

India AI- NCG CATCH Grant – FAQs

Q. Do applicants need to be India-based, or can foreign entities with Indian partnerships apply?

A. Start-ups, MSMEs, and private limited companies registered under Indian Law are eligible for the application

Q. Are multiple proposals from the same applicant allowed?

A. Yes, multiple proposals from the same applicant are allowed

Q. Can a private hospital apply for the grant, or is it limited to government hospitals only?

A. Yes, private hospitals can apply as a clinical partner as long as other criteria are met.

Q. Can only a software solution be part of this grant, or is a device/hardware required to be the overall solution?

A. Yes, only a software solution provider company can apply as a technology partner, along with hospitals as clinical partners.

Q. Please let us know if the project allows partnership with overseas researchers?

A. Participating entities are expected to be registered in India

Q. Can one organisation apply for multiple areas of innovations- Screening/Diagnostics/Clinical Tx/Patient Engagement/Research/Operational Efficiency/Data Curation? If so, should a separate application have to be done for each area?

A. Yes, an organisation can apply for multiple use cases

Q. What is the Grant duration? 1y or 2y or more?

A. The first tranche is for 6-9 months, and 2nd tranche is subsequently for another 6-9 months

Q. Can an incubator apply for the grant in collaboration with a hospital? If yes, how will the grants be allocated?

A. Yes, the grant application is a joint application with the technical and clinical lead. Allocation is left to the applicant. The milestone and grant utilisation plan are expected to be shared with the CATCH grant committee

Q. What is the Scope of the CATCH grant with respect to AYUSH-based solutions? Are there any regulations or limitations that one needs to look out for?

A. Scope is limited to having an AI-based solution for Cancer care use cases as defined in the detailed document. Please refer to the document for the condition applied

Q. Kindly request if TRL-5 for the Solution is an eligibility criterion, or a well-defined solution to be developed and tested shall suffice to qualify

A. Ideally, a TRL-5 level is required for eligibility; however, if the solution is at the TRL-4 level, you can apply for the grant. The final decision will be taken based on the impact of the solution.

Q. We have developed 2 technologies, first to automate PET CT uptake analysis and second to automate Pap Smear Analysis. These solutions are ready and have been prepared with Indian patient data. Would this

Can Grant help us with clinical validation partnerships in India, as well as the regulatory approval process?

A. Regulatory approval is outside the scope. We recommend partnering with the clinical lead to apply for a grant, or we can connect you with an NCG hospital.

Q. Do we need to collaborate with a Private Hospital for data, or do we only need to provide solutions? We have a ready prototype for this initiative.

A. Data for the solution is expected to come from the clinical lead. The clinical lead can be private hospital

Q. As a working individual, if I want to participate in the challenge independently, do I need to submit an NOC from my company?

A. As an individual, one will not be able to apply. Only registered entities under Indian law are eligible to apply.

Q. What kind of partnership do we need with the clinical lead? Do we also need a partnership with the hospital org?

A. The type of partnership will be left to the technical and clinical lead, as long as the expectations mentioned in the detailed document are met, like de-identified data is made available to AI kosh, and preferential treatment for the license of the solution to the clinical lead.

Q. I am a full-time research scholar pursuing a PhD. Am I eligible to apply for the grant? I am doing research in biomedical image analysis

A. As an individual, one is not eligible to apply for the grant.

Q. Do we have to work on data? We have worked and published papers in the healthcare system and are working on different datasets. What type of partnership is required with healthcare?

A. The type of partnership will be left to the technical and clinical lead, as long as the expectations mentioned in the detailed document are met, like de-identified data is made available to AI kosh, and preferential treatment for the license of the solution to the clinical lead

Q. Is it mandatory for the application to be a joint submission with a hospital partner?

A. While applying, if the technical lead does not have a clinical lead partner, the NCG team will share the use case with a group of hospitals and interested hospitals will be shared with the technical lead and the technical lead and work with the hospital to finalise the clinical lead for the grant.

Q. We are exploring an idea in patient engagement and are interested in applying for the India AI grant. Could you kindly clarify whether an individual with an idea is eligible to apply?

A. Applicant must be a registered entity under Indian law.

Q. Do we need to submit a working prototype while applying for the grant? We have developed an AI model for detecting pneumonia using X-rays. We can also develop a model for the oncology domain for early detection. Does this suffice for POC for the application?

A. Please identify the clinical lead and finalise the use case for cancer care.

Q. As Joint applications are mandated, if the AI solution has already undergone clinical validations. Should we consider re-engaging with the same hospital

A. You can apply and see if it calls for a new scope of implementation.

Q. Does the grant support the design of sensors along with the software?

A. Write to NCG with specifics (ceo.kcdo@ncgindia.org)

(partnerships@ncgindia.org), And we could answer.

Q. What is the Grant duration? 1y or 2y or more?

A. 12-18 months

Q. Would it be a catch grant or a scale-up grant? Is the application procedure the same?

A. Scale-up is at the end of 1 year, and that too based on the deliverables as per the milestone committed and impact. Application Process

Q. Is there a sample application or template available?

A. No, the ideal way is to work with the clinical lead to come up with a use case and work jointly on the solution.

Q. Can one organisation apply for multiple areas of innovation?

A. Yes, multiple applications are allowed.

Q. Does an AI solution, which already has multiple regulatory approvals such as CSCDO, US FDA, CE MDR, etc, need to be clinically validated under this NCG grant under Tranche 1/2 (6-9 months duration)?

A. Not required at TRL 5.

Q. Could you please clarify the following points regarding the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) requirements: What is the minimum TRL expected at the time of application submission? Is being at TRL5 mandatory for applying?

A. Trl5 and above. In the first catch grant call, we are not looking at piloting and developing. We want to focus on accelerating the implementation of already formed technology solutions. But you are free to write to NCG and share your specific technology level, and we will respond.

Q. Can we develop an AI model for Indian patient specimens in coordination with a cancer institute for pathology solutions? Can we participate in the grant, or help us with an MoU for doing a study

A. Yes, the MOU is between the tech partner and the health care provider. We can offer guidelines.

Q. If the AI project is expected to reach TRL-8, how much development time would the organisation have, assuming the development process starts from today? Your guidance on this will help us align our planning and development roadmap accordingly.

A. The Grant committee will not be able to help with TRL level achievement.

Q. Can we develop an AI model for Indian patient specimens in coordination with a cancer institute for pathology solutions? Can we participate in the grant, or help us with an MoU for doing a study? Asking this because on the website, you say exempted if already funded by the government.

A. Yes, the existing model can be trained for India-based specimens, based on the proposed impact and solution application will be selected. The MoU

between the technical lead and clinical lead has to be taken care of by the respective leads; the committee can only guide.

Q. Is co-funding from other sources allowed?

A. Yes

Q. Will there be in-kind support (e.g., mentoring, access to datasets, clinical sites)?

A. Yes, institutional support such as access to NCG hospitals, mentorship, program oversight and outreach support will be provided.

Q. Are there follow-up funding opportunities after the pilot?

A. Post-pilot selected solutions are eligible for a scale-up grant of up to 1 CR.

Q. What assistance can we expect from the CATCH team for the selected projects from a clinical validation, regulatory approvals and market adoption perspective?

A. Yes, institutional support such as access to NCG hospitals, mentorship, program oversight and outreach support will be provided for market adoption. Timelines and Deliverables

Q. Will applicants get access to anonymised cancer datasets from NCG?

A. Each technical lead must work with the clinical lead (Hospitals) to use the required dataset as per the IEC guidelines and state regulations of the clinical partner's location, as health is a state subject.

Q. What are the IP and equity rules, ownership grounds

A. NCG does not ask for ownership.

Q. What does IP Rights will belong to investigators mean?

A. NCG does not hold IP rights for having funded the research. Post Engagements.

Q. Will NCG help in scaling the validated solution to its member hospitals?

A. Yes, visibility on the India AI, NCG, and KCDO platforms to promote uptake and ecosystem engagement.

Q. Are there IP (Intellectual Property) ownership guidelines?

A. IP and Commercialisation: Awardees will retain ownership of any IP generated; however, they will be required to offer preferred pricing and/or non-exclusive licensing to participating clinical partners. Awardees shall contribute anonymised data to AIKosh (India's AI datasets platform) and NCG for broader ecosystem learning.

Q. Do we have any framework that can guide the startups for developing the AI applications (after say, identification of the problem to be solved) that can combine the technical, clinical validation and implementation part of the journey

A. Problem or use case identification must be done with the clinical lead

Q. Is there a framework for the nationwide implementation of a solution, and post-implementation support?

A. Yes, institutional support such as access to NCG hospitals, mentorship, program oversight and outreach support will be provided for market adoption.

Q. How & what support do we get in screening for cancer? We have a platform which can connect the caregivers with the cancer patients with AI integrated in it. Please guide.

A. Please team up with a clinical partner and submit the proposal. If you don't have a partner, please submit the proposal, and the NCG-KCDO will try to match you with a relevant clinical partner.

Q. Does the Grant also support creating a framework for federated learning/development?

A. The grant is focused on AI solution development, not on building broad frameworks.

Q. Given the state of EMR in the hospitals, the greatest challenge is to digitise the existing records for the hospitals; The cost of digitisation is quite expensive if the records span multiple years. Is there an open-source solution that we can use to get data from scanned data?

A. Data collection and digitisation must work with the clinical lead on what solution will work for it, based on ethical committee approval.

Q. Can the application form be saved and completed later?

A. No, the application must be filled out and submitted in a single session; it cannot be saved and resumed later.