

Technology Business Incubator – Malnad College of Engineering (TBI-MCE)

Managed by

ME-RIISE FOUNDATION

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

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1. About Technology Business Incubator– Malnad College of Engineering (TBI-MCE)

Technology Business Incubator– Malnad College of Engineering (TBI-MCE), managed by ME-RIISE Foundation at Malnad College of Engineering, Hassan, is operating with the support of the Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS), Department of Electronics, IT, Biotechnology and Science & Technology, Government of Karnataka. The initiative aims to strengthen the innovation and startup ecosystem in the Malnad region by providing a structured incubation environment, access to technical facilities, mentorship, business support, market linkages, and seed funding opportunities. The collaboration brings together Government, academic institution, and incubation entity to promote technology-led entrepreneurship, capacity building, and commercialization of innovations addressing regional and national development priorities.

TBI-MCE serves as a dedicated platform to identify, nurture, and support innovation-driven entrepreneurs. The incubator provides an enabling environment where ideas can evolve into prototypes, prototypes can mature into products, and products can scale into sustainable businesses. It offers structured guidance, technical support, startup mentorship, access to laboratories and research facilities, business development assistance, and seed funding support to innovators at various stages of their entrepreneurial journey.

Positioned within an academic ecosystem enriched with experienced faculty, diverse technical expertise, and student talent, TBI-MCE encourages interdisciplinary innovation. The incubator prioritizes high-impact sectors not limited to Agri-Tech, Healthcare Technology, Renewable Energy Systems, and Smart Systems, which are vital to both regional development and national growth priorities. By supporting innovators from ideation to commercialization, TBI-MCE contributes to:

- Strengthening the startup and innovation culture within educational institutions and communities
- Creating employment opportunities
- Promoting research commercialization and technology transfer
- Empowering rural and emerging entrepreneurs to develop market-ready solutions
- Enabling self-sustaining and scalable startup ventures

Through mentorship, incubation, acceleration programs, pilot deployment support, and structured seed fund assistance, the incubator ensures that startups can confidently progress through each stage of development and enter the market with validated, robust, and competitive solutions.

2. Priority Sectors of TBI-MCE

TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE Foundation prioritizes incubation support in four core sectors and another sector of MSME that have strong relevance to regional needs, national missions, and scalable commercial potential.

Sector	Focus Areas
Agri-Tech	Smart farming systems, Precision agriculture, Post-harvest processing solutions, Agri-supply chain digitization, Water & soil sensing, Agri-drones and allied areas
Healthcare Technology	Early disease screening systems, Point-of-care diagnostic devices, Telemedicine platforms, Assistive medical devices, Health analytics and wearable monitoring and allied areas
Renewable Energy Systems	Solar automation, Energy storage and management systems, Microgrid solutions, Smart metering, EV charging ecosystems, Waste-to-energy products and allied areas
Smart Systems	IoT-enabled automation, AI/ML-driven decision systems, Robotics, Smart infrastructure solutions, Environmental sensing, Factory automation, web based solutions and allied areas
MSME Development	Helping MSMEs in the region to grow through structured support, capacity building, technology adoption, and access to incubation resources and mentorship

3. Technology Start-up Selection Process

TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION shall follow a structured, merit-based process for admitting Technology Start-ups.

3.1 Call for Applications

3.1.1 Frequency of Call

Calls for applications shall be announced on a rolling, bi-annual, or annual basis, or as per program requirements approved by the Project Management Committee (PMC) and the CEO. The mode of intake — rolling or cohort-based — shall be decided by the CEO in consultation with the COO, having regard to programmatic objectives, available infrastructure, and funding cycles.

3.1.2 Mode of Announcement

Each call for applications shall be disseminated through the following channels:

- **Official TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE Foundation website** (www.meriise.org)
- **Host Institute (HI) website** (www.mcehassan.ac.in) and notice boards
- Dedicated incubator application portal, where applicable
- Institutional and academic networks, including affiliated universities and research institutions
- Industry partners, innovation cells, startup forums, and government platforms
- Social media, newsletters, outreach programs and deep tech influencers

3.1.3 Application Format

Applications shall be submitted online using a standardised application form prescribed by TBI-MCE.

The form shall capture, at a minimum, the following information:

- Due diligence data like registration certificates, date of registration, registered address, DPIIT certificates, MoA, AoA, LLP certificates, Share Holders Agreement (SHA), etc.. wherever applicable
- Problem statement and proposed solution
- Technology description and Technology Readiness Level (TRL)
- Innovation content, novelty, and differentiation
- Market potential, target beneficiaries, societal relevance within the market, include a detailed analysis on the competitors
- Team composition, roles, and core competencies
- Alignment with the thrust areas of TBI-MCE
- Funding requirement (if applicable), milestones, and proposed utilisation plan

3.2 Eligibility Criteria and Screening

3.2.1 Eligibility Criteria

An applicant shall be considered eligible for evaluation if it satisfies the following criteria:

- The applicant has an innovative, technology-based product, process, or service at the concept, prototype, or early-revenue stage.
- The proposal aligns with the thrust areas of TBI-MCE and the norms of the relevant funding agency, where applicable.
- The application is complete in all respects and submitted within the prescribed timeline.

3.2.2 Initial Screening

All applications received shall undergo an initial eligibility screening conducted by the CEO and the TBI-MCE team. The screening shall verify completeness of the application, fulfilment of eligibility norms, and prima facie fit with the Foundation's mandate.

3.2.3 Screening Parameters

During screening, applications shall be assessed against the following parameters:

- Technology Readiness Level (TRL) and technical feasibility
- Innovation content and novelty of the solution
- Alignment with the identified thrust areas of TBI-MCE
- Team capability, commitment, and technical competence
- Societal relevance, market need, and scalability
- Compliance with eligibility norms prescribed by funding agencies and institutional guidelines

3.2.4 Outcome of Screening

- Eligible applications shall be forwarded for detailed technical and commercial evaluation.
- Ineligible or incomplete applications shall be rejected with reasons formally recorded.

3.3 Pitch Presentation and Assessment

3.3.1 Startup Selection Committee

Shortlisted applicants shall be invited to pitch to a panel comprising the CEO and a duly constituted jury panel viz., **Startup Selection Committee (SSC)** that includes external experts in relevant technology and business domains. To ensure a transparent, fair, and merit-based evaluation of startup applications received by TBI_MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION, the following SSC is hereby constituted.

Sl. No.	Name	Designation in SSC	Category
1	Dr. Geetha Kiran A.	Chairperson	CEO, TBI-MCE
2	Mr. Mani	External Expert Member	Industry & Startup Mentor
3	Mr. Chethan, RVCE	Member	Academician
4	Dr. Shivanand Koteswarar, Founder/CEO of a Startup	Member	Startup Representative
5	Expert from C-CAMP	Member	Innovation Ecosystem Expert

Note:

The meeting shall be valid with the presence of at least **three (3) members**, including the **Chairperson** and **one external member**. The meeting will be in hybrid mode.

The Startup Selection Committee shall remain in force for a period of **two years** or until reconstituted by the competent authority of ME-RIISE FOUNDATION.

3.3.2 Pitch Presentation

Each shortlisted start-up shall present its proposal to the Selection Committee / PMC. The pitch shall cover, at a minimum:

- Technology overview, innovation, and TRL
- Business plan, target market, and customer validation
- Milestones, timelines, and execution roadmap
- Fund utilisation plan (where applicable)
- Expected outcomes, deliverables, and impact
- Expectations from TBI-MCE and Plans with TBI-MCE

3.3.3 Interaction and Clarifications

Members of the Startup Selection Committee may seek clarifications, suggest improvements, or propose specific conditions to be incorporated prior to selection. Applicants shall be given a fair opportunity to respond to queries raised during the pitch.

3.3.4 Assessment Criteria

Each applicant / start-up shall be evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Technology novelty** — strength of innovation and technical merit
- **Team capability** — competence, commitment, and ability to execute
- **Commercial or social impact** — market readiness, customer validation, and societal relevance
- **Scalability** — potential to grow technically, commercially, geographically and competency in the field
- **Strategic fit** — alignment with TBI-MCE objectives, thrust areas, and funding-agency norms
- **Milestones and fund utilisation** — clarity, realism, accountability of the proposed plan, expectations from TBI-MCE and plans with TBI-MCE

3.4 Final Selection and Approval

3.4.1 Recommendation

Based on the consolidated evaluation, expert recommendations, and pitch outcomes, the Startup Selection Committee shall recommend start-ups for incubation having regard to overall merit, strategic fit, and available capacity at TBI-MCE.

3.4.2 Approval

Final approval for incubation shall be accorded by the Project Management Committee (PMC), or by the competent authority designated under the governance or funding norms applicable to the specific program. Approvals shall be obtained from KITS prior to onboarding, wherever required.

3.4.3 Communication of Outcome

- Selected start-ups shall be officially notified within 20 working days of the conclusion of the selection process.
- Non-selected applicants shall be formally informed, with brief feedback provided where feasible.

3.5 Onboarding and Incubation Agreement

3.5.1 Mandatory Registration

Any idea, innovation, or pitch that qualifies for incubation but does not have a legally registered entity must complete formal registration as a legally registered entity before the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) is signed. This is a mandatory precondition: until a registered start-up entity is in place,

- The MoA / Incubation Agreement shall **not** be executed,
- Incubation support shall **not** commence, and
- Onboarding shall **not** take place.

3.5.2 Execution of Agreements

Prior to onboarding, a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) / Incubation Agreement shall be executed between TBI-MCE (managed by ME-RIISE Foundation) and the selected start-up. The agreement shall, inter alia, cover:

- Incubation period and renewal terms
- Facilities, infrastructure, and services provided
- Fee structure, equity terms, and financial obligations (where applicable)
- Intellectual Property (IP) rights and ownership
- Confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations
- Reporting, monitoring, and review obligations
- Exit terms, graduation criteria, indemnity clauses and dispute resolution

3.5.3 Commencement of Incubation

Incubation support shall commence only after due execution of the Incubation Agreement and completion of all onboarding formalities, including submission of statutory documents and acceptance of TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE FOUNDATION's policies and code of conduct.

3.6 Incubation Duration and Progress Review

- **Standard incubation period:** 12 months from the date of onboarding.
- **Extension:** The period may be extended up to a maximum of 18 months, based on quarterly progress reviews conducted by the CEO and recommendations placed before the PMC.
- **Review parameters:** Achievement of agreed milestones, fund utilisation, technical progress, market traction, and adherence to reporting obligations.
- **Early exit / graduation:** Start-ups achieving graduation criteria prior to the standard duration may exit with the approval of the CEO, as per the terms of the Incubation Agreement.

3.7 Incubation Stages and Seed Fund Support

The incubation journey at TBI-MCE is organised in structured stages — from pre-incubation through formal incubation, scale-up, and graduation — with milestone-linked support at each stage. The detailed stages are set out below.

3.7.1 Pre-Incubation Stage (Up to 6 Months)

This stage is not covered under active incubation support; it serves as the foundational phase to establish technical feasibility and demonstrate a Proof of Concept (PoC) at TRL 4.

Key Support and Activities

- Identification of problem–solution fit and clear articulation of target user needs
- Access to laboratories, maker spaces, testing facilities, and institutional infrastructure

- Design and development of an early PoC or basic feasibility model
- Technical mentorship from domain experts and research faculty
- Limited financial support for material procurement and prototype testing
- Quarterly monitoring through review meetings and milestone tracking (every 3 months)

Expected Outcome

- A functional PoC demonstrating feasibility at TRL 4 readiness
- Formal evaluation by TBI-MCE, managed by ME-RIISE Foundation, after the first 3 months

Progress Review and Transition

At the end of the first review cycle i.e. 3 months, one of the following decisions will be taken:

- If there is clear scope for improvement and potential, an additional 3 months may be granted to bring the PoC to TRL 4 standard.
- If the progress is unsatisfactory and there is no demonstrable potential, the startup will be exited from the programme.
- If the PoC meets the expected technical and validation criteria, the startup receives formal approval to enter the Incubation Stage.
- After the completion of 6 months if the PoC meets the expected technical and validation criteria of TRL 4 and above, the startup receives formal approval to enter the Incubation Stage.

Note: Eligibility for Direct Incubation and Seed Fund Support

- Any startup or technology that is evaluated and recommended by the Startup Selection Committee (SSC) and demonstrates a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of 4 or above, with a validated Proof of Concept (PoC) during the pitch or evaluation process, shall be eligible for direct admission into the Incubation Program of TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION.
- Such startups may be considered for seed funding support of up to ₹9,00,000 (Rupees Nine Lakh only) each, for 5 startups, subject to the recommendations of the Startup Selection Committee, availability of funds, compliance with the applicable funding guidelines, successful completion of due diligence, and approval by the Competent Authority.
- The quantum of seed funding shall be determined based on the startup's technology maturity, business potential, commercialization roadmap, funding requirements, and milestones proposed by the startup.

3.7.2 Incubation Stage – Phase 1 (12 Months)

Phase 1 marks the start of formal, funded incubation. Upon formal approval, the startup is recognised as a **TBI-MCE incubated company managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION** and becomes eligible for seed fund support.

Seed Fund Support (upto ₹9 Lakhs per Startup, in Three Tranches)

To support prototype building, validation, and early market entry, eligible incubated startups may receive seed funding on a case-to-case basis, disbursed in three milestone-linked tranches. The exact amount to be sanctioned and disbursed to each startup will be evaluated and decided by the PMC.

Tranche	Amount	Purpose	Milestone Outcome
Tranche 1 (After Onboarding)	As approved by the SSC	Prototype development / PoC refinement and	TRL 6–7 prototype / MVP readiness
Tranche 2	Based on successful review of Tranche 1 milestones	Pilot deployment and field validation	Documented performance validation and user feedback
Tranche 3	Based on successful review of Tranche 2 milestones	Market launch and early scale-up	Product launched with initial customer acquisition and revenue pathway

The above allocation is indicative and may be modified by the Startup Selection Committee based on the specific requirements of the startup and the approved funding proposal.

Note: Release of subsequent tranches shall be subject to satisfactory technical and financial review, utilization certificates, and achievement of agreed milestones

Fund Utilisation Breakdown

Each tranche disbursed to a startup must be utilised in line with the following allocation pattern to ensure focus on product development while accommodating essential support costs:

Allocation	Purpose	Maximum Allocation
Product Development	Research & Development (Prototype/MVP Development, Product Engineering, Procurement, Testing & Validation)	60% of the sanctioned amount
Outsourcing	Outsourcing / Technical Services (Design, Fabrication, Certification, Testing, Cloud Services, Specialized Consultancy, etc.)	15% of the sanctioned amount
Salary	Salary for Founders / Directors	15% of the sanctioned amount
Administrative & Miscellaneous	Administrative & Operational Expenses (Travel, Consumables, IP Filing, Regulatory Compliance, Marketing, Business Development, and other approved operational expenses)	10% of the sanctioned amount

Support Provided

- Mentorship in product design, engineering refinement, and prototype improvement
- Support for IP filing, regulatory understanding, documentation, and product certification pathways
- Pilot deployments through industry partners and identified field sites

Expected Outcomes

- Product developed up to TRL 6–7 with validated field performance
- Early user acquisition and demand validation from real deployments
- Strengthening of the business model, costing, and financial projections

Evaluation

Startup performance is reviewed every quarter against the agreed milestones. The evaluation framework operates as follows:

- Startups demonstrating satisfactory progress against the milestones of a tranche are released the next tranche.
- Startups demonstrating overall satisfactory performance at the end of Phase 1 are advanced to Phase 2.
- Startups that fail to meet the agreed milestones may have funding paused, restructured, or discontinued, based on the recommendation of the review committee.

3.7.3 Incubation Stage – Phase 2 (Additional 12 Months)

Phase 2 focuses on commercial readiness, scaling, and structured market entry of the validated product.

A. Core Incubation Support (Included)

These services are provided as part of the incubation program:

- Go-to-market planning and customer discovery guidance
- Business model refinement and market validation support
- Brand positioning and customer segmentation
- Basic investor readiness mentoring and pitch refinement
- Networking with investors, industry experts, and ecosystem partners
- General legal and regulatory guidance
- Mentoring on scaling strategy and business growth planning

B. Value-Added Paid Services

The following specialized services may be offered on a chargeable basis, depending on startup requirements:

Service	Charging Basis
Professional pitch deck design and financial modelling	Per assignment
Investor connect programs and fundraising facilitation	Success fee/participation fee
Market research and competitive intelligence reports	Per project
Branding, website development, and digital marketing	Vendor cost + service fee
Legal documentation (Shareholders Agreement, ESOP, NDAs, Contracts, IP licensing, etc.)	Actual professional charges
Company secretarial, compliance, and regulatory filings	Actual charges
Supply chain development and vendor sourcing	Consultancy fee
Manufacturing partner identification and scale-up consulting	Consultancy fee

Expected Outcomes

- Operationalisation of the revenue model and demonstrable customer traction
- Commercial production / manufacturing plan with established distribution linkages
- Investment, grant, or CSR funding secured for scale-up

Extension Provision

- On a case-to-case basis, an extension of up to 3 months may be granted in either Phase 1 or Phase 2 to further strengthen the product or business model before graduation.

Note – Mature Startups at Entry

For startups already operating at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6–7 at the time of incubation entry, the incubation duration may be rationalised in line with product maturity and commercialisation readiness. In such cases:

- Phase 1 may be compressed to 6 months, focused on validation and refinement.
- Phase 2 may be set at an additional 6 months, focused on commercialisation and scale-up.

- The total duration and milestone structure remain subject to periodic evaluation and approval by the TBI-MCE team.

3.7.4 Graduation

A startup is considered ready for graduation from the TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION incubation programme upon achieving one or more of the following:

- Field-validated TRL advancement to TRL 7 / TRL 8
- Market launch with customer acquisition
- External funding secured or revenue generation initiated
- Demonstrable revenue traction and an established customer base
- Successful mobilisation of external funding or strategic partnerships
- Completion of product validation and market deployment goals defined at the time of entry

Post-graduation, the startup remains part of the TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE FOUNDATION Alumni Network and continues to receive extended ecosystem access, networking benefits, mentorship linkages, and partnership support to facilitate sustained growth.

3.8 Intellectual Property (IP) Policy

The Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) framework at TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION is structured to ensure clarity of ownership, fair benefit-sharing, and ethical commercialisation of knowledge outputs.

3.8.1 Ownership of IP

- By default, the Startup retains full ownership of the Intellectual Property it creates during the incubation period.

3.8.2 Joint Development Clause

In cases where IP is co-developed, it shall be treated as Jointly Developed IP on a case to case basis depending upon the contribution beyond the standard incubation support.

3.8.3 IP Sharing with ME-RIISE Foundation

Where IP is created using seed fund support, faculty mentorship, institutional research facilities, or other resources of TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE Foundation, ME-RIISE Foundation shall be entitled to a share in such Jointly Developed IP, governed by the following principles:

- The Startup shall retain a majority share of 80%, and ME-RIISE Foundation shall hold a minority share of 20% in the Jointly Developed IP, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing.
- Any revenue, royalty, licensing fee, or consideration arising from the commercialisation of Jointly Developed IP shall be shared in proportion to the agreed ownership split, after deduction of applicable costs.
- ME-RIISE Foundation and the startup shall have the right of negotiation to license or co-commercialise the Jointly Developed IP before it is offered to any third party.
- The support of TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE Foundation and the Government of Karnataka (KITS) shall be duly acknowledged in all filings, publications, and commercialisation of such IP.
- The precise ownership share, licensing rights, royalty terms, and technology transfer mode shall be recorded in a separate, mutually agreed Joint IP Agreement executed on a case-to-case basis.

The above default share is indicative and may be revised by mutual agreement having regard to the extent of resources, funding, and technical contribution provided by TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE Foundation in the development of the IP.

3.8.4 Benefit Sharing and Commercialisation

For jointly developed IP, the following terms shall be governed by a separate, mutually agreed Joint IP Agreement on a case-to-case basis:

- Ownership share
- Licensing rights
- Royalty / revenue sharing
- Technology transfer mode

IP may be licensed, assigned, franchised, or transferred to industry partners as per commercialisation needs.

3.8.5 Confidentiality

- All stakeholders, including startups, mentors, faculty, and external experts, shall sign Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) to protect proprietary knowledge.

3.9 Code of Conduct

All incubated startups and associated individuals shall maintain the highest standards of professional, ethical, and responsible behaviour.

3.9.1 Professional Conduct

- Respectful workplace behaviour, collaboration, and integrity are mandatory.
- Harassment, discrimination, misconduct, or unlawful activities will not be tolerated.

3.9.2 Confidentiality

- Startups must safeguard sensitive information, proprietary designs, algorithms, and business data obtained during incubation.
- Data and know-how shared during mentoring, technical reviews, and evaluations must be treated as confidential.

3.9.3 Responsible Use of Infrastructure

- Access to laboratories, computing facilities, and prototyping tools must be used strictly for approved project purposes.
- Startups must maintain records of resource usage and ensure no damage or misuse of institutional assets.

3.9.4 Compliance with Legal and Institutional Regulations

Startups must adhere to:

- Institutional safety norms
- Environmental standards
- Government policies
- Statutory certification and licensing requirements

Non-compliance may result in temporary suspension or termination of incubation support.

3.10 Expected Impact

The structured incubation and startup support ecosystem at TBI-MCE, managed by ME-RIISE Foundation, is designed to generate measurable academic, economic, and societal value.

3.11 Documentation and Record Maintenance

- All applications, screening reports, evaluation scores, pitch assessments, approvals, and communications shall be formally documented.
- Records shall be maintained in physical and digital form for the duration prescribed by the relevant funding agency and applicable audit norms, and shall not in any case be less than the period required under institutional policy.
- All records shall be available for inspection by sponsoring agencies, internal auditors, statutory auditors, and authorised institutional bodies as and when required.

4. Fee Collection from Technology Start-ups

The TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION shall collect a monthly incubation fee from each admitted start-up to partially offset the cost of facilities, utilities, mentoring, and program administration.

4.1 Fee Structure

Item	Amount	Frequency
Security Deposit	₹ 50,000	One – time and refundable**
Incubation Fee per chair / seat	₹ 2,000	Monthly
Documentation and Onboarding Charges (one-time)	₹ 10,000	During MoA sign up

Why ₹2,000 per chair per month:

- ME-RIISE FOUNDATION provides physical workspace, high-speed internet, shared lab access, mentoring sessions, business development support, and administrative facilitation.
- The fee is kept modest to keep the program accessible to early-stage start-ups while ensuring a steady revenue stream to meet day-to-day operating expenses.
- This fee does not cover full operational costs during the grant period but serves as a cost-sharing contribution and builds financial discipline in incubatees.

4.2 Payment Process

- Fees are payable by the 5th of each month via bank transfer or demand draft in favour of ME-RIISE Foundation.
- Non-payment for 30 days triggers to use the amount from the security deposit** along with a written warning; non-payment for 60 days may result in suspension of incubation services.
- Any damage, loss of property of TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE FOUNDATION will be covered from the security deposit.

4.3. Equity Sharing with Technology Start-ups

In addition to the incubation fee, ME–RIISE Foundation, may take a graduated, contribution-linked equity share in admitted technology start-ups. Equity is administered case-by-case by the Start-up Selection Committee (SSC) and is taken only where the contribution of TBI–MCE, managed by ME–RIISE Foundation, justifies it. The fee model and the equity model may operate together or independently, as recorded in the start-up’s agreement.

4.3.1 Guiding Principles

- ME–RIISE Foundation, shall normally take a low equity share, and a higher share only where the start-up makes substantial use of TBI–MCE IP, seed funding, infrastructure, or other resources.
- Total equity taken by ME–RIISE Foundation, shall not exceed 9.5%, ensuring that TBI–MCE, managed by ME–RIISE Foundation, carries no legal liability arising out of the start-up (as per NISP 2019).

- Equity is determined by the actual value contributed by TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION, not by a fixed entitlement.
- A cooling period of up to three months may be allowed under the compulsory-equity model before the start-up begins formal use of incubation services.

4.3.2 Indicative Equity Bands

Equity is determined case-by-case by the SSC, considering use of brand, support provided, ME-RIISE FOUNDATION IP used, infrastructure, mentorship, seed funding, and the start-up's overall reliance on TBI-MCE resources managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION. The following are indicative bands, not entitlements:

Nature of contribution by TBI-MCE, managed by ME-RIISE Foundation	Indicative equity
Use of brand and basic infrastructure only; no ME-RIISE FOUNDATION IP or seed funding	Up to 2%
Significant infrastructure, mentorship, and support from ME-RIISE FOUNDATION	2% – 5%
Use of ME-RIISE FOUNDATION IP and/or seed funding; substantial start-up reliance on TBI-MCE resources managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION	5% – 9.5% (cap)

4.3.3 Terms

- The agreed equity is recorded in the incubation / shareholders' agreement at the time of MoU/MoA sign-up and is reviewed at each stage transition.
- Where an equity model is adopted, the start-up is liable to issue the agreed equity within the timeframe specified in the agreement, and in any case before graduation from the TBI.
- Proceeds from any liquidity event accruing to TBI-MCE, managed by ME-RIISE Foundation, shall be ring-fenced and reinvested into the TBI-MCE innovation and start-up ecosystem.

5. Utilization of Fees and Revenue Distribution

All fees and revenues shall be transparently recorded and utilized in accordance with the TBI's purposes and KITS grant requirements.

5.1 Application of Fees Collected

The fees collected from start-ups are applied towards specific, identified services rendered by TBI-MCE, as set out below. This ensures that every fee collected is linked to a defined value provided to the incubatee.

Fee Collected	Nature	What it is Used For
₹ 10,000 (one-time)	Collected at the time of MoU / Incubation Agreement sign-up	Start-up onboarding and documentation; start-up milestone assistance (milestone definition, tracking, and review support).
₹ 2,000 (per chair / seat, monthly)	Recurring monthly charge	Use of shared facilities and laboratory usage – covering workspace, high-speed internet, shared lab and equipment access, and common infrastructure made available to the start-up

The above application of fees is indicative; any unutilised balance shall be retained by TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE Foundation and applied towards the operation, maintenance, and sustainability of the incubation facility.

5.2 Post-OPEX Sustainability (After Year 5)

The TBI 2.0 grant from KITS covers operational expenditure for a defined 5-year period. Beyond this, the TBI must be fully self-sustaining. The following measures are built in from the start:

- By Year 3, TBI-MCE targets at least 10 active incubatees generating combined monthly fee income to cover at least 20% of OPEX.
- Revenue diversification is pursued through: consultancy fees, sponsored events and training programs, grant facilitation commissions, and alumni contributions.
- A Governing Body review of financial sustainability is mandated in Year 3 and Year 4.
- The CEO shall present a Post-OPEX Sustainability Plan to the Governing Body by the end of Year 4, covering revenue projections, staffing model, and asset utilization.

6. Guidelines for Staff and Employees

All staff engaged with the TBI shall comply with the following guidelines while performing their duties and functions.

WORKING HOURS & ATTENDANCE

6.1 Working Hours

- Working days shall be from **Monday to Saturday**.
- Working hours shall be from **9:30 AM to 5:30 PM** from Monday to Friday.
- On **Saturdays** working hours shall be up to **1:30 PM**.
- Work beyond prescribed hours or on holidays must be taken as required and the need for the activities.

6.2 Attendance

- All employees must mark attendance through the prescribed system (Biometric & in register).
- A maximum grace period of **15 minutes** beyond the prescribed reporting time is permissible for entry.
- If late entry beyond the permissible **15 minutes** occurs **more than five (5) times in a month**, it shall attract a deduction of **half-day (½) Casual Leave**.

6.3 Functions of TBI-MCE Team

[This is in alignment with the Annexure C of MoA with KITS]

- TBI-MCE team will work with the CEO in the management of TBI-MCE;
- TBI-MCE team will provide advice and expertise in the field of technology and innovation to TBI members and Technology Start-ups;
- TBI-MCE team will be responsible for overseeing the daily operations of TBI;
- TBI-MCE team will report to the Project Management Committee as per the timelines issued by KITS on the functioning and efficacy of TBI and shall furnish suggestions for improvement wherever required.
- Various data shall also be provided to the GoK when sought for.

6.4 Leave Policy

Types of Leave

6.4.1 Sick Leave (SL)

- Entitlement: 5 days per year.
- A medical certificate is mandatory for Sick Leave exceeding two consecutive days.

6.4.2 Casual Leave (CL)

- Entitlement: 12 days per year.
- One Casual Leave may be availed after completion of one (1) month of service.
- Not more than two (2) consecutive days of Casual Leave shall be permitted at a time.

6.4.3 Special Casual Leave / On Official Duty Leaves

- **Purpose:** Granted for attending official assignments, activities, or duties approved and assigned by the CEO.

- **Entitlement:** Leave may be availed based on requirement, subject to the approval of the CEO, with a maximum limit of 10 days per year for employees excluding CEO, COO, Outreach office/Programme Associate.
- **Leave Salary:** The mentioned leave period shall be treated as on duty with full pay.
- **Reporting Requirement:** Staff members shall submit participation details, reports, or completion documents upon completion of the assigned duty, wherever applicable.

6.5 Leave Rules

- All leave must be applied for in advance and approved by the CEO through the leave app of ME-RIISE FOUNDATION and in written format.
- Unauthorized absence or misuse of leave may attract disciplinary action as per organizational rules.

6.6 Holidays

- TBI-MCE shall observe **institutional, state, and national holidays** as notified annually.
- Holiday list will be circulated at the beginning of each calendar year.

6.7 Performance Management

- Performance shall be reviewed periodically (quarterly / half-yearly).
- Key evaluation parameters:
 - Role deliverables and outcomes
 - Timeliness and quality of work
 - Compliance with SOPs and reporting
 - Teamwork and stakeholder coordination
- Performance outcomes may influence:
 - Continuation or renewal of contract
 - Performance-based incentives (if applicable)

6.8 Code of Conduct

All employees shall:

- Maintain integrity, confidentiality, and professionalism.
- Avoid conflict of interest and misuse of official position.
- Use organizational resources responsibly.
- Adhere to institutional ethics and government norms.

Any form of misconduct, harassment, discrimination, or misuse of funds will invite strict disciplinary action.

6.9 Confidentiality & Intellectual Property

- Employees shall maintain strict confidentiality of official, financial, and startup-related information.
- All work outputs, data, reports, and IP created during employment shall be the property of TBI-MCE / ME-RIISE Foundation, unless otherwise agreed.
- Non-disclosure obligations shall survive termination of contract.

6.10 Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary measures may include:

- Verbal or written warning
- Suspension (if required)
- Termination of contract

Actions shall be taken following due process and principles of natural justice.

6.11 Termination & Resignation

- Either party may terminate the contract by giving **30 days' notice** or salary in lieu thereof.
- TBI-MCE reserves the right to terminate employment without notice in cases of gross misconduct.
- Employees must complete handover and return all organizational assets upon exit.

6.12 Grievance Redressal

- Employees may raise grievances to the **Reporting Authority / CEO**.
- Grievances shall be handled confidentially and fairly.

6.13 Workplace Safety & Well-being

- TBI-MCE is committed to provide a safe, inclusive, and harassment-free workplace.
- All staff shall comply with safety norms and institutional policies.
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) norms shall be strictly followed.

6.14 Policy Amendment

- This HR Policy may be revised or amended by TBI-MCE / Governing Body as required.
- Any changes shall be communicated to all employees.

7. Travelling Allowance (TA), Dearness Allowance (DA) and Expense Reimbursement

The following guidelines govern reimbursement of travel, food and accommodation expenses incurred by TBI-MCE employees, managed by ME-RIISE Foundation, while travelling for official duty.

7.1 Scope and General Principles

- These guidelines apply to the CEO, COO, Incubation Manager, and Outreach Officer, and any other personnel duly authorised by the CEO to undertake official travel on behalf of TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION.
- All travel shall be undertaken by the shortest and most economical route.
- Reimbursement shall be admissible only for journeys actually performed and supported by valid proof of travel.

7.2 Travel Entitlements by Designation

Designation	Entitlements
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Air fare on actuals (Economy Class), submission of e-ticket, invoice, and boarding pass
Chief Operating Officer (COO)	OR Actual fare by any type of public transport, train (2 AC/1AC), bus including AC bus

Designation	Entitlements
	OR At prescribed rates of AC taxi when the journey is actually performed by AC taxi OR At prescribed rates for journey by own car as specified in section 7.3
Incubation Manager Outreach Officer	Actual fare by any type of public transport, train (3AC), and AC bus.

7.3 Rates Where No Specific Rates Are Prescribed

At places where no specific rates have been prescribed, the following rates shall apply:

Mode of Journey	Rate
For journeys performed in own car	Rs. 12/- per km
For journeys performed in own 2 wheelers	Rs. 6/- per km

7.4 Food Allowance (Daily Allowance)

Food expenses incurred during official travel shall be reimbursed at the following rates:

Place of Travel	Rate
Metropolitan cities	Rs. 300/- per head per meal
Cities other than metropolitan cities	Rs. 200/- per head per meal

7.5 Accommodation

Accommodation expenses incurred during official travel shall be reimbursed on actuals, subject to the following upper caps per night:

Designation	Upper Cap (per night)
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) / Chief Operating Officer (COO)	Rs. 5,000/- (AC / Non-AC)
Incubation Manager / Outreach Officer	Rs. 3,000/-

Note: Travel, food and accommodation expense for any other than those listed above shall be as approved by the CEO. Original hotel bills/invoices shall be submitted with the claim.

7.6 Claims and Reimbursement Procedure

- Travel Allowance (TA)- Dearness Allowance (DA) and accommodation claims shall be submitted in the prescribed claim form within 15 days of completion of the journey, supported by original tickets, invoices, boarding passes (for air travel), and receipts, as applicable.
- Where public transport tickets are not available (e.g., auto rickshaw), a self-declaration along with a voucher copy to be submitted by the employee indicating journey details and distance travelled.
- Kilometre-based claims shall be computed on the actual distance between the points of journey by the shortest route – example: odometer picture of the vehicle to be attached covering the travel distance.
- Any expenditure beyond entitlement requires prior written approval of the competent authority; otherwise, reimbursement shall be restricted to the entitled amount.

- All claims shall be verified by the and sanctioned by the Head of the Host Institute and CEO of TBI-MCE managed by ME-RIISE FOUNDATION. Reimbursement shall be made through bank transfer after due approval.

7. Power Delegation and Execution Process

All authority within the TBI ultimately vests in the CEO. Delegation is structured to ensure operational efficiency while preserving accountability at every level.

7.1 Authority Matrix

#	Decision Area	Authority	Reports To
1	Strategic direction and TBI policy	Governing Body	SEAC
2	Operational decisions (day-to-day)	CEO	Governing Body / KITS
3	Start-up selection and exits	CEO (with Selection Startup Selection Committee)	PMC
4	Recruitment of staff	Recruitment and Selection Committee	KITS
5	All expenditures	CEO	KITS
6	MoU and partnership agreements	CEO	Governing Body / PMC / KITS
7	Policy revisions and procedural changes	Governing Body	SEAC
8	Grievance resolution (staff / start-up)	CEO	Governing Body

8. Organisation Structure and Reporting Structure

The TBI operates under a lean, functional structure. COO and all functional roles report to the CEO. The CEO is accountable to the Governing Body and KITS.



9. Performance Standards and Milestones

The following milestones are tracked annually to measure TBI effectiveness and align with the objectives in the TBI 2.0 proposal submitted to KITS.

#	Milestones	Target	Measurement Method
1	Start-ups incubated (new admissions)	5	Admission records
2	Start-ups graduated (successfully exited)	2	Exit certificates / reports
3	Funding facilitated for incubatees	₹ 45 Lakhs (approx.)	Grant letters / funding documents
4	No. of new products/technologies to be developed / innovations to be commercialized	1	New products developed / IP / Commercialization documents
5	No. of training programs conducted	8	Attendance registers / session reports
6	No. of Conferences / seminars / workshops to be organised	6	Event reports / certificates issued
7	Other notable services provided (e.g., mentorship, networking opportunities)	10	Event reports

KPI Review Process:

- Milestones are reviewed quarterly by the CEO and reported to the PMC
- Annual milestone achievement reports are tabled at the PMC meeting and submitted to KITS.
- Underperformance on any KPI for two consecutive quarters triggers a corrective action review led by the CEO.

10. General Guidelines for TBI Operation

The following guidelines govern the overall operation of the TBI and execution of its commitments under the TBI 2.0 proposal.

10.1 Program Execution

- All programs and events shall be planned at the start of each quarter and approved by the CEO.
- Event reports, attendance records, and outcome data shall be documented and archived within 7 days of each event.
- All external communications on behalf of the TBI-MCE shall be issued under the signature of the CEO.

10.2 Record-Keeping and Documentation

- A central registry of all start-ups, MoUs / MoAs, staff records, financial accounts, and program reports shall be maintained.
- Records shall be preserved for a minimum of 7 years, or as required by KITS.
- KITS has the right to inspect all TBI records at any time upon notice.

10.3 Compliance and Reporting

- Quarterly progress reports are submitted to KITS in the prescribed format.
- CEO ensures compliance with all statutory requirements applicable to ME-RIISE Foundation as A Section 8 company.
- Any material deviation from the approved proposal or this SOP must be brought to the attention of the Governing Body and KITS immediately.

10.4 Amendments to this SOP

- Amendments to this SOP require approval by KITS.
- Revised versions are communicated to all staff and incubatees within 15 days of approval.