विदेश मंत्रालय, नई दिल्ली
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
NEW DELHI

**No. SCO/106/10/2021** **27 December, 2023**

The Ministry of External Affairs of Republic of India, presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Republic of Turkiye in India and has the honour to convey that India plans to hold the 4th edition of the **SCO Start-up Forum** on **31 January, 2024** in **New Delhi**. The Administrative Circular containing the program, tentative timelines and topics of discussion at the Start-up Forum is enclosed herewith.

2. Nodal points for the Forum are given below:

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Asst. Manager Start-up India,
Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)
Ministry of Commerce (MoC)
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3. The Ministry requests the assistance of the esteemed Embassy of the Republic of Turkiye for circulating the information on the SCO Start-up Forum 4.0 to the concerned stakeholders in your country and share the list of interested participants to the SCO Division of MEA as per the timelines mentioned in the Administrative Circular.

4. The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the Republic of Turkiye in India, the assurance of its highest consideration.

Embassy of the Republic of Turkiye
New Delhi

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सत्यमेव जयते

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Government of India

# SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION

## SCO STARTUP FORUM 4.0

## ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation, the creation of which was announced on 15th June 2001 in Shanghai (China) by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan. It was preceded by the Shanghai Five mechanism. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter was signed during the St. Petersburg SCO Heads of State meeting in June 2002 and entered into force on 19 September 2003.

The SCO's main goals are as follows: strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness among the member states; promoting their effective cooperation in politics, trade, the economy, research, technology, and culture, as well as in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, and other areas; making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security, and stability in the region; and moving towards the establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order.

## 1.2 Current Members of SCO

| Member | Country | |
|---|---|---|
| Member States | 1. | Republic of India |
| | 2. | Islamic Republic of Iran |
| | 3. | Republic of Kazakhstan |
| | 4. | People's Republic of China |
| | 5. | Kyrgyz Republic |
| | 6. | Islamic Republic of Pakistan |
| | 7. | Russian Federation |
| | 8. | Republic of Tajikistan |
| | 9. | Republic of Uzbekistan |
| Observer States | 10. | Islamic Republic of Afghanistan |
| | 11. | Republic of Belarus |
| | 12. | Mongolia |
| Dialogue Partners | 13. | Republic of Azerbaijan |
| | 14. | Republic of Armenia |
| | 15. | Kingdom of Cambodia |
| | 16. | Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal |
| | 17. | Republic of Turkey |
| | 18. | Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka |
| | 19. | Kingdom of Saudi Arabia |
| | 20. | State of Qatar |
| | 21. | Arab Republic of Egypt |
| | 22. | Republic of Maldives |
| | 23. | Kingdom of Bahrain |
| | 24. | United Arab Emirates |
| | 25. | State of Kuwait |

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| | |
|---|---|
| | 26. Republic of the Union of Myanmar |

## 2. SCO Startup Engagements by India

All Member States agreed to create a Special Working Group for Startups and Innovation (SWG) at the Summit of SCO Heads of State in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on 16th September 2022. Given the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship in driving and diversifying an economy, India had proposed this initiative in 2020 to create a new pillar of cooperation between the SCO Member States. The SWG was created with the vision of fostering collaboration among SCO Member States, to not only benefit the startup ecosystem, but also accelerate regional economic development. After multiple rounds of meetings chaired by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Government of India, the Member States decided to approve and adopt the Regulations of the SWG to be permanently chaired by India in SCO.

DPIIT has organised various initiatives for the startup ecosystems of the SCO Member States since 2020, including three editions of the SCO Startup Forum. By leading such engagements, India undertook an opportunity to expand the innovation footprint, knitting the whole ecosystem together and inspiring other SCO Member States to take up similar programs. The startup engagements are organised by India with the following objectives:

- Empower the local startup ecosystems in the SCO Member States
- Provide value to startups through mentoring and enabling access to investor and corporate engagement activities
- Solve social problems through innovative solutions and exchange knowledge on how institutional interventions can be introduced to support the startup ecosystem

### 2.1 SCO Startup Forum 1.0 (October 2020)

DPIIT hosted the first-ever SCO Startup Forum on 27th October 2020. The SCO Startup Forum laid the foundation for multilateral cooperation and engagement for startups among the SCO Member States. Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, and Textiles, Government of India, Shri Piyush Goyal, SCO Secretary-General, His Excellency Vladimir Norov, and Secretary, DPIIT, Dr. Guruprasad Mohapatra, were among the dignitaries present during the launch of the SCO Startup Forum 2020.

The Forum was one of its kind- the virtual platform was customized to represent Indian culture in augmented reality. The Forum had 1 plenary session and 6 simultaneous activity zones wherein 11 different activities were held within 3.5 hours in three languages- English, Mandarin, and Russian. A fleet of over 14 Russian and Mandarin interpreters supported the live interpretation throughout the journey of the SCO Startup Forum making it more accessible.

The SCO Startup Forum housed a Startup Showcase built to provide a holistic and interactive 3D environment. 90 startups from 4 SCO Member States exhibited their products/ services as part of the virtual startup showcase. 12 Startups from 4 SCO Member States were also given an opportunity to pitch their idea in front of a Jury

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consisting of renowned professionals and industrialists. Further, 8 Panel Discussions on various areas of cooperation such as Sharing Best Practices, Promoting Women Entrepreneurship, Procuring Social Innovations, and building successful incubators, among others, were conducted by 49 Speakers from 7 SCO Member States.

The Forum also received global participation- 2,600+ observers from 60 countries and 6 continents registered for the SCO Startup Forum. The top five registrations were received from the Republic of India, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and the People's Republic of China.

## 2.2 SCO Startup Forum 2.0 (October 2021)

After the success of the first-ever SCO Startup Forum launched in 2020, DPIIT hosted the second edition of the SCO Startup Forum on the 27th - 28th of October 2021. The SCO Startup Forum 2021 builds on the foundation, laid last year, for multilateral cooperation and engagement for startups among the SCO Member States. Hon'ble Minister of State, Commerce and Industry, Shri Som Parkash, SCO Secretary-General, His Excellency Vladimir Norov, and Secretary, DPIIT, Shri Anurag Jain, were among the dignitaries present during the launch of the SCO Startup Forum 2021.

The two-day Forum was held virtually through a customized platform representing the Indian culture in augmented reality. The Forum saw participation from 5,800+ startup ecosystem stakeholders from over 28+ countries and 169 Startups from 5 SCO Member States showcased their innovations on SCO Startup Showcase. Discussions on topics pertinent to the development of the startup ecosystem such as Multilateral Incubator Programs and Procuring Social Innovation were undertaken to explore synergies among the countries. These power-packed discussions saw a representation of 16 subject-matter-experts from all eight SCO Member States including a virtual incubation tour of an Indian Incubator. Further, a Knowledge Sharing Workshop was organised to build capacity among the SCO founders. The workshop covered topics such as turning an idea into a billion-dollar business, growing, and scaling your startup and helping startups go global which were delivered by leading Indian startup founders such as Pocket Aces, BankBazaar, Bellatrix Aerospace, and leaders from marquee organizations such as IVCA, Microsoft for Startups, and CISCO LaunchPad.

SCO Startup Forum 2021 launched the **SCO Startup Hub**, a single point of contact for the SCO startup ecosystem that provides insights into the startup ecosystems of the 8 Member States. The microsite serves as an active engagement platform and a thorough digital handbook leading to the entrepreneurial world of the SCO Member States. Link: https://www.startupindia.gov.in/content/sih/en/sco.html

## 2.3 Meeting with SCO Ambassadors (June 2022)

DPIIT organised a meeting with the ambassadors of the SCO Member States, Dialogue Partners, and Observer States on 25th June 2022. The Ambassadors and their teams from 15 countries visited Invest India office to discuss cross-border startup engagements and the SCO Startup Forum 3.0. The discussions revolved around the mentorship program to be organised by Startup India. Some countries shared their best practices as well. For example, Innovation Factories in Iran, the Tashkent IT Park in Uzbekistan, and Tax provisions in Kazakhstan, among others.

The Startup India website provides real-time translation in 11 languages followed in the participant countries – which was an eye-catcher to all the foreign delegates. The

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meeting was succeeded by a showcase wherein all the ambassadors tried out the products made by Indian innovators.

## 2.4 Focused Mentorship Program (July-September 2023)

A 3-month long virtual mentorship series **'Starting-Up'** was organised for the nominated startups, to build capacity among the SCO Startup founders. This series provided guidance and mentorship to aspiring entrepreneurs. The Virtual mentorship workshops comprised of 1-hour long sessions every week over 3 months i.e. a total of 12 sessions. The workshops highlighted important fundamental concepts and building blocks of successful startups. Startups were individually handheld, and their queries were addressed by experts over the 3 months. A total of 100+ hours of mentorship was provided to the startups. Below mentioned is the structure of the mentorship series:

- **Month 1- Entrepreneurship Fundamentals**: The 4 sessions focused on highlighting essential concepts such as developing a business model from an idea, identifying the target audience, creating a pitch deck, etc.
- **Month 2- Entrepreneurship Intermediate**: The next 4 sessions were an advanced version of the previous session. Concepts such as term sheets, generating revenue, important financial metrics, diversifying business, raising capital, etc were covered in these sessions.
- **Month 3- Entrepreneurship Advanced:** The last 4 sessions were focused on how to scale up a startup. Concepts such as building up teams, scaling business operations, and going global were covered in these sessions.

## 2.5 Discussion on Draft Regulations of the SWG (March 2023)

DPIIT organised various meetings with the Member States to discuss the adoption of Draft Regulations for nominating India as the permanent chair for the Special Working Group on Startups and Innovation (SWG) under SCO. These meetings were chaired by the Joint Secretary, DPIIT.

After four rounds of discussions in the hybrid format, over a span of 2 months, the Member States decided to approve and adopt the Regulations of the Special Working Group on Startups and Innovation to be permanently chaired by India in SCO at the meeting of Council of SCO National Coordinators (CNC, 29 Apr – 3 May 2023) preceding the meeting of SCO Foreign Ministers (4-5 May 2023) in Panaji, Goa.

## 2.6 SCO Startup Forum 3.0 (April 2023)

DPIIT organised the SCO Startup Forum 2023 on 11th April 2023 in New Delhi, India. The forum saw physical participation from the SCO Member States. Shri Som Parkash, Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, delivered the keynote address highlighting the role of Startup Ecosystem in development of a nation and past initiatives such as Startup Forum 2020, Startup Forum 2021, and SCO Mentorship Series for SCO Member States. Smt. Manmeet Kaur Nanda, the then Joint Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, addressed the delegation about India's Startup Journey and various initiatives undertaken by DPIIT to help startups scale up. The delegates later attended a workshop on 'Role of Bilateral and Multilateral Engagement in developing startup ecosystem' followed by an incubator visit at IIT Delhi.

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## 2.7 1st Meeting of the SWG: Growing from Roots (November 2023)

The first Meeting of the SCO Special Working Group on Startups and Innovation (SWG), permanently chaired by India, was organised on the theme 'Growing from Roots'. The meeting was organised to discuss best practices for building intelligent agriculture systems and farms while promoting the application of technologies and development of primary sectors.

25 representatives from the 9 SCO Member States participated in the meeting and presented their respective startup ecosystems and prospective areas of collaboration related to the agriculture and animal husbandry sectors covered in the theme. Several modern research and technology promotion and application platforms were discussed benefiting all SCO countries.

## 3. SCO Startup Forum 4.0

The fourth edition of the SCO Startup Forum will be hosted in **Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi, India in the last week of January 2024** a physical format. The representatives from all the SCO Nations will be invited to attend the business-to-business event.

### 3.1 Objectives

Below are some of the key outcomes of the activities organized as a part of the SCO Startup Forum 4.0:

i. Platform to share knowledge, expertise and best practices in the domain of entrepreneurship and innovation to build knowledge-exchange systems

ii. Bringing in key stakeholders from each nation to work closely with each other and provide local entrepreneurs with much-needed support and market access

iii. Increase scaling opportunities for startups by providing solutions in the field of social innovation and provide the Governments with a plethora of innovative solutions

iv. Create open procurement channels to enable matchmaking for procuring innovative solutions from startups

v. Facilitate cross-border incubation and acceleration programs that will enable the startups to explore international markets and get focused mentorship

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## 3.2 Tentative Agenda

| January 2024 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Duration (IST)** | **Tentative Agenda** | |
| 11:00 – 11:05 hrs | **Welcome Note**<br>*By Shri Sanjiv, Joint Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade* | **Startup Showcase** |
| 11:05 – 11:15 hrs | **Context Setting for SCO Startup Forum 4.0**<br>*By Dr. M. Anand Prakash, Joint Secretary, SCO Division, Ministry of External Affairs* | |
| 11:15 – 11:25 hrs | **Special Address**<br>*By Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh, Secretary, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry* | |
| 11:25 – 11:35 hrs | **Address by SCO Secretariat**<br>*By H.E. Zhang Ming, Secretary-General, SCO Secretariat* | |
| 11:35 – 11:45 hrs | **Special Address**<br>*By Shri Som Parkash, Minister of State, Ministry of Commerce and Industry* | |
| 11:45 – 12:00 hrs | **Keynote Address**<br>*By Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Textiles* | |
| 12:00 – 13:00 hrs | **Introduction address by the Delegates** | |
| 13:00 – 14:00 hrs | **Lunch** | |
| 14:00 – 15:00 hrs | **Knowledge Sharing Workshop**<br>*A workshop to build capacity among the SCO Startup founders shall be organized* | |
| 15:00 – 17:30 hrs | **Exposure Visit** | |
| 17:30 – 18:30 hrs | **Vote of Thanks**<br>*By Startup India Team* | |
| 20:00 – 22:00 hrs | **Dinner** | |

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**Activity Brief**

- **Startup Showcase:** The startup showcase will see a footfall from startup ecosystem enablers and will be a great opportunity for the startups to gain visibility, network with potential investors and partners, and receive valuable feedback on their products or services. Atleast one startup from each Nation can showcase their product/service during the Forum.
- **Knowledge Sharing Workshop:** 1 hour workshop may be taken by the sector expert detailing on the nuances of building a successful startup and sharing best practices for enabling Nation's startup ecosystem. The workshop will also have case studies of successful startups to build a real-time perspective. Additionally, Nations may express their topics and sectors of interest for the same.
- **Exposure Visit:** Participants will visit a leading unit of a Startup/Incubator in Delhi (NCR) to receive a first-hand ecosystem experience. Through this tour, the participants will be equipped with the know-how of entrepreneurship and taking their businesses global. The tour will focus on highlighting the nuances of meticulous planning, guidance, and opportunities required to support startups at the scaling stage.

## 3.3 General Arrangement

Below mentioned are the general arrangements being made for organizing the SCO Startup Forum 4.0

- **Event Hosting**
  - The SCO Startup Forum 4.0 shall be hosted by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Government of India, and the Startup India Team.
- **Participants of SCO Startup Forum**
  - Atleast 2 representatives from each country may participate in the event
  - In the delegation of two participants, atleast one participant may be a representative of startup nodals/agencies (counterparts of Startup India) and one representative can be a startup founder/representative
  - Nominations may be shared by 23rd December 2023 as per Annexure 1 and 2 at sco.startup@investindia.org.in
  - Participants need to be 18+ years of age
  - Please share all information in English
- **Knowledge Exchange Workshop**
  - The Startup Nodal Agency of each SCO Nation may give suggested topic of interest and relevance for knowledge sharing by 23rd December 2023 sco.startup@investindia.org.in.

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## Annexure 1: Format for Startup Nomination

**Instructions**

- Please share all the details below in the prescribed format
- Please share the information in English
- Deadline for submission of the information by 23rd December 2023 at sco.startup@investindia.org.in

| Startup Details | |
|---|---|
| Country Name | |
| Name of Startup | |
| Startup Stage (Select one) | Ideation/Early Traction/Validation/Scaling |
| Startup Sector | |
| Age of the startup | |
| What kind of innovation do you have? (Select one) | Product/Service |
| What problem is your innovation solving? (Max 200 words) | |
| Give a brief description of about your innovation (Max 350 words) | |
| Picture of your product/service | |
| Social Media Handles (Website and LinkedIn) | |
| **Representative Details** | |
| Name of Representative | |
| Gender | Male/Female/Others |
| Please share a passport picture | |
| Age | |
| Phone Number | |
| Email ID | |

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## Annexure 2: Format for Nodal Representative Nomination

**Instructions**

- Please share all the details below in the prescribed format
- Please share the information in English
- Deadline for submission of the information by 23rd December 2023 at sco.startup@investindia.org.in

| Particulars | |
|---|---|
| Country Name | |
| Name of Representative | |
| Name of Organisation | |
| Contact Number | |
| Contact Email | |

## Annexure 3: Format for Suggestive Knowledge Sharing Workshop

**Instructions**

- Please share all the details below in the prescribed format
- Please share the information in English
- Deadline for submission of the information by 23rd December 2023 at sco.startup@investindia.org.in

| S.No | Topic of Interest | Sub-Topic |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Example: How to Create a Pitch Deck | Business Models and Valuations |

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