

RESPONSES TO PRE-BID QUERIES (EoI No. 13031/DIT/2026/01 DATED 22-06-2026)

Pre-Bid Meeting held on 25-06-2026

Sl. No	Pre-Bid Question	Response
1	Please clarify whether the corporate/academic partner's 20% contribution (or more) is to be treated as grant, donation, equity-like contribution, CSR contribution, service contribution, sponsorship, or recoverable investment.	Contribution may be in the form of grant, donation, CSR contribution, service contribution or sponsorship to be mutually agreed between the parties.
2	Can the partner's contribution be made partly or fully in-kind through AI platforms, software licenses, cloud/GPU credits, expert manpower, accelerators, training, startup mentorship, and managed services?	Yes, to be mutually agreed.
3	If in-kind contribution is allowed, what valuation methodology will be used and who will certify the value?	Valuation methodology will be based on standard market practice which can be certified through third party.
4	Will the partner's contribution be milestone-based and linked to release of Government of India and UT Government funds?	No
5	What happens if the Government of India or UT Government contribution is delayed? Will partner obligations also be deferred proportionately?	No
6	Is any bank guarantee, performance security, earnest money deposit, or financial undertaking required from the selected partner?	Not Applicable
7	Will GST, TDS, CSR eligibility, or any tax treatment apply to the partner contribution and future revenue streams? And will this be extended to the implementation of the AI projects by the partner's extended arm if CoE is not able to manage the load?	As per applicable rules.

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8	Will the selected partner be allowed to charge government departments for solution development, deployment, cloud/compute usage, licenses, AMC, managed services, and support?To be	To be determined by CoE
9	Assuming the COE does not have capacity/skill to execute solutions identified in the CoE (Skilling/AI development), will the extended arm of the selected partner (which has the required skills) receive right of first refusal or preferred implementation partner status for AI solutions?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
10	Pls confirm if tenders will not be floated separately for the AI related departmental work identified via AICoE. If separate tenders are required for each implementation, what commercial advantage does the selected CoE partner receive in return for its investment?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
11	Can the partner commercialize plug-and-play products developed under the CoE in other Indian states, UTs, PSUs, and international markets?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
12	Can the partner use the resources in AICoE to train their resources (identified for implementation) in AI related work and solutions arrived at as part of the AICoE?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
13	Can CoE developed products be commercialized outside Puducherry by the selected partner? If so, what will be the revenue-sharing model between the partner, CoE, and Government?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
14	Will the selected partner be permitted to generate revenue through paid skilling programs, certifications, hackathons, incubation services, consulting, product licensing, SaaS subscriptions, and AMCs?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
15	Will citizen-facing services be free to citizens? If yes, which department or entity will bear the recurring operating cost?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement

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16	Please clarify the proposed ownership, membership, voting rights, and board representation in the proposed Section 8 company. If it depends on the investment made by the partner, will more investment mean more rights and more board representation?	To be decided by mutual agreement between Government of India. Government of Puducherry and Industry Partner
17	Will the selected industry partner have representation in the Executive Committee and Project Management Committee?	To be decided by mutual agreement.
18	Who will appoint the CEO, CTO, CFO, and other key leadership roles of the CoE?	To be decided by mutual agreement
19	Will the partner have the option to rotate resources out of the CoE and replace them with new resources with time?	To be decided by mutual agreement
20	Will the Section 8 company (CoE) be allowed to enter into service contracts, license agreements, managed service agreements, or revenue-share agreements with the selected industry partner, if necessary?	To be decided by mutual agreement
21	What are the exit provisions if the partner wishes to withdraw after a defined period or if the CoE model changes? Like wise, what are the provisions to increase the investment into the CoE if the partner wishes so?	To be decided by mutual agreement
22	What happens to assets, software, licenses, models, IP, and unfinished projects if the partnership is terminated?	To be decided by mutual agreement
23	Please clarify whether the annual KPIs mentioned in the EOI are mandatory contractual obligations or indicative targets.	The KPIs are indicative targets as mentioned in the AI CoE guidelines of India AI Mission. Release of funds will be linked tom achievements of KPIs.

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24	Will KPI responsibility be shared among Government, CoE management, industry partner, academia, and startups? Will only the selected vendor be responsible for achieving KPIs such as 24 startups incubated, 30 prototypes/products, 10 use cases, 10 IP filings, 300 employment opportunities, and 400/1500 trainees per year?	CoE will be responsible for complying to KPIs
25	What penalties or consequences will apply to the selected partner if KPIs are not achieved due to lack of departmental data, delayed approvals, lack of funds, or low adoption?	To be decided by mutual agreement
26	Will the Government provide department-level business owners, data owners, nodal officers, and budget owners for each use case?	Implementation modalities will be arrived for each Use Case.
27	Will detailed DPRs, solution architecture, implementation plans, and business cases be prepared after selection, or are they expected as part of the EOI submission?	After selection
28	After partner selection, what will be the contracting mechanism for AI implementation projects? What revenue rights will be available to the selected partner for solutions developed, deployed, maintained, or commercialized through the AI CoE?	To be decided by mutual agreement
29	Will work orders be issued directly by the AI CoE, the Directorate of IT, or individual departments?	CoE will issue Work Orders.
30	Will standard government procurement rules apply to all future projects developed through the CoE? Or can the selected partner bring consortium members, OEMs, cloud providers, startups, academic institutions, and specialist subcontractors?	CoE will determine as per policy.
31	Are consortium bids allowed at the EOI stage?	Consortium bids are not allowed.

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32	Will there be a master services agreement defining scope, SLAs, payment terms, liability, IP, confidentiality, and dispute resolution?	To be decided by mutual agreement.
33	What will be the payment cycle for services rendered by the selected partner to the CoE or to government departments?	To be decided by mutual agreement.
34	What datasets are currently available across departments such as health, agriculture, tourism, fisheries, education, urban development, excise, and smart governance?	Departments are owning datasets as per Statutory requirements, Government policy and scheme design
35	Will the Government provide clean, digitized, API-accessible datasets for AI model development?	CoE will work with government with regard to provision of datasets.
36	Who will own raw data, cleaned data, annotated data, synthetic data, derived datasets, AI models, model weights, prompts, workflows, and trained algorithms?	As per data policy of government and mutual agreement between the parties.
37	Will the partner be permitted to use anonymized or non-personal datasets for product improvement and commercialization?	As per data policy of government and mutual agreement between the parties.
38	What data-sharing agreements will be executed between departments, the CoE, and the selected partner?	As per data policy of government and mutual agreement between the parties.
39	Will the CoE be expected to provide specifications for GPU servers, storage, networking, security, backup, disaster recovery, and high-availability infrastructure? Or will the be available upfront?	Compute Infrastructure will be made available as part of India AI Mission by MEiTY.
40	Will the AI CoE be allowed to use public cloud, MeitY-empanelled cloud, NIC/NICSI cloud, private cloud, or hybrid cloud?	Yes, as per Scheme guidelines and prevailing policy.

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41	If hardware and software assets are procured by the selected partner for implementation of the identified AI projects/work, will the assets be owned by the CoE or the selected partner?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
42	Will license renewal, cloud consumption, GPU usage, model API usage, and support costs be treated as pass-through costs or included in the partner's commercial proposal?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
43	Who will own the IP for AI solutions developed by the selected partner under the CoE?	The IP for AI solutions will be owned by CoE.
44	Who will bear the cost of patent, copyright, trademark, and other IP filings?	The patents, copyrights, trademarks and IP costs will be borne by CoE.
45	If the EOI expects 10 IP filings per year, who will be the applicant and beneficiary of such IP?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
Will be 46	Can the partner reuse its pre-existing IP, frameworks, accelerators, models, tools, and platforms while retaining ownership?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
47	Will the CoE receive a perpetual use license for solutions deployed in Puducherry and also retains commercialization rights outside Puducherry?	To be decided with approval of Competent Authority in Government of Puducherry..
48	Can the selected partner take equity, revenue share, or commercial rights in startups incubated through the CoE as part of its seed funding?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
49	Is the seed support budget of Rs. 20 lakh per year fixed, and who will decide allocation to startups?	Industry partner is expected to bring additional seed support from other players and allocation to startups will be decided by CoE

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50	Will training and certification programs be free, subsidized, or paid?	To be decided by CoE on mutual agreement
51	Can the selected partner offer its own certifications, industry certifications, and jointly branded certifications?	To be decided by CoE. on mutual agreement
52	What revenue-sharing model will apply for paid skilling programs delivered to students, government officials, professionals, and industry participants?	To be decided by CoE. on mutual agreement
53	How will the Government ensure department-level adoption and citizen awareness after AI solutions are deployed?	Government will ensure through policy intervention
54	What grievance redressal mechanism will be available if AI-assisted recommendations or decisions adversely affect citizens?	Grievance redressal mechanism will be evolved during implementation.
55	Please provide detailed scoring weights for investment, AI project experience, organization location/global presence, and proposed areas of contribution.	No separate weightage has been assigned to the individual evaluation parameters. The proposals will be evaluated comprehensively by the Evaluation Committee based on the criteria specified in the RFP, taking into account all relevant aspects to identify the proposal(s) that best meet the objectives of the project
56	Can global AI projects be part of the experience of the selected vendor as part of the eligibility criteria?	Yes.
57	Will bidders be required to make a presentation or demo before selection?	Yes, if decided by the department.
58	Is physical submission mandatory in addition to email submission?	Physical submission of documents is mandatory in addition to e-mail submission.
59	What is the exact disbursement schedule for the 20% industry share (Rs. 4 Cr)? Lump sum or milestone-based?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement

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60	Will the industry partner receive any revenue share from AI CoE commercial activities, or is it purely a grant/CSR investment?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
61	Will the Puducherry Government provide tax benefits, land at concessional rates, or other non-monetary incentives?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
62	Is the Rs. 4 Cr industry contribution over 4 years (Rs. 1 Cr/year) fixed, or can partners propose alternate payment schedules?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
63	Will GST be applicable on contributions made by industry partners? What is the tax treatment?	As per provisions of GST Act.
64	What is the IP ownership structure for AI solutions developed by the CoE? Who holds patents and copyrights?	To be decided by CoE.
65	Can the industry partner commercialize AI solutions developed at the CoE outside of Puducherry?	To be decided on case-to case basis by mutual agreement
66	What board representation will the industry partner have on Executive Committee and Project Management Committee?	To be decided by mutual agreement between Government of India. Government of Puducherry and Industry Partner
67	What is the exit clause for industry partners? What happens to their investment if they exit mid-term?	To be decided by mutual agreement between Government of India. Government of Puducherry and Industry Partner
68	Will there be a formal MoU or binding agreement signed after selection? What are penalty clauses for non-performance?	To be decided by mutual agreement between Government of India. Government of Puducherry and Industry Partner
69	Who is responsible for hiring the CEO, CFO and CTO — government or industry partner?	To be decided by mutual agreement between Government of India. Government of Puducherry and Industry Partner
70	Will the government provide any deputed/seconded government officials to the AI CoE?	To be decided by mutual agreement between Government of India. & Government of Puducherry.

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71	Does the industry partner have the authority to hire and fire operational staff independently?	To be decided by CoE.
72	Will the space at PTU/MSME be rent-free for Phase 1, or will rental charges apply from day one?	As per policy of the selected institute.
73	What is the status of GPU server procurement — will it be part of the CAPEX budget or a separate GoI/NICSI arrangement?	To be provided under India AI Mission by Government of India.
74	Is the 12,000 sq. ft. space currently vacant and fit-for-use, or does it require civil/MEP work before occupation?	Site to be finalized.
75	Given the tight selection timeline (bids July 6, selection July 7), when is the expected date for signing the formal partnership agreement?	To be mutually decided.
76	What is the expected go-live date for Phase-1 operational activities?	Already indicated in the EoI document.
77	What happens if KPI targets (24 startups/year, 300 jobs/year) are not met? Are there financial penalties?	To be decided by mutual agreement between Government of India and Government of Puducherry.
78	Are KPIs negotiable during the proposal stage, or are the stated targets fixed?	The KPIs are as per guidelines provided by MeitY, GoI
79	What is the data governance framework for government data shared with the AI CoE? DPDP Act 2023 compliance required?	All applicable policy/laws pertaining to data governance will apply
80	Who is the data custodian for datasets used to train AI models — the government or the CoE?	As per applicable data policy.
81	Will shortlisted organizations be called for a presentation/demonstration before final selection?	Yes, if required by department
82	What exact weightage is given to each selection criterion (investment, AI projects, location, contribution areas)?	No separate weightage has been assigned to the individual evaluation parameters. The proposals will be evaluated comprehensively by the

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		Evaluation Committee based on the criteria specified in the RFP, taking into account all relevant aspects to identify the proposal(s) that best meet the objectives of the project
83	Quantity of GPUs ?	GPUs will be provided as service by India AI Mission.
84	The EOI states that seed support to AI-enabled startups shall be provided by the industry partners. We would like to understand whether this refers to direct financial assistance or if the support may also include non-monetary contributions such as mentoring, technical expertise, infrastructure, incubation support, or other forms of enablement	Partner is expected to bring additional support funding from other industry partner including monetary contributions.
85	As per the EOI, the industry partner is expected to make a minimum investment of ₹4 Crore and provide guidance and support towards establishing the AI CoE. We would appreciate further clarification on the expected benefits or return on investment envisaged for the industry partners, including any revenue-sharing opportunities, commercial engagement models, branding benefits, or other incentives associated with the initiative	To be decided on mutual agreement basis.
86	What is the projected operational lifespan of the CoE	CoE will continue to operate beyond four years.
87	Who will retain ownership of the tools and intellectual property developed during the CoE's tenure	The solutions developed by CoE will be owned by CoE.
88	Following the registration of the Section 8 company, is there an opportunity to immediately initiate pilot testing for existing tools, particularly within the education, healthcare, and tourism sectors	Yes
89	Given the CoE's status as a Section 8 company, how will revenue generated through the implementation of AI tools and investments in AI startups be managed	To be decided by CoE in consultation with Industry partner and Government.