rs 25 Crores to encourage and incubate the growing startups. Project Ankur has developed a supportive ecosystem that nurtures entrepreneurship in the country by backing the innovative ideas that have the potential to grow into successful start-ups and create a multiplier effect on the entire ecosystem. BPCL has now moved a step ahead in its startup initiative since its inception.

In the initial phase, startups like Genrobotic Innovations, Planys Technologies, and Detect Technologies etc. were supported through suitable grant funding of up to Rs 1.5 Crores per startup. This initiative is aligned with BPCL's digital strategy wherein BPCL is focused on creating a digital ecosystem to orient a thinking that accepts digital as a norm to deliver results across the entire value chain. BPCL has signed Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with KSUM (Kerala Startup Mission), Invest India New Delhi, IIT Madras, KIIT Bhubaneswar, Axilor Ventures Bangalore & IIM Kozhikode, primarily to collaborate on startups. By collaborating with startups, BPCL is leveraging its core strengths of industry expertise & large networks to build new solutions to the existing problems.

BPCL Ankur have developed many innovative products and solutions. Some of them are-

- Drone based inspection technique developed by **Detect Technologies** for refinery stack inspection.
- **Bandicoot** - a robotic system developed by Genrobotic Innovations for manhole and sewer line cleaning aimed at the complete elimination of manual scavenging,
- -Inspection of underwater structures, tanks can now be carried out through submersible robots developed by **Planys technologies**.

Brief About BPCL Startup Grand Slam Season#1

Recently, BPCL has launched a grand challenge for startups, "**BPCL Startup Grand Slam- Season 1**" under Project Ankur. Aim of the grand challenge is to encourage startups to formulate solutions for the industry challenges & problems, thereby increasing industry startup collaboration. Under this grand challenge, has put forth 6 problem statements, comprising of BPCL's business challenges across latest technologies like IoT, Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Asset Performance Management, Mobility Solutions, CRM etc. BPCL has invited visionary and innovative startups in India to propose solutions for these problem statements. Winner of each challenge statement shall be given a grant of Rs. 50 Lakhs and also an opportunity to carry out the PoC (Proof of Concept) of the same with BPCL.

The winners will be selected through a two-round evaluation process: Ideas shortlisted from the first round will be pitched by the respective startups in the final round to a jury panel comprising of eminent personalities ranging from industry experts to startup incubators. BPCL has also planned to release additional funds of up to Rs. 1.5 Cr, if required, to the winning startups if the proposed solution is scalable. “Tremendous response is observed from startups for this challenge”, said a team member from strategy team of BPCL.

Going forward, BPCL shall continue engaging effectively with stakeholders to ensure that BPCL’s aim of creating a multiplier effect on the startup ecosystem is fulfilled.

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