

North Eastern Science & Technology Cluster (NEST), About, Components

February 24, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



The **Government of India** has approved the establishment of the **North Eastern Science & Technology Cluster (NEST)** to accelerate research, innovation, skill development and entrepreneurship in the North Eastern Region (NER). It was **sanctioned in July 2025** with a financial **outlay of ₹22.98 crore** under the schemes of the North Eastern Council and the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.

About North Eastern Science & Technology Cluster (NEST)

- The North Eastern Science & Technology Cluster (NEST) is a **collaborative research and innovation platform** established to strengthen the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) **ecosystem** in North East India.
- It aims to **connect universities, research institutes, national laboratories and industry to promote region-specific research and development.**
- It is **funded under the Schemes of the North Eastern Council (NEC)**, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) and **implemented by Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati.**

- The project is designed to **operate through four thematic verticals**, selected based on emerging technologies, regional needs, and future growth potential:
 - Innovation Hub on Grassroot Technologies;
 - Technology Hub for Semiconductor and **Artificial Intelligence**;
 - Centre of Excellence for Innovation in Bamboo-Based Technology, Entrepreneurial Promotion & Skill Development; and
 - Skill Development and Innovation Centre on Biodegradable and Ecofriendly Plastics

North Eastern Science & Technology Cluster (NEST) Key Components

The key components of the Project include:

- Training Programs for technology creation and start-ups;
- Incubation and Tinkering Laboratories;
- Technology transfer, commercialization and product marketing support; and
- Development of enabling infrastructure for research, innovation and skill development.

North Eastern Science & Technology Cluster (NEST) Objectives

The specific objectives of the NEST clusters include:

- **Empowerment of young people in the North Eastern Region (NER) with emphasis on SC, ST, women, and Divyangjan** to consider self-employment or entrepreneurship among the career options.
- **Promotion of new enterprises by handholding from ideation to commercialization, capacity building of existing MSMEs and inculcating entrepreneurial culture in the NER** in priority areas.
- It focuses on strengthening **research and innovation infrastructure. Through a Hub-and-Spoke model**, institutions across the region will be supported in developing laboratories, conducting applied research and organizing training-cum-enterprise programmes.
- **Strengthening the existing grassroot practices through scientific interventions.** Traditional technologies and local innovations will be standardised, certified and improved using Industry 4.0 approaches, enabling efficient commercialization and integration into national and global markets.

The **NEST cluster works as a hub and spoke model** to connect academia, industry, research and Govt. agencies. The **hub institution is IIT Guwahati**, which will coordinate research, funding, training and monitoring activities. **Several institutions across the region will function as spokes**, facilitating decentralised implementation. Among the identified institutions are the

- North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council,
- North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology
- Indian Institute of Management Shillong,
- Tezpur University, and
- CSIR North East Institute of Science and Technology, along with multiple National Institutes of Technology across the region.

This collaborative structure ensures that research outcomes are translated into grassroots-level skill development and entrepreneurship, rather than remaining confined to academic publications.

About North East Council

- The North Eastern Council was **constituted in 1971 by an Act of Parliament.**
- It is the **nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region.**
- It consists of the eight states – **Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.**
- The council includes the **Governors and Chief Ministers of the eight states, along with three members nominated by the President of India.**
- The **Union Home Minister serves as the ex-officio Chairman of the NEC.**
- The **Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) serves as the ex-officio Vice-Chairman.**

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/north-eastern-science-technology-cluster/>

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