

# ICONN Summit 2025 Sets Vision for India's Innovation Decade: Trusted AI, Deeptech, and Expanded R&D in Focus

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The CII Centre of Excellence for Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Startups (CII CIES) inaugurated ICONN Summit 2025 at T-Hub today, bringing together India's leading corporates, investors, policymakers, and innovators to chart the next phase of India's technology and startup growth.



**Mr Sanjay Kumar, Special Chief Secretary, ITE&C and Industries & Commerce, Government of Telangana, addressing the delegates at the ICONN Summit 2025**

Delivering the Inaugural Address, Mr. Sanjay Kumar, Special Chief Secretary, ITE&C and Industries & Commerce, Government of Telangana, outlined the State's next big technology leap. *"We are launching the AI Hub with a strong focus on cybersecurity, biologics, and cutting-edge Centres of Excellence. Our aim is to build Hyderabad into a global node for trusted AI, biotech-driven innovation, and next-generation digital infrastructure,"* he said.

Mr. Kris Gopalakrishnan, Chairman, CII CIES Advisory Board & Chairman, Axilor Ventures, highlighted the growing national importance of corporate-startup collaboration. *"Industry working with startups is nation building. When established companies partner with young innovators, we accelerate economic growth, generate high-quality jobs, and create solutions at scale for India and the world,"* he said. **Mr. Gopalakrishnan** also called on India's wealth creators to take

a more active role in the innovation economy.

*“Family offices today have the capacity to come together and create a multi-billion-dollar VC fund that can fuel India’s next wave of deeptech and transformative startups. For this to happen, we must prioritise strong intellectual property practices, IPR is very important for our long-term global competitiveness,”* he added.

Reflecting on India’s long-term economic vision, he stated that *“Viksit Bharat 2047 looks very exciting, and the momentum we are building in technology, entrepreneurship, and research is laying the foundation for a truly developed nation.”*

**Dr (Mrs) Suchitra K Ella, Vice President, CII** emphasised the importance of significantly scaling India’s R&D capacity. *“India must give industry status to the R&D sector. Recognising R&D as an industry will unlock more investments, attract world-class talent, and encourage deeper collaboration between academia, startups, and corporates. This shift is crucial if India is to lead globally in science, technology, and innovation,”* she stated.

In his special address, **Mr. C. K. Ranganathan, Co-Chairman, CII National Startup Council**, underscored the importance of the Summit in strengthening the national innovation movement. *“The ICONN Summit is here to bring the entire innovation ecosystem together, startups, corporates, investors, academia, and government. It is a monumental event that will play a defining role in shaping India’s innovation-led future,”* he said.

**ICONN Summit 2025 also featured a series of important releases and recognitions, underscoring the growing impact of India's innovation ecosystem:**

- Announcement of Winners of the CII Startuppreneur Awards 2025, celebrating the country's most promising early-stage and growth-stage startups.
- Release of the report **"Engineering Hardware Startup Ecosystem: Opportunities & Challenges"**, offering insights into India's deeptech and hardware innovation landscape.
- Release of the report **"Democratising Access to Finance in India"**, capturing key recommendations for strengthening financial inclusion.

Launch of the **"Women in Innovation"** Compendium, highlighting the achievements and journeys of emerging women innovators across India.

The Summit further showcased the growing impact of CII CIES through its market-access programmes, global delegations, startup affiliation initiatives, family-office masterclasses, and collaborations with international partners such as the UK and Japan.

