DRONE FEDERATION INDIA (DFI)

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Office of Director (TTE)
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1st April 2025

To,

Ms. Nandini Paliwal, IAS
Commissioner cum Secretary, Directorate of Training and Technical Education
Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi

Subject: Encouragement of technical institutions to participate in India's Largest Drone Innovation Challenge hosted by Drone Federation India & MeitY, Govt of India

Dear Madam,

The **Drone Federation India (DFI) is a non-government, non-profit industry body representing 550+ drone companies and 5,500+ drone pilots** and promotes Indian drone and counter-drone technology solutions worldwide.

DFI in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), has launched NIDAR – National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application and Research, a national-level drone innovation competition specifically focused on motivating India's student community. **The competition was launched by Shri S. Krishnan - Secretary, MeitY and Prof. T. G. Sitharam - Chairman, AICTE on 18th March 2025.**

The competition problem statements are focussed on precision agriculture and disaster management. Student teams are challenged to **build two collaborative autonomous drones for object detection and autonomous delivery,** an evolving technology area for the drone industry.

NIDAR offers students cash prizes worth 40 Lakhs, internship opportunities with the best drone companies in India, startup incubation and cloud credits.

We humbly request that you encourage technical education institutes from Delhi to participate in this national-level competition.

We also request your office to circulate the Invitation Letter, Concept Note, and Competition Posters to all technical education institutions across the state.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Yours sincerely,

Smit Shah
President
Drone Federation India (DFI)

Annexures for circulation;
Invitation Letter
Concept Note
Competition Posters

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Address: 116, Air India Building, Sri Aurobindo Marg, Safdarjung Airport Area, New Delhi - 110003
Phone: 011 20819809 | **Email:** smit@dronefederation.in | **Website:** www.dronefederation.in

NIDAR

NATIONAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE FOR
DRONE APPLICATION AND RESEARCH

Concept Note on
NIDAR - National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application & Research

The adoption of drone technology in India has witnessed remarkable growth, driving economic development and transforming key sectors. Drones are now extensively used for land record digitisation, precision agriculture, infrastructure monitoring, medical deliveries, and national security, among other critical applications.

Recognising the transformative impact brought by drones in several sectors, our **Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave us the vision to make India a global drone hub by 2030** and the Central Government opened up the ecosystem and published the **liberalised Drone Rules, 2021. Most of Indian airspace is now accessible** without special permissions for drone operations, boosting the ease of doing business.

India has encouraged world-class drone manufacturing through financial incentives like the **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** and government-industry trade promotion programs. The government's "Make in India" push has made domestic drone manufacturing compulsory while **restricting the import of finished products** and encouraging foreign partnerships.

As the largest consumer, the government has employed drones for major projects, including **surveying numerous villages, distributing agriculture drones, conducting mine audits, and using drone data to verify road construction projects.** Liberalised export policies and international trade networks have further integrated India into the global drone market.

India's evolving drone ecosystem has transitioned from being seen as a risk to becoming a critical tool for development across agriculture, healthcare, infrastructure, and disaster management. **The Indian drone market is projected to reach $11 billion by 2030, accounting for 12.2% of the global drone market.** This growth reflects the country's commitment to harnessing drone technology for large-scale impact, positioning India as a leader in the global drone industry.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has launched **'SwaYaan - Capacity Building for Human Resource Development in Unmanned Aircraft Systems'** in September 2022 with the goal of fostering a national industry-academia collaborative ecosystem for Drone/UAS & related technologies.

The initiative aims to train as many professionals in the UAS sector by 2027 through 1500+ activities nationwide encompassing five major technical areas towards making India the Global Drone Hub by 2030.

MeitY in partnership with Drone Federation India (DFI) is launching NIDAR - National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application and Research, a national-level drone innovation competition specifically focused on motivating India's students and research community. DFI being a premier industry body represents 550+ drone companies and 5500+ drone pilots across the country and is bringing support from the drone industry to mentor participating students.

Over 100+ student teams from higher education colleges and technical institutions are expected to participate in this competition where teams shall build two collaborative autonomous drones for solving image-based detection and autonomous delivery. This year's problem statements are focused on Disaster Management for building "Scout & Deliver Drones" and Precision Agriculture for building "Scan & Spray Drones".

This year, NIDAR offers a total prize pool of INR 40 Lakhs Cash Prizes and opportunities for students to participate in Startup incubation Programs, obtain Cloud Credits and receive internship opportunities to work in India's best drone companies.

The competition will serve as a strategic platform for students to tackle real-world challenges, fostering a culture of cross-functional innovation and positioning them to become future leaders in drone technology and applied research.

The participating students will gain valuable technical skills that align with industry demands. They will acquire hands-on experience in drone design, programming, and aerodynamics, which will help them develop expertise in fields such as robotics, control systems, and artificial intelligence. By accessing simulation software and receiving mentorship from industry leaders, they will expand their practical knowledge and gain the ability to apply their skills in real-world scenarios.

Additionally, they will gain exposure to cutting-edge research developments, technological innovations, and industry best practices, fostering a deeper understanding of drone technology's applications in sectors such as agriculture and disaster management. Such involvement will enhance their technical proficiency while strengthening their problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and project management skills, preparing them for impactful careers in emerging technology domains.

NIDAR will create a gateway for students in career opportunities and jobs by equipping them with industry-relevant skills, fostering innovation, and connecting them with potential employers. This will also boost the sector to bring in more young talent in the field of aerospace and defense, agriculture, logistics, surveying and mapping.

1st April 2025

Subject: Official Invitation to participate in National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application and Research (NIDAR) – India's Largest Student Drone Competition hosted by Drone Federation India & Ministry of Electronics & IT, Govt of India

Dear Sir / Madam,

The **Drone Federation India (DFI) is a non-government, non-profit industry body that represents over 550+ drone startups and over 5,500+ drone pilots** and brings together industry, academia and civil society to build and promote indigenous drone and counter-drone technology solutions in India.

DFI in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), has launched NIDAR – National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application and Research, a national-level drone innovation competition specifically focused on motivating India's student community. **The competition was launched by Shri S. Krishnan – Secretary, MeitY and Prof. T. G. Sitharam – Chairman, AICTE on 18th March 2025.**

The competition problem statements are focussed on **precision agriculture and disaster management**. Student teams are challenged to **build two collaborative autonomous drones for object detection and autonomous delivery**, an evolving technology area for the drone industry.

NIDAR offers students **cash prizes worth 40 Lakhs, internship opportunities with the best drone companies in India**, startup incubation and cloud credits.

We are excited to invite the students of your institute to participate in this premier national-level competition designed to challenge and inspire students. This communication maybe circulated to all relevant departments and students.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Competition Details: www.nidar.org.in

Yours sincerely,

Smit Shah
President
Drone Federation India (DFI)

For distribution:
Engineering Colleges and Technical Institutes across India