



Presents

Hackathon-for-Innovation 2026-2027

Sustainable Solutions for MSMEs

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES

Table of Contents

1. Hackathon Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Structure of the Hackathon
4. Team Composition & Eligibility
5. Registration & Submission Rules
6. Submission Format for internal shortlisting & Hackathon event
7. Evaluation Criteria
8. Obligations of the college
9. Obligations of organizer, FSE
10. Thematic Streams
11. Certification
12. Innovation Support Fund
13. Innovation Support Phase (Post-Hackathon Event)
14. Where to start after orientation? - The Hackathon Blueprint
15. Contact Details

I. Hackathon Introduction

India's innovation and research ecosystem has shown sustained growth and expansion. India has climbed to 38th position in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025 from 66th in 2019, according to the Economic Survey 2025-26.

“Hackathon-for-Innovation 2026-2027- Sustainable Solutions for MSMEs” further aspires in aligning innovation and entrepreneurial dreams of students of higher education institutions (HEIs) by positioning skills, talents and knowledge with beyond classroom practices and real market experiences with Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises - MSMEs.

Forum for Sustainable Enterprises (FSE) understands that the synergy between India's MSME and HEI ecosystem is the backbone of its futuristic inclusive economic growth. FSE plans to drive this transformation towards a sustained and collective effort in building an empowered Viksit Bharat 2047.



Hackathon-for-Innovation

2026-2027 *Sustainable Solutions for MSMEs*

20+ Real - World problem statements and hyper-local solutions |
Climate readiness and resilient smart city themes |
Structured mentorship & incubation program |

This Hackathon aspires in aligning innovation and entrepreneurial dreams of students of higher education institutions (HEIs)



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II. Objectives

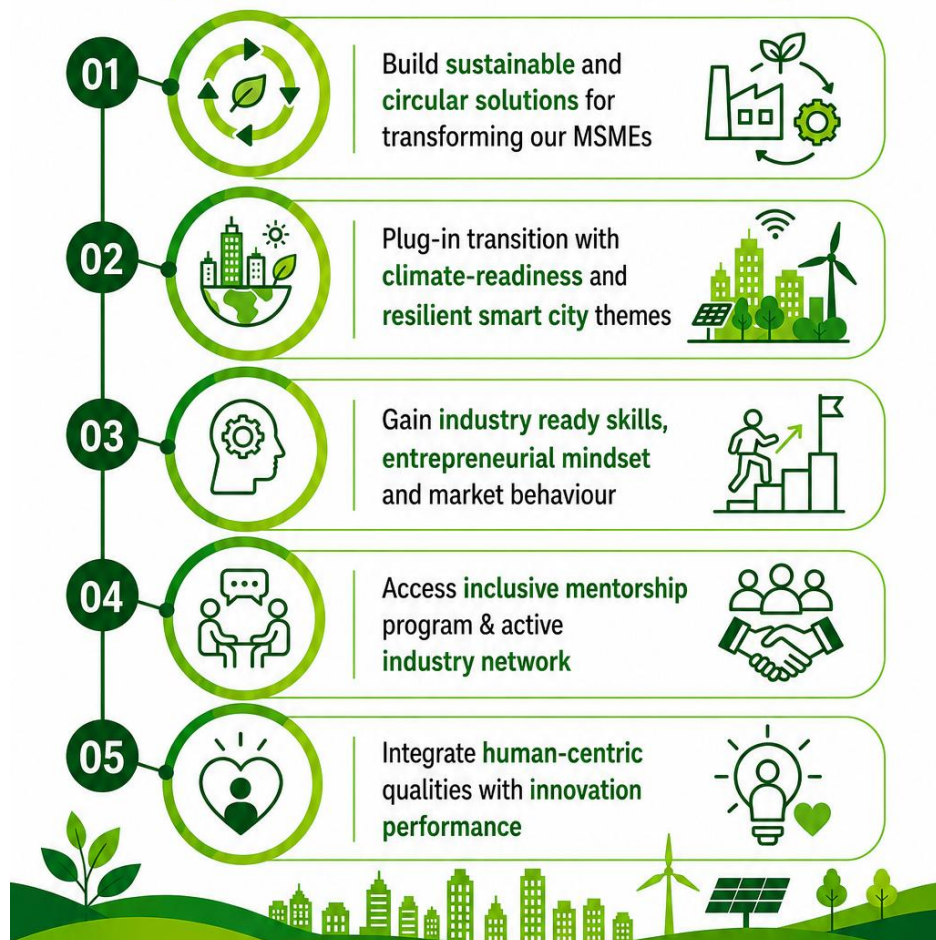
- Build sustainable and circular solutions for transforming our MSMEs
- Plug-in transition with climate-readiness and resilient smart city themes
- Gain industry ready skills, entrepreneurial mindset and market behaviour
- Access inclusive mentorship program & active industry network
- Integrate human-centric qualities with innovation performance



CORE GOALS

Hackathon-for-Innovation 2026-2027

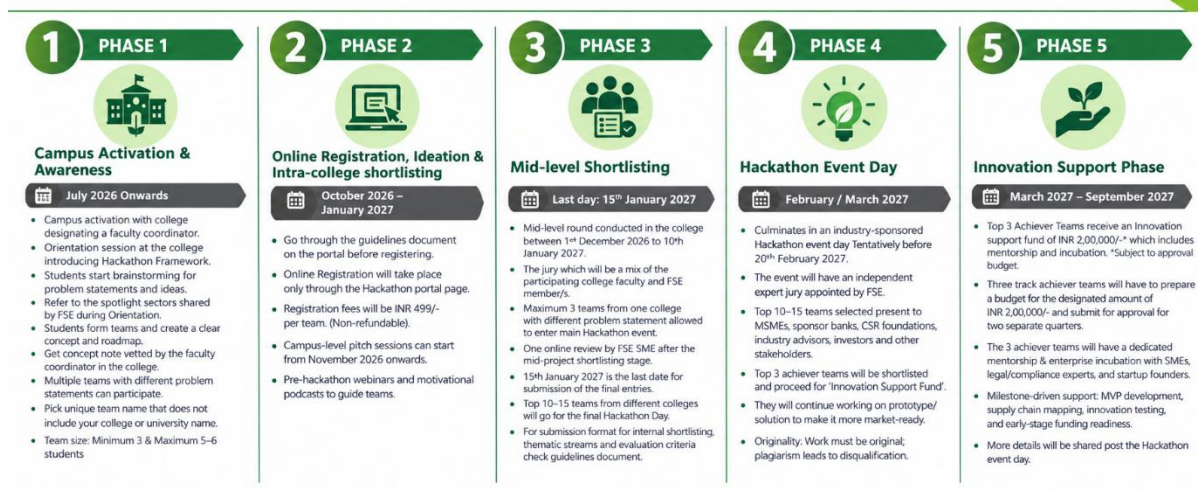
Sustainable Solutions for MSMEs



III. Structure of the Hackathon

Hackathon shall comprise of four levels of screening:

1. The first will be the preliminary entry level round which will start after the orientation session is conducted by FSE at the college premises. Students will make use of the Hackathon Blueprint (shared during the orientation session and at the end of this document) as a base for brainstorming and then create a clear concept note. The college faculty will mentor and guide students on the problem statement mapping and alignment with real-world issues; and then motivate & lead on need basis. The faculty will then shortlist the teams with then strongest concept note that can be developed further into a solution. These shortlisted teams will then register on the FSE Hackathon portal and start their formal participation in the Hackathon. (Online registration cut-off date – 15th November 2026). A team can have a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 students. Each team must have a student Team Lead and a Faculty Lead.
2. The second will be the mid-level round conducted in the college between 1st December 2026 to 10th January 2027. This will be judged by a mix of jury from the college and FSE. Top 10-15 shortlisted teams in total will move forward for the final Hackathon event to be held in February 2027.
3. The third or final round before the Hackathon event day shall be completed within the prescribed timelines as per these guidelines. Please note that 15th January 2027 is the last date for submission of the final entries after making any changes/ upgrades/ improvisation. The Final round shall consist of submission of all the deliverables with detailed project reports along with a presentation. Please note that timelines may vary for various Problem Statements and shall be communicated after discussion with the college faculty coordinator.
4. The fourth will be the culmination level in the form of a Hackathon event day where the shortlisted top 10-15 teams will present their entries to an independent expert jury appointed by Forum for Sustainable Enterprises (FSE). This jury panel will be a mix of MSMEs, sponsor banks, CSR foundations, Industry advisors, investors and other stakeholders. Top 3 achiever teams will be shortlisted and proceed for 'Innovation Support Fund'. They will continue working on their prototype/solution to make it more market-ready.



IV. Team Composition & Eligibility

- **Eligibility:** Teams must register via their college/ faculty coordinator on the FSE Hackathon portal.
- **Team Size:** Minimum 3, maximum 6 students. (Gender Inclusive)
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** We are keen in bringing interdisciplinary talent from different academic domains together and build a strong sense of community, self-worth, creativity and collaboration. All-girls teams are permitted. All-male teams from co-educational or single-gender institutions must comply or find cross-department/eligible members to meet the diversity criteria. This hackathon is a fully inclusive, safe, and welcoming space for the LGBTQIA+ community and non-binary individuals.
- **Affiliation:** All team members must generally be active, enrolled students must be from a recognized institution. Inter-college team mixing is permitted for institutional nominations, provided both colleges agree on certain terms and condition and become equal signatories in the collaborative agreement with FSE.

V. Registration & Submission Rules

- **Registration deadline:** Online registration cut-off date – 15th November 2026 on FSE Hackathon portal.
- **Registration Fee:** Payment of INR 499/- per team (non-refundable) with a different problem statement. Bank account details will be shared on the registration form. Upload the complete online transaction receipt with the registration form before submitting.
- **Faculty Leadership:** Appoint a faculty coordinator as a single point of contact for coordination and all official communication with the Organizer. Assist in promoting the event among eligible student departments, bodies, cells, teams, clubs within the campus.
- **College Obligation:** Provide access to designated campus facilities, including [specify auditoriums, labs, Wi-Fi, electricity], on the agreed dates and times for orientation session, internal shortlisting event where the college and organizer will come together.
- **Mentorship:** Appoint one faculty per department who can mentor/ guide the students to create a clear concept note with problem statement mapping and alignment with real-world issues; and then motivate & lead on need basis. This faculty will shortlist the teams and register every participating team on the FSE Hackathon portal.
- **Problem Statement Selection:** Students can pick the problem statements shared during the orientation or work on the problem statements of their interest. However, this should match the list of 20-25 spotlight sectors shared by FSE. Then get the problem statement vetted by the faculty coordinator in the college.
- **Team Name:** Student should pick a unique team name that does not include your college or university name.
- **Portal Registration limit:** Multiple entries are possible per college on the portal. Just that every team entry should be working with a distinct problem statement.
- **Originality:** Work must be original; plagiarism leads to disqualification.

High-Growth Spotlight Sectors “Hackathon-for-Innovation 2026-2027” — Sustainable Solutions for MSMEs —



1 Coastal Livelihoods: IoT-enabled cold chain solutions 	2 Smart & Sustainable Cities: Urban heat island effect mitigation 	3 Precision Engineering 	4 Automotive sector & mobility ecosystem 	5 Environmental Biotechnology & Bio-Manufacturing
6 Economic valorization of cow waste (dung and urine) 	7 AI-optimized, real-time traffic routing software, digital logistics optimization aggregators or platforms 	8 Unified, dynamic ticketing and passenger load management system 	9 EDI platform, Real-time API tracking systems and Predictive software for SME freight forwarders 	10 Medical Health Tech: Longevity, Preventive Health & Active Aging
11 Cloud-Based Yard Management Systems (YMS) & Low-Cost Hardware Anchors 	12 Industrial Automation Systems & Models and IoT – Internet of Things 	13 AI-driven energy auditing and optimization systems 	14 Green Finance or Climate Finance Playbook: Models, Strategies & Policy Pathways. 	15 A “Sustainability Dashboard” for multi-stakeholder dialogues and tracking MSME resource use, social impact and environmental indicators.
16 A “Narrative Toolkit” blending photography, local folklore, and branding to help MSMEs market sustainable products. 	17 A “Behavioural Nudges Framework” for MSME employees — e.g., gamified recycling, recognition systems for eco-friendly practices. 	18 Digitalization & Real-time data tracking of supply chain to mitigate carbon emissions 	19 Anti-Poaching Surveillance and other tech-driven systems for illegal wildlife trade & trafficking 	20 Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) & Soil Health Science
21 Immersive Culinary Experiences and Food Science 	22 Data-Driven Sustainable Tourism & Regenerative and Circular Models 	23 Deep-Tech Groundwater Monitoring: Hydrogeological Mapping, Digital Twins, IoT sensors & FPO Dashboard 	24 Bio-mining, energy process design and resource recovery of sewage sludge to build a manual scavenging-free India! 	25 Re-engineering and repurposing textile into sensor-based physiotherapy and motion tracking

Spotlight Sectors & Problem Statements

“Hackathon-for-Innovation 2026-2027” - Sustainable Solutions for MSMEs

I. Spotlight Sector: Coastal Livelihoods: IoT-enabled cold chain solutions Problem Statement: Small-scale fishery cooperatives in the Raigad coastal belt lack affordable, IoT-enabled cold chain solutions, resulting in severe post-harvest spoilage and reduced profit margins during transport to urban markets.	II. Spotlight Sector: Smart & Sustainable Cities: Urban heat island effect mitigation Problem Statement: A new report by US-based Climate Central analyses that, out of 961 cities worldwide, 59 Indian cities show that the average number of dangerously humid days has increased. In Maharashtra, Mumbai and Navi Mumbai increase is from 136 to 206 annually, while Thane and Dombivli have recorded an increase from 182 to 222 days. The urban heat island (UHI) effect occurs when a developed area experiences higher temperatures than nearby rural areas. The need is for affordable, efficient, and sustainable solutions to regulate temperatures. Solutions could be bio-based materials, green and cool roofs, indoor environmental quality, energy efficiency, product lifecycle management, and more.	III. Spotlight Sector: Precision Engineering Problem Statement: SMEs in Thane's industrial estates lack affordable, automated quality inspection tools on their shop floors, resulting in high product rejection rates and wasted raw materials. The requirement is for specialized designs and manufacturing discipline focused on creating automation and production systems with extremely tight tolerances, high repeatability, and long-term stability.	IV. Spotlight Sector: Automotive Sector & Mobility Ecosystem Problem Statement: India has unique and complex mobility needs. The consumer needs a spectrum of transformations that bring safety, connectivity, convenience, intuitive digital experiences, energy efficiency, recyclability, manufacturing parts, EV charging infrastructure and grid readiness, Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) Communication and more.	V. Spotlight Sector: Environmental Biotechnology & Bio-Manufacturing Problem Statement: India generates over 170,000 metric tons of municipal solid waste every single day, according to the Central Pollution Control Board. There is need for source-level waste sorting, segregation, automated artificial intelligence processing, and decentralized community recycling models, landfill bio-mining and more. Technological interventions here could be AI-powered E-waste sorting and tracker, Integrated Bio-Membrane Systems and Anaerobic Digestion to treat and minimize Leachate Pollution Index (LPI) at landfills, Microbial Bioremediation, RFID tracking: Radio-frequency identification tags track waste from homes to final processing sites to keep collection transparent and more.
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Align your work with the 5Ps of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 and eventually the broader 17 goals.



People

End poverty and hunger in all forms and ensure dignity and equality for all.



Planet

Protect our planet's natural resources and climate for future generations.



Prosperity

Ensure prosperous and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature.



Peace

Foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies free from fear and violence.



Partnership

Strengthen the means of implementation through global solidarity and collaboration.



VI. Submission Format for internal shortlisting and Hackathon main event:

- Preliminary entry level concept note that was submitted internally to college faculty before registering on online portal.
- Prototype/solution/demo with supporting documentation (max 10 pages).
- Pitch deck (max 8-10 slides) with photographs/ illustration highlighting innovation, sustainability impact, and feasibility.
- A team video (2 mins max) including team introduction, problem statement, process, solution and expectation.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

- **Innovation & Creativity (30%)** – Novelty, alignment with FSE thematic streams - Brahma/Vishnu/Shiva.
- **Technical Feasibility (20%)** – Practicality, scalability, capacity building.
- **Environmental Impact (20%)** – Contribution to sustainability, circularity and climate readiness.
- **Business Viability (20%)** – MSME applicability, cost-effectiveness, replicability.
- **Presentation & Storytelling (10%)** – Clarity and persuasiveness, interdisciplinary collaboration.

VIII. Obligations of the college

The College agrees to:

- Appoint a faculty coordinator as a single point of contact for coordination with the organizer.
- Appoint one faculty per department who can mentor/ guide the students to create a clear concept note with problem statement mapping and alignment with real-world issues; and then motivate & lead on need basis.
- Provide access to designated campus facilities, including [specify auditoriums, labs, Wi-Fi, electricity], on the agreed dates and times for orientation session, internal shortlisting event where the college and organizer will come together.
- Assist in promoting the event among eligible student departments, bodies, cells, teams, clubs within the campus.

IX. Obligations of Organizer, FSE

The organizer agrees to:

- Conduct an Orientation session (1-1.5 hrs) on the premises of the college campus.
- A pre-hackathon webinar (Live or uploaded on You tube channel) focussing on domain specific to problem statements and spotlight sectors. This will guide student teams in positioning their pitch with prototype/ solution/ demo for the Hackathon. This will be scheduled post November 15th 2026.
- A few motivational podcasts/ media bytes of voices that matter in the world of academia and industry.
- One online review for the college student teams by subject matter expert post the mid-project shortlisting stage.
- Managing the culminating Hackathon event (Tentatively before 20th February 2027) including execution, registration, scheduling, mentoring, and judging criteria.
- Provide necessary venue, felicitation ceremony, food/refreshments, swags, or technical infrastructure as agreed in writing.
- Ensure proper conduct, safety protocols, and cleanup of the premises post-event.

X. 🌟 Thematic Streams (Brahma–Vishnu–Shiva)

- **Brahma (Creation)**

New product designs, innovative materials, digital tools, communication and conceptual strategies.

- **Vishnu (Preservation)**

Sustainable transformation, resource efficiency, supply chain resilience.

- **Shiva (Disruption)**

Radical change, process re-engineering, circular economy breakthroughs, disruptive models that challenge existing paradigms.

XI. Certification:

- Participation certificate: Upon completion of the internal college shortlisting - mid-level round to those who do not make it to the main Hackathon event.
- Certificate of Finalist: Specifically honours those making it to the final stage of a competition.
- Certificate of Recognition: To the top achiever teams. Acknowledges notable effort, skill, or reaching an advanced milestone.

XII. Innovation Support Fund

Top 3 Achiever Teams receive an **Innovation support fund of INR 2,00,000/-*** which includes mentorship and incubation.

**Subject to approved budget.*

XIII. Innovation Support Phase (March 2027 – September 2027) *

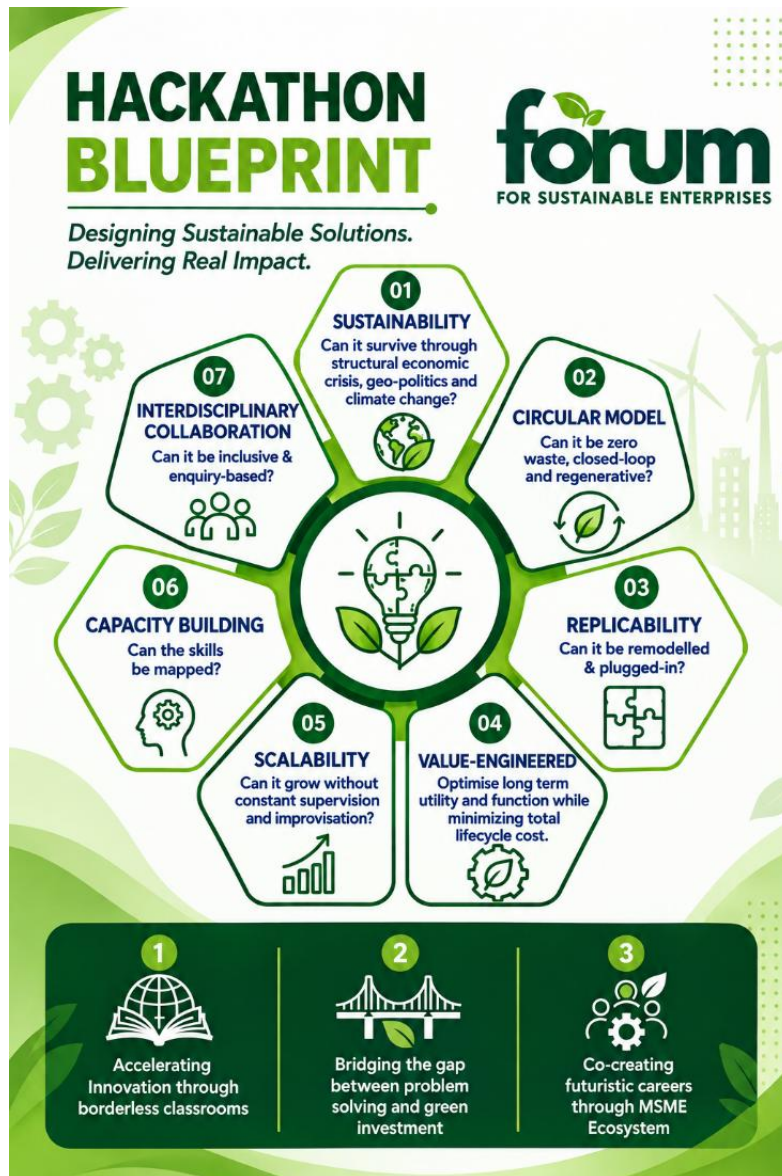
**Time frame might change according to academic calendars and as we evolve*

- The 3 achiever teams will have a dedicated mentorship & enterprise incubation with SMEs, legal/compliance experts, and startup founders.
- Milestone-driven support: MVP development, supply chain mapping, innovation testing, and early-stage funding readiness.

Innovation Support Fund Policy

- The three achiever teams will have to prepare a budget for the designated amount of INR 2,00,000/- and submit for approval for two separate quarters. (March – May 2027 & June – August 2027)
- The 'Innovation Support Fund' will be released in two parts. One as an advance on approval of the first quarter budget. The second quarter will be released after all itemized original receipts for first quarter are validated by FSE.
- Digital invoices will be accepted only if they state the team participant's (representing the team) name, date, and amount.
- Credit card statements alone are insufficient.
- More details will be shared post the Hackathon event day.

XIV. Where to start after orientation? - The Hackathon Blueprint



XV. CONTACT DETAILS

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