

Mentor India

An Atal Innovation Mission initiative to engage leaders who will empower young innovators at Atal Tinkering Labs

Guidelines

August 2019

Background

1. Atal Innovation Mission

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country. AIM's objective is to develop new programmes and policies for fostering innovation in different sectors of the economy, provide platform and collaboration opportunities for different stakeholders, create awareness and create an umbrella structure to oversee innovation ecosystem of the country. AIM's flagship schemes include establishing Atal Tinkering Labs and Atal Incubation Centers, providing scaling up support to Established Incubation Centers, and finding ultra-low cost solution to India's most intractable problems through Atal New India Challenges and promoting community innovation through Atal Community Innovation Centers.

2. Atal Tinkering Labs

Atal Tinkering Labs are dedicated works spaces where students (Class 6th to Class 12th) learn innovation skills and develop ideas that will go on to transform India. The labs are powered to acquaint students with state-of-the-art equipment such as 3D printers, robotics & electronics development tools, IoT & sensors etc.

The lab activities are designed to spur the spark of creativity, and go beyond regular curriculum and text book learning. The labs will let students explore skills of future such as design and computational thinking, adaptive learning and artificial intelligence.

Atal Innovation Mission has already set up 3000+ ATLs and is in the process of setting up 10,000 such labs by end of 2019.

The Atal Tinkering Labs are being established in government as well as private schools which are passionate about science and innovation. Each selected school is provided a grant-in-aid that includes a one-time establishment cost of Rs. 10 lakh and operational expenses of Rs. 10 lakh for a maximum period of 5 years. Additional support is also provided by creating resources which will guide schools on concepts of tinkering and the key elements of successfully implementing an Atal Tinkering Lab on the ground.

Operation of the Atal Tinkering Labs will be monitored on a suitable periodic basis by an advisory body comprising of the following suggested members:

- i. Principal of the School as Chairman
- ii. Faculty-in-charge of the ATL as Convener (hereby defined as Atal Tinkering Lab In-Charge)

iii. Representative from local industry/local community/ young innovators/ reputed academia/ alumni as Two Members

iv. Parents of School students as Two Members

3. Mentor India

Mentor India is a strategic nation building voluntary initiative to engage leaders who can guide and mentor students in 3000+ Atal Tinkering Labs and startups/Incubators under the programs of Atal Innovation Mission.

We are looking for leaders who can volunteer on a regular basis in one or more such labs and enable students to experience, learn and practice future skills such as design and computational thinking.

These labs are non-prescriptive by nature, and mentors are expected to be enablers rather than instructors.

Possible areas of contribution could be, but not limited to: a) Technical Knowhow: building prototypes, b) Innovation and Design: inculcating solution-oriented approach, c) Inspirational: leadership and self-motivation, and d) Business and Entrepreneurship: encouraging ideas and team building

Key aspects of the Mentor India program

1. Corporates (including but not limited to corporations, MSMEs, entrepreneurs, innovators, maker-spaces, NGO partners), Government organizations, higher education institutes, academicians (including applicants from research organizations), students from undergraduate and post graduate programs are eligible to apply and become a part of Mentor India. The terms of engagement of becoming a part of Mentor India are elaborated in Terms of Engagement section.

2. The selected mentors are expected to provide mentorship within the outlined areas outlined in the Proposed Areas of Mentorship section.

3. The selected mentors will have to follow certain roles and responsibilities which are outlined in the Proposed Roles and Responsibilities section.

4. Selected mentors are to volunteer their time and services strictly on a pro-bono basis. However, Atal Innovation Mission would like to recognize the work done by mentors in various forms as mentioned in the Proposed Recognition for Mentors section.

5. Atal Innovation Mission will be an enabling agency for Mentor India and work with volunteer mentors / corporates / schools to ensure smooth functioning of the program. In order to assess the impact of the program and contribute towards its improvement, Atal Innovation Mission will monitor the mentoring activities based on a duly formed criteria and feedback on an ongoing and consolidated basis.

6. Mentor India guidelines, including Terms of Engagement, are subject to periodic review in consultation with concerned stakeholders, and may be modified in future.

Terms of Engagement

1. Atal Innovation Mission reserves the right to select the mentors based on a rigorous screening and selection process.

2. The proposed mentoring will be finalized by Atal Innovation Mission, in consultation with respective Atal Tinkering Labs, after successful due diligence of the mentors.

3. Allocation of Atal Tinkering Labs for mentoring to selected mentors will be done strictly by Atal Innovation Mission. While utmost effort will be devoted to ensure selected mentors get the Atal Tinkering Labs of their choice, such a choice cannot be guaranteed. Selected mentors will be asked to confirm their adherence to the selected Atal Tinkering Labs. All such confirmed allocations will be considered final and no modifications will be accommodated subsequently.

4. The selected mentors will be engaged on a pro-bono basis and no financial engagement will be involved at any level from Atal Innovation Mission.

5. The selected mentors will not be allowed to promote their products and / or services inside the school.

6. The in-person interactions with students will strictly take place inside an Atal Tinkering Labs / school premises only, in presence of an Atal Tinkering Lab In-Charge / designated school teacher.

7. No mentor will be permitted to meet or take any school students outside the school premises without the explicit permission of the school principal and the Atal Tinkering Lab In-Charge.

8. The interaction between students and mentors through the portal developed for Mentor India will also be moderated / monitored for suitability of content and language.

9. The selected mentors will work with the respective Atal Tinkering Lab In-Charge to coordinate on the mentoring sessions. The selected mentors and respective Atal Tinkering Lab In-Charge may use the portal developed for Mentor India for such coordination. Any such coordination / modification has to be informed by the selected mentors 48 hours in advance.

10. The selected mentors will have to dedicate time on a regular basis. The selected mentors are expected to spend 1 - 2 hours per week during / after school hours. Furthermore, an ongoing commitment for at least one year with the school is necessary (will typically involve ~40 weeks of academic operations in a year). Selected mentors will have to sign a commitment document to this effect.

11. Selected mentors are also expected to interact with the mentors through the portal developed for Mentor India. These interactions could include supporting and reviewing specific innovation projects, support in innovation competitions, and community outreach. The expected time commitment for such interactions is 30 - 40 hours in a year.
12. The selected mentors will be requested to spread awareness about the program and provide regular feedback to increase the impact of the program.
13. The performance and contributions of selected mentors will be monitored on a regular basis by Atal Innovation Mission. Atal Innovation Mission reserves the right to terminate services of mentors at any point of time without any justification.
14. Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog will not be responsible for the behaviour of the selected mentors. However, selected mentors will be chosen through a stringent selection process which may include telephonic interviews and background checks.
15. In addition, all selected mentors will be to read and sign an Atal Innovation Mission approved child protection policy document and an engagement document before starting their engagement with Atal Tinkering Labs.
16. Safety and security of school students is of utmost importance to Atal Innovation Mission, and hence Atal Innovation Mission reserves the right to take appropriate safety measures in coordination with Atal Tinkering Labs Advisory Committee, local administrative and law enforcement agencies etc.
17. In case of any dispute, the same shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the court of Delhi.

Proposed Areas of Mentorship

The contributions of the selected mentors is expected, but not limited to, one or more of the following areas:

1. Technical Know-How
 - i. Utilize available equipment to build products in various fields, including IoT, electronics, mechatronics, biomedical engineering, 3D printing, robotics, etc.
 - ii. Help to build prototypes using the latest technologies.
2. Innovation and Design
 - i. Focus on problem solving including aspects of design thinking.
 - ii. Inculcating a solution-oriented approach.
3. Inspirational

i. Emphasize on personal journey and holistic soft skill development, learning from failures, and becoming self-motivated to strive for excellence.

ii. Inculcate leadership skills, self-motivation and reflection on oneself

4. Business and Entrepreneurship

i. Encourage students to create a business model in order to form sustainable and successful enterprises

ii. Instil and inspire students to become entrepreneurial leaders and encourage team building

5. Break stereotypes and bias to bring about mind set and behavioral change

Proposed Roles and Responsibilities

1. For engagement of individual mentors

i. In-person mentoring session at least once a week for 1 - 2 hours on an ongoing basis for at least 1 year (typically 40 academic weeks).

ii. Such sessions will be focused on guiding and nurturing students in Atal Tinkering Labs for problem formulation, finding solutions to common problems faced in day to day life, and finally tinkering on ideas converting them into scalable solutions.

iii. Reasonable availability to help students on the portal developed for Mentor India, with typical expected response time of 72 hours from the selected mentors

iv. Provide support and review specific innovation projects. Give constructive feedback to school management/ individual students to allow further improvement at regular intervals.

v. Introduce students to relevant extended community / networks.

vi. Reasonable participation in social media forums organized by Atal Tinkering Labs.

vii. Support the school in reaching out to communities in neighbouring areas.

viii. Help the schools to arrange for sessions in the lab in after school hours or in camp mode or during vacations or on weekends (based on mutual availability of selected mentors and students).

2. For corporations / institutions

Atal Innovation Mission will work with the corporations / institutions to finalise suitable mode of engagement with Atal Tinkering Labs and Mentor India. All such agreement will be captured in a Statement of Intent duly signed by the corporate / institution and Atal Innovation Mission

Proposed Recognition for Mentors

1. Honour board for top mentors: India wide and at company level
2. Meet and greet with prominent dignitaries
3. Round Table with CEO of NITI Aayog / Mission Director of Atal Innovation Mission
4. Invitation to Government of India events
5. Opportunity to experience state-of-the-art equipment in Atal Tinkering Labs