

Initiative

How NIDHI Yojana Is Powering Women Start-ups in UP

UP State Bureau
LUCKNOW

The central government's National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI) Yojana is emerging as a key support mechanism for women-led start-ups in Uttar Pradesh, contributing to the expansion of entrepreneurship across the state, including smaller cities and towns.

Launched in 2016 by the Department of Science and Technology, the NIDHI Yojana focuses on providing financial, technical and institutional sup-

port to early-stage science and technology-based start-ups. The scheme aims to strengthen innovation-driven enterprises by assisting them during their initial and most vulnerable phases. According to official data, a total of 714 women-led start-ups across India have received assistance under the NIDHI framework. Of these, 25 start-ups are based in Uttar Pradesh, indicating the state's growing participation in the national innovation ecosystem. Year-wise figures show a steady rise in support, with 23 women-led start-ups assisted in 2017-18, 152 in 2023-24, 140 in



2024-25 and 84 in 2025-26.

In Uttar Pradesh, the impact of the scheme is supported by the establishment of Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) and Inclusive Technology Business Incubators (ITBIs). Seven such incubators are currently operational in the state, providing

25 women-led start-ups from UP receive direct support under the central NIDHI scheme

structured support to women entrepreneurs. These centres offer mentoring, technical guidance, business planning assistance, intellectual property support and help with regulatory compliance.

Officials note that these incubators are playing a significant role in enabling women from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities to

launch innovation-based ventures. Districts that earlier had limited start-up activity are gradually witnessing increased participation from local entrepreneurs, particularly women.

The spread of start-up infrastructure beyond major urban centres aligns with the broader objective of promoting balanced regional development. By providing access to resources and institutional backing closer to home, the NIDHI Yojana is helping reduce entry barriers for aspiring women entrepreneurs and strengthening local economies across Uttar Pradesh.