

FAQS – INTERCONNECT INNOVATION CATALYST PROGRAM

A. Eligibility & Application

1. What kind of projects are eligible for the Interconnect Innovation Catalyst Program?

Projects must be in the healthcare domain within the minimum TRL-4. Projects involving public health problem statements and implementation challenges are also eligible.

Projects should go beyond pure ideation and demonstrate early validation or a credible pathway to real-world testing.

2. Who can apply for the Fellowship?

The Program is open to:

- Innovators and entrepreneurs
- Principal Investigators (PIs) from research institutes
- Healthcare startups
- Clinicians and physicians from medical colleges
- Public health professionals

Applicants must demonstrate ownership and responsibility for the proposed project.

3. Can I apply as a team?

The Program is awarded to individual innovators only. Teams may support the work, but one individual must apply as the main applicant innovator.

The innovator will be solely responsible for milestones, reporting, and outcomes. Program funds are disbursed to the individual Fellow (in their bank account).

4. Can someone apply with just an idea?

Early ideas are encouraged to be shared on the Interconnect platform to find collaborators and refine concepts.

Idea-stage concepts are not eligible for the Program. Projects must be TRL-4 or higher.

5. Is the Program open to non-Indian applicants?

Yes. Applicants of any nationality may apply. However the project work must be executed in India, field validation, pilots, or implementation should be India-based.

B. Funding & Support

6. What is the Program grant amount?

Each innovator will receive up to ₹30 lakhs over one year.

- Disbursement is quarterly
- Each tranche is linked to pre-defined milestones

- Healthcare startups
- Continued support depends on satisfactory progress

7. Is additional funding available for prototypes or pilots?

At this stage the Program provides a quarterly grant only. Innovators are encouraged to leverage BFI's ecosystem and Interconnect's network to explore co-funding, pilots, or partnerships.

8. What kind of mentorship is provided?

Through BFI's ecosystem and Interconnect's network, Innovators will receive access to the following through

- Domain experts in healthcare and life sciences
- Experts in commercialization, policy, and technology
- Tailored mentorship aligned to the project's stage and needs

9. Will Innovators get access to labs, test beds, or incubation?

The Program does not guarantee incubation or infrastructure access. Wherever relevant, BFI may facilitate introductions through the Interconnect partner network. Access depends on project requirements and partner availability.

10. Can a Program be terminated mid-cycle?

Yes. The Program may be paused or terminated in cases of:

- Non-performance or repeated milestone failure
- Misuse of funds
- Ethical or compliance concerns

C. Program Structure, Progress & Deliverables

11. What are the expectations from selected Innovators?

- Progress is evaluated against agreed milestones
- Challenges and risks are discussed
- Mentorship, course correction, or strategic inputs are provided as required
- Disbursement decisions are linked to review outcomes

12. What happens during the quarterly reviews?

Innovators are expected to:

- Submit a milestone-based execution plan
- Participate in quarterly reviews
- Actively refine the project toward real-world use or scale-up
- Engage meaningfully with the Interconnect platform and BFI network

13. What are the expected outputs at the end of the Program?

Outputs may include (depending on project type):

- Validated prototypes or pilots
- Evidence of clinical, public health, or market relevance

- Partnerships or deployment readiness
- Clear next-step roadmap for scale or follow-on funding

D. Intellectual Property & Compliance

14. Who owns the intellectual property (IP) developed during the Program?

All IP remains with the Fellow. Neither BVT nor BFI claim ownership of IP generated during the Program. Innovators must disclose any pre-existing IP or institutional, employer, or collaborator agreements that may affect ownership.

15. Does the Program take equity?

No. The program does not take equity.

E. Duration, Extensions & Overlap

16. What if my project requires more than 12 months?

The Program duration is one year. No-cost extensions may be considered in exceptional cases. Follow-on support may be explored through BFI or external networks, based on performance and readiness.

17. Can I apply if I am already incubated or funded elsewhere?

Yes, provided that:

- There is no conflict of interest
- The Program supports a distinct scope of work
- All existing funding and incubation support are fully disclosed.

F. Selection Process

18. How are Innovators selected?

Applications are evaluated by an expert panel based on:

- Innovation and problem relevance
- Potential impact
- Feasibility and execution capability
- Applicant motivation and commitment

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to:

- Present/Pitch their project
- Participate in interviews with the Selection Committee

19. Can I reapply if not selected?

Yes. Applicants who are not selected may reapply in future Program cohorts after one year.