

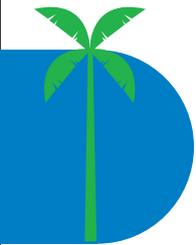


Kerala State Planning Board



K E R A L A
LOOKSAHEAD
FEBRUARY 1-3 2021

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
AND CONSULTATION
KERALA STATE PLANNING BOARD**



CONCEPT NOTE FOR IT/ITES INDUSTRY SESSIONS

The Government of Kerala is committed to increasing and developing the productive forces of the State. As part of this commitment, the Government of Kerala recognises the important role of the Information Technology sector as a key element for Kerala's growth. During its period in office it has pro-actively assisted the growth of this sector, and has been committed to continued investment in infrastructure, enhancing Kerala's digital connectivity and networking, undertaking initiatives to upgrade the quality of skilled human resources from Kerala, and reaching out to investors from different parts of India and internationally to invest in the State. The State has registered significant gains and progress in these efforts.

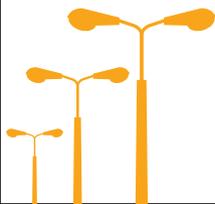
Alongside these initiatives, the Government has also invested strongly in the start-up sector, and the Kerala Startup Mission has won national recognition for its performance. The start-up sector is closely connected to the IT sector and the development of start-ups is widely acknowledged as essential to the growth of IT.

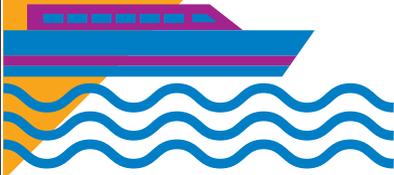
The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have had serious consequences for the IT sector, especially for the many small and medium firms that are part of the State's IT ecosystem. There were recessionary trends in the global economy even before the pandemic struck, and their impact on Kerala's IT sector was a matter of concern. However, in India and globally, several IT firms have managed to not only cope with the stresses but also register strong growth in business and revenues.

In order to maintain and enhance the momentum of development of Kerala's IT sector, it is necessary to identify new growth areas for the IT industry in the State. We must also to promote Kerala as a IT destination, emphasising its strengths.

The following themes have been identified for the IT sessions of the proposed conference.

1. **Winners and Losers in the IT sector:** The recent recession and pandemic have had an unequal impact on different sectors of the IT industry as a whole. Understanding the impact of recent trends on diverse sub-the industry will help the State to focus its efforts in attracting new and viable investment in the sector.
2. **Global Digital Transformation Hub for Conventional Sectors:** Several sectors of industry and business are undergoing substantial digital transformation to stay competitive. Automobile, healthcare, hospitality and tourism etc. are some of the early adopters of digital transformation. Kerala has made an entry into this with Nissan Motors choosing Trivandrum as their first Global Digital Centre to develop new e-mobility solutions. What are the other sectors that can be identified in which leading enterprises can be attracted to set up their digital transformation knowledge centres in Kerala? To what extent can Kerala attract attention and investment as a Global Digital Transformation Hub in the region?

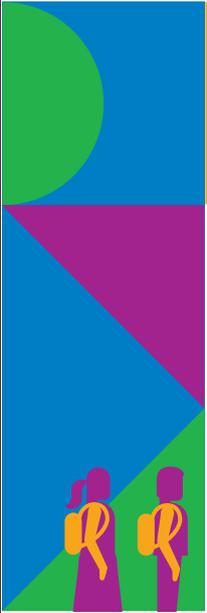




3. New work patterns and their impact on IT infrastructure: Kerala has thus far invested in high-quality infrastructure in centralised locations for the IT sector. However, the widespread recourse to work-from-home has changed our perceptions about future investment in such central locations. What are the current developments and the value of investing further in new options such as work-near-home, decentralized work spaces, and the use of the State's tourism potential for developing Kerala as a "workation" (work+vacation) destination?
4. R&D in the IT sector: Kerala needs fresh effort in research and development in the IT sector that would further contribute to its growth in the State as well as adding to the S&T research infrastructure. The network of engineering institutions and the newly inaugurated Digital University can provide base for such an effort. What shape should such an initiative to build R&D in the state take? What institutional form should it have?
5. Kerala and Industrial Revolution 4.0: New trends in robotics and artificial intelligence (AI) are key to the future of IT. There has already been enthusiasm in Kerala in this field among start-ups. It is important to survey trends and specific possibilities for the Kerala IT sector in these fields.
6. Electronic Component Manufacturing Supply Chain: The lack of an electronic component supply chain is currently a barrier to further development of start-ups and innovation hubs. However, due to some pioneering efforts, Kerala has developed considerable capacities in the electronics component sector including some of the best electronic R&D facilities under CDAC, India's largest incubator for start-ups in electronics and high end digital fabrication facilities. How can these be utilised to further develop a supply chain of electronic component manufacturers and high quality start-ups and SMEs in electronic hard ware sector in Kerala?
7. Creating a Fab-City: India's major barrier to excellence in electronic manufacturing is the near-total lack of high-quality fabrication facilities for chips and microprocessors. Can Kerala plan a state of the art foundry for creating large scale electronic chips, sensors and microprocessors? Can the State create a Fab-City through public-private partnership State to leapfrog into the hardware sector?

The IT component of the conference will be conducted over multiple sessions. There will be two thematic deep-dive sessions, one on the "software" aspect, (January 24, 2021) covering the first four themes and the second the "hardware" dimension (January 27, 2021) covering the last three themes. In the third session, (February 2, 2021) the key conclusions and recommendations of the thematic sessions will be presented for final discussions, leading to an overall conclusion on strategies for the future as the main outcome of the conference.





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