

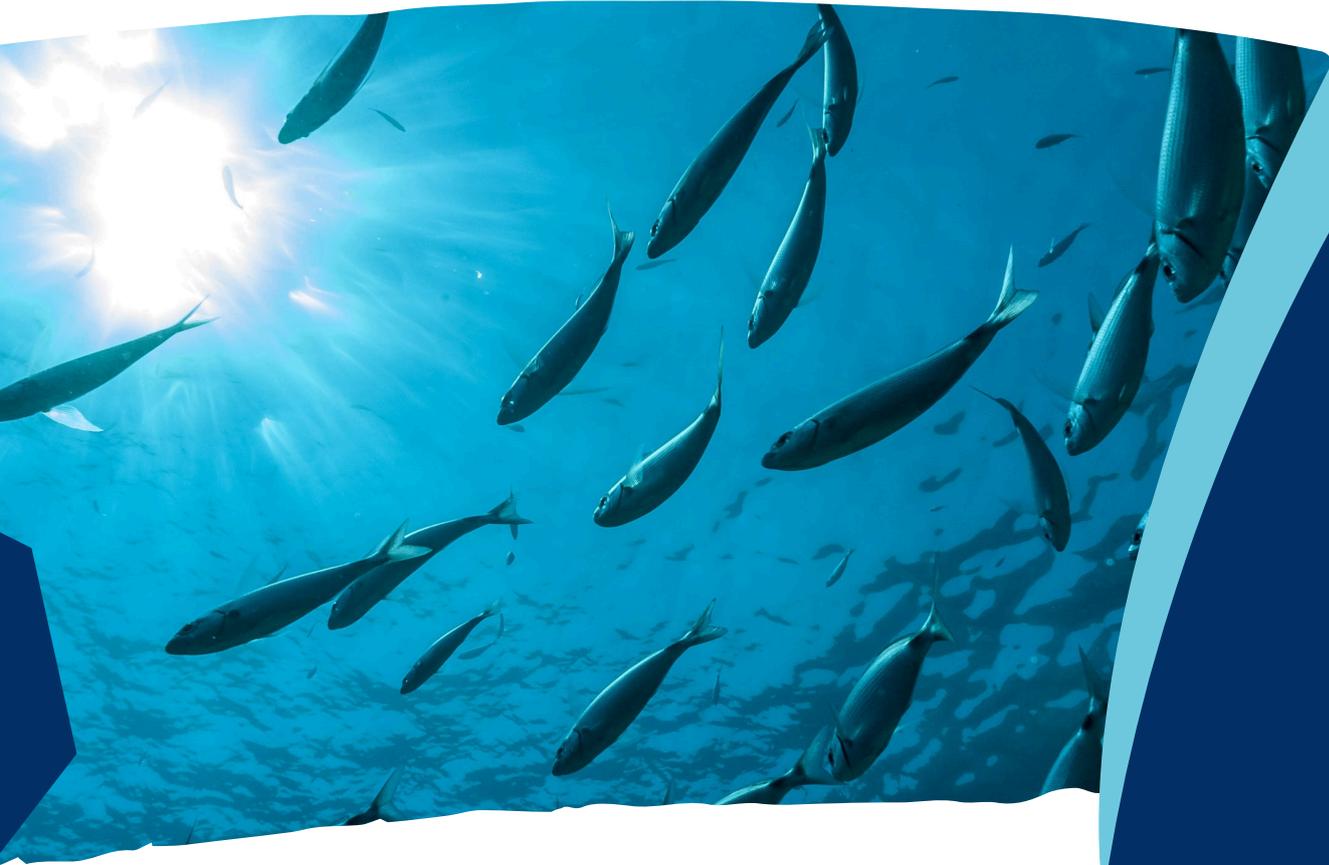


भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
मत्स्यपालन विभाग
Department of Fisheries



Batch I

Pre-Incubation Mentoring Program for Fisheries Startups



MANAGE Fisheries Innovation and Startup Hub (M – FISHub)

(A National Fisheries Incubation Centre Supported by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India)

National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)

(An Autonomous Organization of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India)

Rajendranagar, Hyderabad – 500 030, Telangana, India

<https://www.manage.gov.in/managefishub/>

Introduction

The fisheries sector is a vital pillar of India's economy, contributing significantly to food and nutritional security while generating large-scale employment across coastal and inland regions. Nearly 16 million people depend directly on fisheries and aquaculture for their livelihoods at the primary production level. In recent years, the sector has witnessed the rapid emergence of innovative startups working across diverse domains such as cage culture, ornamental fisheries, recirculatory aquaculture systems (RAS), AI- and IoT-enabled aquaculture solutions, water quality monitoring, feed health products, nutraceuticals, seaweed cultivation, aqua tourism, value chain development, marketing platforms, and cold chain infrastructure.

Despite this promising growth, early-stage fisheries startups face several structural and operational challenges. These include high capital requirements for infrastructure and technology adoption, limited access to reliable market information, difficulties in validating business models, regulatory complexities, and compliance requirements associated with enterprise registration and operations. Such constraints often hinder the scalability and sustainability of innovative ventures in the sector.

To overcome these barriers, startups require a comprehensive support ecosystem that integrates mentoring, networking, and financial facilitation. Structured mentoring programs can provide targeted guidance in refining business strategies, navigating regulatory frameworks, accessing funding opportunities, and strengthening operational efficiency. Effective mentorship also enhances entrepreneurial competencies, improves decision-making abilities, expands professional networks, and stimulates innovation, thereby enabling fisheries startups to transform ideas into viable and scalable enterprises.

MANAGE-FISHub

In this context, MANAGE – Fisheries Innovation and Startup Hub (MANAGE-FISHub)- is a national-level incubation and innovation hub hosted at the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE). It was established at MANAGE in 2025 with the support of the Department of Fisheries (DoF), Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFAHD), Government of India, to transform the fisheries and aquaculture sector through innovative technology, entrepreneurship, and ecosystem development.



Pre-Incubation Mentoring Program for Fisheries Startups 2025

The fisheries and aquaculture sector stands at the core of India's Blue Economy and represents one of the most dynamic and rapidly expanding food production systems worldwide. Beyond its contribution to national income, the sector plays a crucial role in strengthening food and nutritional security, sustaining rural and coastal livelihoods, generating employment, and enhancing export potential. With more than 28 million individuals dependent on fisheries and allied activities, the sector presents significant scope for innovation-driven enterprises and startup-led transformation.

Despite the vast opportunities, emerging entrepreneurs in the fisheries domain encounter several critical barriers. Many lack a comprehensive understanding of the fisheries startup ecosystem, including value chain dynamics and market linkages. Early-stage innovators often struggle with idea refinement, proof of concept, and business model validation. Additionally, limited awareness of government schemes, regulatory procedures, compliance requirements, and legal formalities further constrains enterprise development. Challenges related to fundraising, branding, market positioning, and scaling strategies also restrict the growth potential of startups. Above all, aspiring founders require sustained mentoring and expert guidance to navigate the complexities of the sector.

The Pre-Incubation Mentoring Program is designed to address these gaps by providing structured and systematic support at the ideation and early development stages.

Program Objectives

- Provide structured guidance on business model development, market opportunities, and innovative marketing strategies.
- Help idea/pre-idea stage entrepreneurs validate and refine concepts.
- Create a pipeline of confident, investment-ready, and ecosystem-connected fisheries startups.
- Build capacity in fundraising, pitching, and investor readiness.
- Offer one-on-one mentorship and expert-led sessions to address technical and managerial gaps.

Target Participants

- Fishery Startups
- Students & Youth interested in Fisheries Entrepreneurship
- Fisheries Extension Professionals
- Idea Stage / Pre-Idea Stage Entrepreneurs in Fisheries & Aquaculture
- Aspiring Aqua-preneurs
- Professionals in the Fisheries Startup Ecosystem

Salient Features

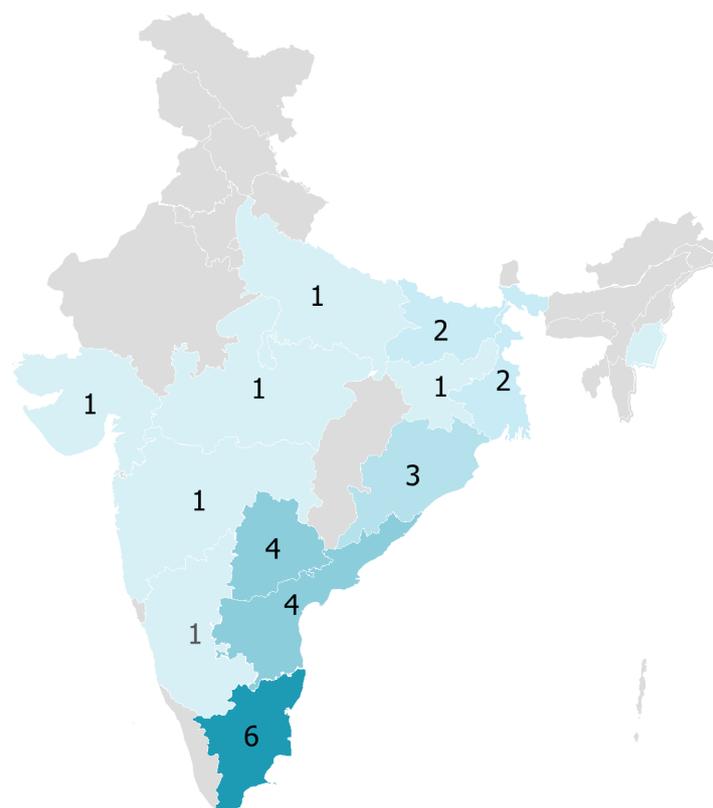
- **22 Days Online Mentoring Program** (15 Days Online Sessions + 7 Days Mentoring / Demo Presentation / One-on-One Sessions)
- **Individual Mentorship** from Fisheries Experts, Incubation Team & Industry Professionals
- **One-on-One Handholding Support** for Startup Growth
- Learning from a **Community of Fisheries Entrepreneurs & Aqua-Startups**
- Exposure to **Fishery Startup Success Stories & Best Practices**

Application Overview

The application for the Pre-Incubation Mentoring Programme for Fisheries Startups was officially launched on 15 August 2025. The programme was conducted from 1 December to 24 December 2025 with the primary objective of nurturing idea-stage and pre-idea-stage fisheries and aquaculture startups through structured mentoring, expert guidance, and ecosystem exposure.

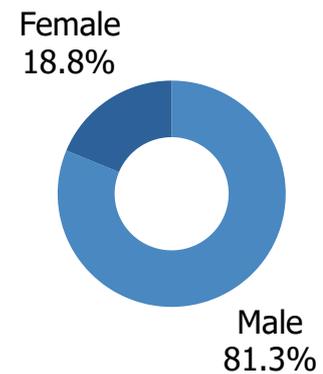
A total of 32 participants enrolled in the programme, representing early-stage ventures from 13 states across India.

State-wise Participant Distribution



This wide geographic representation reflects the growing interest in fisheries entrepreneurship across diverse regions of the country.

With respect to gender distribution, 81.3% of participants were male, while 18.8% were female.



Programme Structure

The Pre-Incubation Mentoring Programme was designed as a structured capacity-building initiative combining technical inputs, practical exposure, and personalized mentoring support for idea and early-stage fisheries startups.

The programme comprised 25 structured sessions, including 14 expert-led technical and managerial sessions and 11 experience-sharing sessions by successful entrepreneurs and industry professionals. The sessions covered key themes such as value chain understanding, business model development, regulatory compliance, government schemes, financial planning, fundraising, branding, technology integration, and scaling strategies.

To ensure targeted support, 13 selected startups received one-on-one mentorship tailored to their specific business ideas and challenges. The programme followed an interactive approach, encouraging discussions, idea refinement, and expert feedback. Certificates were awarded to participants who successfully completed the programme.

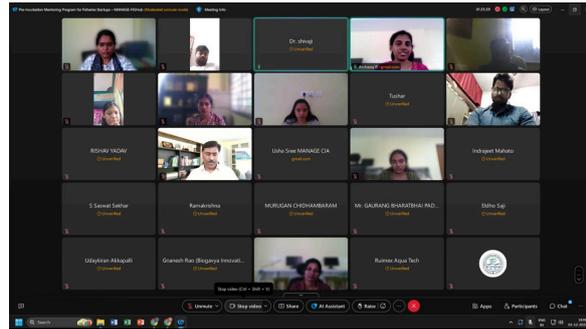
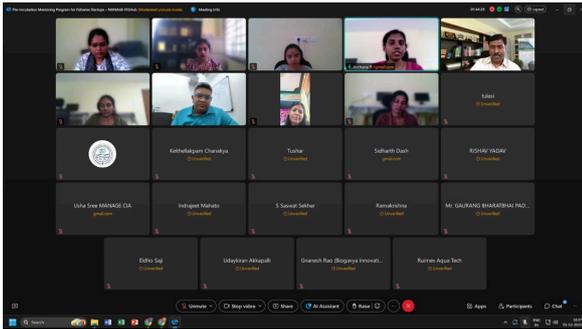
Inaugural Session

The inaugural session of the Pre-Incubation Mentoring Programme for Fisheries Startups was held on 1 December 2025 and was graced by Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE & CEO, MANAGE-FISHub. He formally inaugurated the programme and delivered the inaugural address, warmly welcoming the participants and emphasizing the growing importance of innovation, entrepreneurship, and startup-led transformation in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

In his address, he highlighted the need for structured mentoring, ecosystem support, and capacity building to strengthen idea-stage and early-stage fisheries startups, enabling them to translate innovative concepts into sustainable enterprises.

Following the inaugural address, Ms. Archana R shared an overview of the programme, outlining its objectives, structure, thematic focus areas, and expected outcomes. She briefed participants on the mentoring framework, session components, and the support mechanisms available under the programme.

The session also included participant introductions, during which attendees shared their professional backgrounds, startup ideas, areas of interest within the fisheries value chain, and their expectations from the programme. The interactive exchange set a collaborative tone and facilitated initial networking among participants, mentors, and the organising team.



Expert Sessions

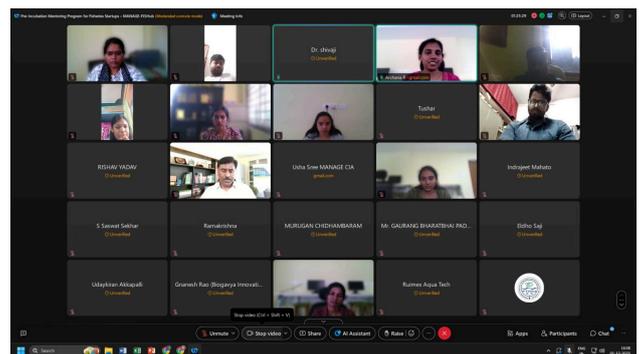
Session 1: From Idea to Market: The Strategic Role of Incubators in Fisheries Startup Scaling

Speaker: Dr. Shivaji Dadabhau Argade, Senior Scientist CIFE, Mumbai

The session focused on the strategic importance of specialized incubation in strengthening fisheries and aquaculture entrepreneurship. The speaker highlighted the sector's rapid growth, increasing domestic demand, and supportive policy environment, emphasizing that aquapreneurship presents significant opportunities for innovation-driven enterprises. However, due to technical complexities, dispersed production systems, and skill gaps across the value chain, the fisheries sector requires tailored incubation support rather than generic startup models.

Two complementary incubation approaches were discussed: the idea-to-market pathway, suited for technology-driven and research-based innovations, and the market-to-idea pathway, which addresses immediate field-level challenges such as price fluctuations, disease management, feed costs, and post-harvest losses.

The session underscored that effective fisheries incubators must combine technical infrastructure, mentorship, regulatory guidance, market linkages, and blended financing mechanisms to accelerate startup scaling while ensuring inclusiveness and sustainability. The discussion concluded with a strong message on building the right entrepreneurial



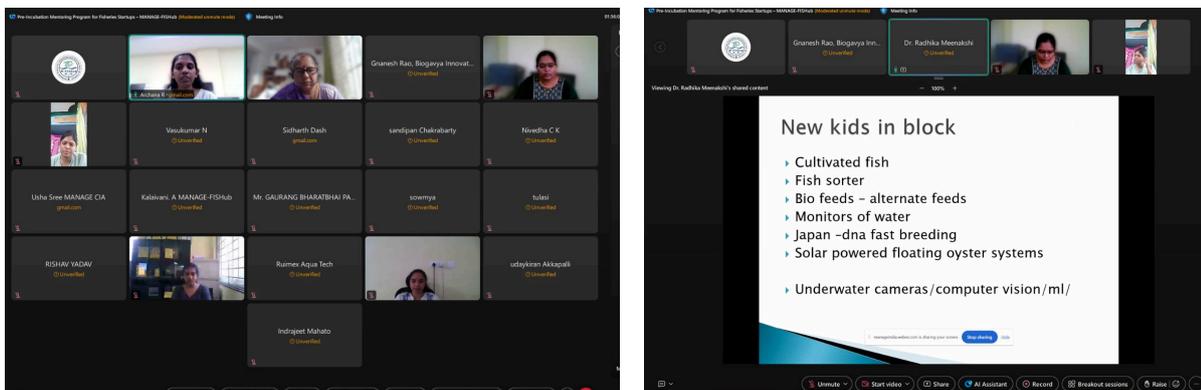
mindset—encouraging participants to gain relevant knowledge and skills, plan strategically, start at a manageable scale, and grow progressively with structured incubation support.

Session 2: Ignition, Validation and Evaluation: Crafting and Assessing Breakthrough Startup Ideas

Speaker: Dr. Radhika Meenakshi Shankar, Entrepreneurship Management Consultant, Wise owl management services

The session was thoughtfully designed to assist aspiring fisheries entrepreneurs in systematically developing, refining, and evaluating innovative startup ideas. The resource person guided participants in identifying high-potential opportunities across the fisheries and aquaculture value chain, encouraging them to move beyond broad concepts toward clearly defined, problem-oriented business ideas. Emphasis was placed on understanding sector-specific gaps and aligning entrepreneurial initiatives with emerging market needs. A key focus of the session was structured idea validation through tools such as basic market research, stakeholder analysis, feasibility assessment, and preliminary business model thinking. Participants were encouraged to critically assess the practicality, scalability, and sustainability of their ideas before proceeding to implementation. The importance of market fit, value proposition clarity, and realistic resource planning was highlighted to reduce early-stage risks.

The session concluded with an engaging interactive discussion, where participants shared their proposed ideas and sought guidance on refining them. The responses and practical suggestions provided helped clarify doubts, strengthen conceptual clarity, and build greater confidence among participants in shaping their entrepreneurial journey within the fisheries sector.

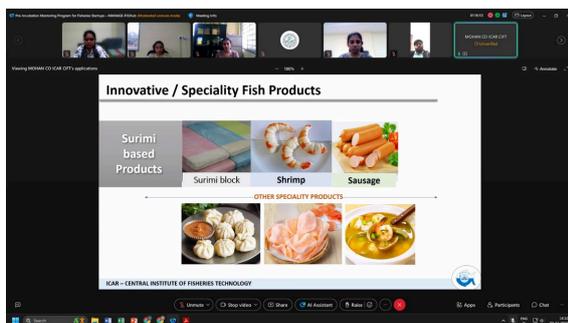


Session 3: Fisheries Innovation: Trends, Opportunities, and the Future of Aquapreneurship

Speaker: Dr. C.O. Mohan, Principal scientist, CIFT

The session provided a comprehensive overview of the current status of fisheries in India, with particular emphasis on its contribution to nutritional security and the evolving fish consumption patterns across the country.

The speaker also discussed global trends influencing the fisheries sector and highlighted the growing impacts of climate change on productivity, sustainability, and resource management. A significant portion of the session focused on the role of research and institutional support in strengthening fisheries entrepreneurship. The support extended by ICAR institutes through technology transfer, Agri-Business Incubators (ABIs), pilot-scale facilities, and guidance in marketing and commercialization was clearly explained. The speaker further emphasized the role of ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) in providing industry-oriented technologies, capacity-building programmes, and technical solutions to support startups and enterprises in the sector. The discussion also underscored the urgent need for focused research and innovation to address sectoral challenges such as inconsistent productivity, soil constraints in specific regions, recurring disease outbreaks, and increasing environmental stress. By integrating practical examples and real-world case insights, the session provided participants with a clearer understanding of current challenges and emerging opportunities within the fisheries ecosystem.



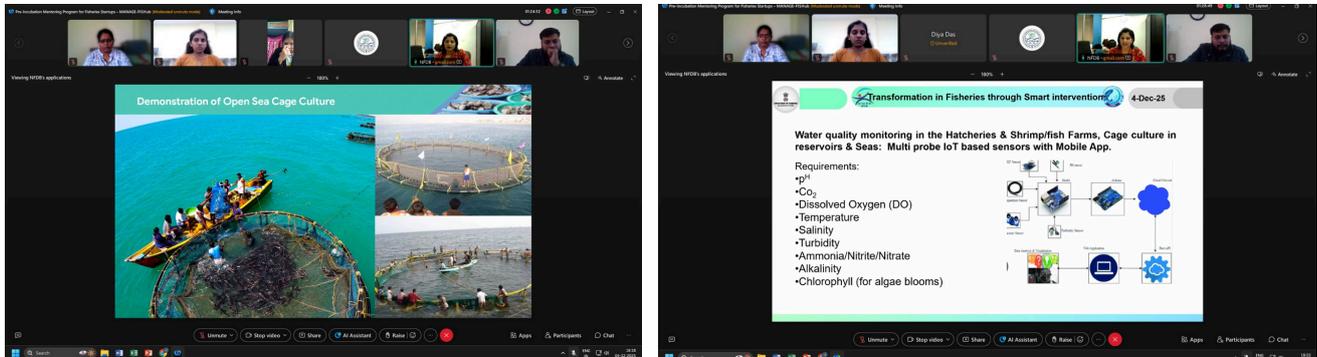
Session 4: Government Support & Funding Avenues for Aqua-Startups

Speaker: Dr. Kanchi Bhargavi Senior Executive (Tech), National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB)

The session offered a comprehensive overview of the current status of Indian fisheries and the institutional mechanisms supporting its growth. The speaker clearly explained the role of the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) and its regional centres in strengthening infrastructure, production systems, and entrepreneurial development across the sector.

Detailed insights were provided on the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), including its major components, objectives, and support mechanisms available for fisheries entrepreneurs. The discussion also covered the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), highlighting funding provisions for infrastructure creation and value chain development. The entrepreneurial models promoted under NFDB, along with the range of eligible activities and flagship initiatives, were explained in a practical and application-oriented manner. Special attention was given to risk mitigation measures in the marine fisheries sector, including insurance support such as the Group Accident Insurance Scheme for fishers.

The speaker also demonstrated the utility of the NFDB web platform as an important information and application resource for startups and stakeholders. The session provided participants with clarity on policy support, financial assistance, and institutional pathways available for scaling fisheries enterprises.



Session 5: Business Model Canvas (BMC): Blueprint for Scalable Aquapreneurship

Speaker: Mr. Ram Bende Founder TDA

The session by Mr. Ram Bende focused on building participants' understanding of the Business Model Canvas (BMC) and its practical relevance in structuring fisheries startup ideas. He clearly explained the concept, purpose, and strategic importance of the BMC as a tool for transforming innovative ideas into well-defined business models. Each of the nine components, ranging from value proposition and customer segments to revenue streams and cost structure, was elaborated with a practical orientation to the fisheries context.

The speaker emphasized how the BMC serves as a strategic framework for planning, resource alignment, operational clarity, and investor communication. Participants were guided on how to systematically develop their own canvases by aligning market needs, value creation, partnerships, and financial sustainability. The session concluded with an interactive discussion, where queries were addressed with practical insights, enhancing participants' confidence in designing structured, scalable, and investment-ready business models.



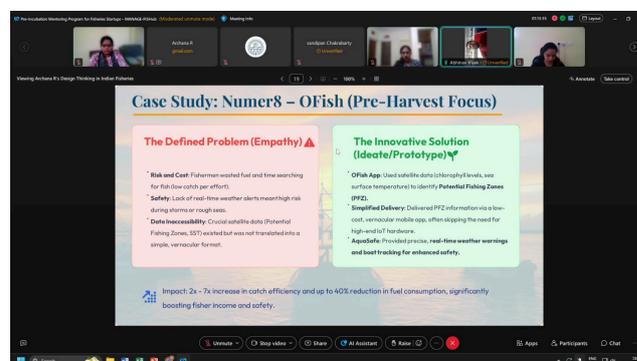
Session 6: Design Thinking: Transforming Customer Needs into Market-Ready Products

Speaker: Mr. Abhinav Vivek Sr. Manager, DeHaat

The session by Mr. Abhinav Vivek introduced participants to the fundamentals of design thinking as a structured and user-centric problem-solving approach for fisheries entrepreneurship. He explained the core principles of design thinking and elaborated on its step-by-step process, empathizing with users, defining the problem, ideating solutions, prototyping, and testing. The session emphasized the importance of deeply understanding customer pain points within the fisheries value chain before developing solutions.

Special attention was given to applying design thinking in fisheries and aquaculture contexts. Through relevant case studies, the speaker demonstrated how startups can address challenges such as post-harvest losses, disease management, feed efficiency, market access gaps, and value-added product development by focusing on real user needs. These examples helped participants understand how innovation must be grounded in field realities and stakeholder experiences.

The session highlighted practical strategies for converting ideas into actionable prototypes and refining them through continuous feedback. It concluded with an engaging discussion where participants actively interacted with the speaker, sought clarification on applying design thinking to their own startup ideas, and gained greater confidence in developing user-driven, market-ready solutions.



Session 7: Mastering Online Growth: Essential Digital Marketing for Aquapreneurial Ventures

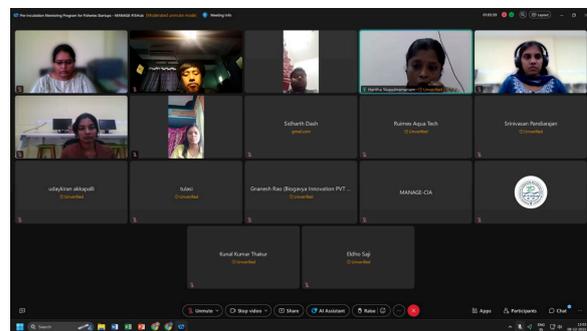
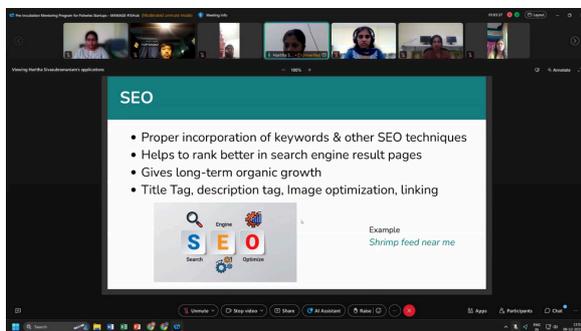
Speaker: Ms Haritha Sivasubramaniam, Digital Marketing Trainer & Personal Branding Strategist

The session introduced participants to the fundamentals of digital marketing and its growing relevance for fisheries and aquaculture enterprises. She explained marketing as a journey from awareness to trust, purchase, repeat sales, and referrals, emphasizing the need for startups to build a strong and credible online presence.

The speaker provided a clear overview of the digital marketing ecosystem, including social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), Google Business Profile, content marketing, online advertising, email marketing, and WhatsApp Business tools.

She highlighted why digital visibility is essential for aquapreneurs, noting that customers and farmers increasingly search online for fish availability, seed quality, disease solutions, and market prices. Practical guidance was offered on choosing the right platforms based on business models (B2B, B2C, consultancy, or tech-based ventures), along with insights into SEO practices, paid advertisements, and audience targeting strategies.

A major focus of the session was content marketing, where she explained different content types—educational, awareness-building, trust-building, promotional, and engagement-based content—relevant to fisheries startups. Through practical examples tailored to aquaculture enterprises, participants gained clarity on how consistent and value-driven content can enhance brand visibility, customer engagement, and business growth. The session concluded with an interactive discussion, enabling participants to better understand how digital tools can be strategically leveraged to scale their ventures.



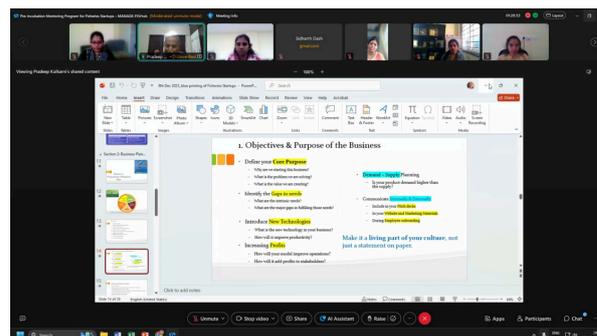
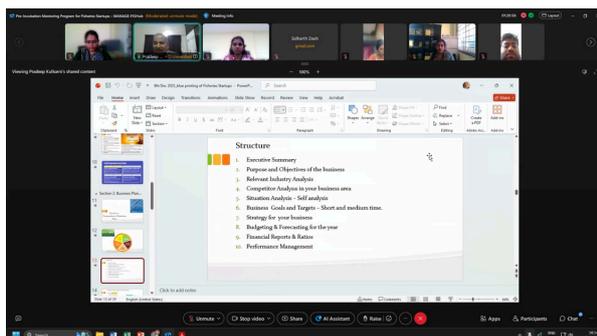
Session 8: Blueprinting Resilient Ventures: Crafting a Robust Business Plan

Speaker: Mr. Pradeep Kulkarni, Consultant Trainer & Banker, Union Bank of India (Retd.)

The session by Mr. Pradeep Kulkarni focused on strengthening participants' capacity to develop a structured and resilient business plan for fisheries startups. He emphasized the strategic importance of business planning as a foundation for sustainability, risk management, and long-term growth. The session covered key components of an effective business plan, including value proposition clarity, market research and analysis, operational strategy, financial planning, revenue projections, and risk mitigation measures.

Particular attention was given to ensuring financial viability and scalability within the fisheries startup ecosystem. The speaker highlighted the need to align technical feasibility with market demand, resource availability, and realistic implementation timelines. Methods for monitoring progress, evaluating performance, and refining strategies were also discussed.

The session concluded with an engaging interaction, where participants sought guidance on structuring their own business plans. The practical insights shared during the discussion helped participants gain clarity on building a strong and sustainable foundation for their entrepreneurial ventures.



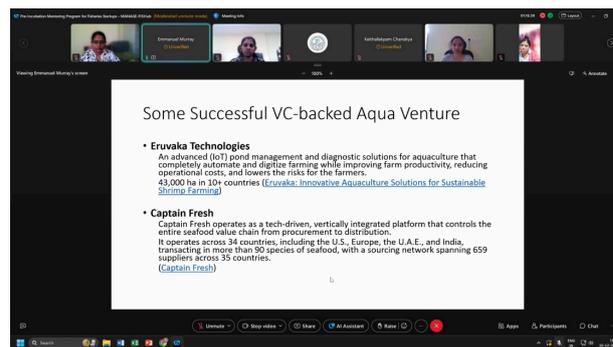
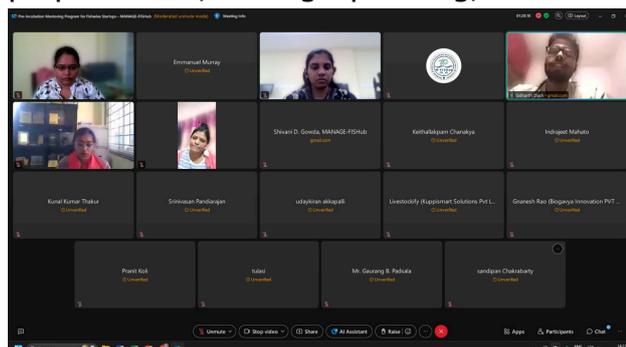
Session 9: Funding Pathways: Accessing Capital and Support for Fisheries Ventures

Speaker: Mr. Emmanuel Murray Investment Director Caspian

The session provided a structured understanding of why capital is essential for fisheries startups, covering needs such as product development, capital expenditure, working capital, branding, and team building. He explained the three primary sources of funding—grants, equity, and debt—highlighting their characteristics, suitability, and relevance across different stages of a startup lifecycle, from ideation to scaling.

A detailed discussion was held on funding sources aligned to each growth stage, including bootstrapping, incubators, angel investors, venture capital, banks, and government schemes. The speaker elaborated on what grant providers, investors, and lenders typically assess—such as uniqueness of the idea, market opportunity, scalability, team strength, financial projections, profitability, and cash flows. He also emphasized the importance of preparing essential documentation, including market feasibility studies, pitch decks, milestone-based financial projections, and regulatory compliance records.

The session further addressed practical challenges in funding aquaculture startups, including sectoral risks, limited insurance coverage, and credit constraints. Concepts such as blended finance, CSR-backed debt, and the “valley of death” in early-stage ventures were discussed to help participants plan fundraising timing strategically. Through real-world examples of venture-backed aqua enterprises and case-based discussions, participants gained clarity on choosing the right financing instrument based on business model, revenue stage, and capital requirements. The session concluded with an encouraging yet realistic perspective on the entrepreneurial journey, emphasizing preparedness, strategic planning, and resilience.



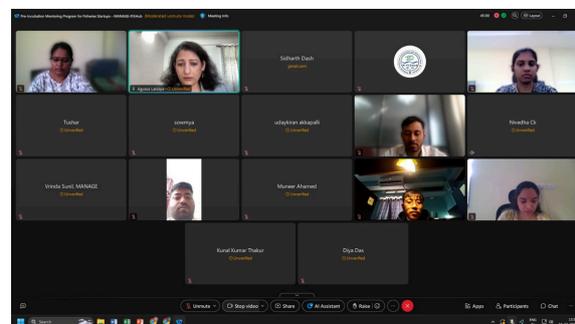
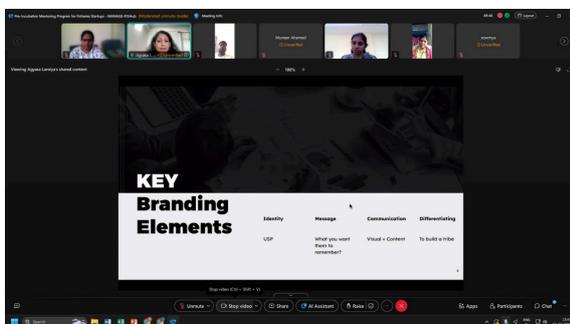
Session 10: Developing Branding Strategies for Innovative Products in fisheries Startups

Speaker: Jigyasa Laroiya Founder Chief Brand Strategist

The session focused on helping aquapreneurs understand branding as a strategic tool for differentiation, trust-building, and long-term business growth. She emphasized the growing importance of personal branding and brand positioning in today's competitive fisheries ecosystem, where startups must clearly define their identity, unique selling proposition (USP), and core message.

The speaker guided participants on identifying their target audience, articulating the specific problem they aim to solve, and defining what makes their product or service distinct within the market. Key branding elements such as positioning, communication strategy (visual and content), niche alignment, sustainability messaging, quality assurance, and transparency were discussed in detail. She highlighted how effective branding enhances credibility among farmers, exporters, and consumers, particularly in areas such as traceability, disease risk management, hygiene standards, and technology integration.

The session also explored competitive positioning and growth orientation, encouraging startups to align their branding with market needs, farmer expectations, digital presence, and industry participation. Participants gained practical clarity on how to build a strong brand narrative, leverage domain expertise, and strategically communicate their value proposition to stand out in the fisheries startup ecosystem.



Session 11: Legal & IP Compliance: Navigating Regulations for Fisheries Startups

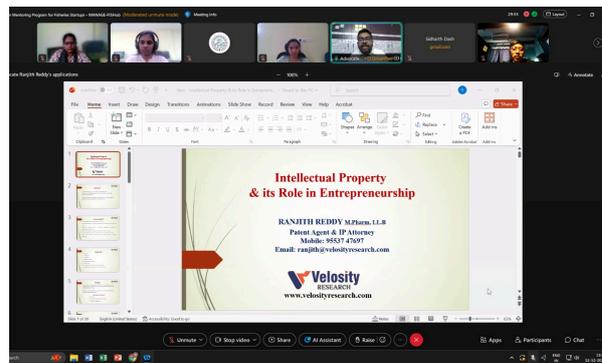
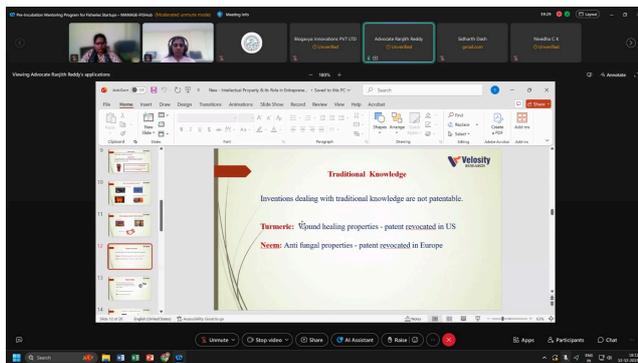
Speaker: Mr. Ranjith Reddy Kondeti (Patent Agent & Advocate) Co-Founder Vesloity Research

The session by Mr. Ranjith provided a comprehensive introduction to Intellectual Property (IP), defined as any creation of the human mind that has economic value and can be legally protected. He emphasized that IP is intangible in nature and arises from intellect, innovation, and creativity. The session underscored the strategic importance of IP protection for early-stage startups, particularly during investor pitches and grant evaluations, where secured intellectual assets enhance credibility, trust, and enterprise valuation.

He also highlighted that IP safeguards the uniqueness of a business idea and reduces the risk of imitation by competitors.

Various forms of Intellectual Property were explained, including patents, copyrights, trademarks, industrial designs, geographical indications, and plant variety protection. The speaker clarified that each form protects a specific category of innovation or creative output, and depending on their operations, startups may hold one or multiple IP protections.

Patents were discussed in detail as a critical tool for protecting technological innovations. A patent is granted based on criteria such as novelty, inventive step, and industrial applicability, following examination by the Indian Patent Office, and provides exclusive rights to the inventor for a period of 20 years. The session also addressed provisions under the Indian Patents Act, including non-patentable inventions such as traditional knowledge, methods of agriculture or horticulture, and plants and animals. The discussion emphasized the importance of legal awareness and strategic evaluation before initiating the IP filing process.



Session 12: Strategic Self-Leadership: Emotional Intelligence and Personality Development

Speaker: Mr.Mohammed Ikan, Director Society for Training and Development in Lakshadweep

The session emphasized that successful aquapreneurship goes beyond technical farming practices and requires strong self-leadership. He highlighted that an aquapreneur must function simultaneously as a farmer, manager, risk analyst, and leader, with a clear focus on mindset, decision-making, time management, and continuous learning.

The speaker introduced the core pillars of strategic self-leadership, including vision-driven thinking, data-based decision-making, operational discipline, financial self-leadership, and continuous innovation. Participants were encouraged to move from traditional to modern, data-driven farming practices by regularly tracking parameters such as water quality, feed conversion ratio (FCR), survival rates, costs, and yields.

He also stressed the importance of separating personal and business finances, understanding break-even points, and managing cash flow cycles effectively. Through the A.Q.U.A. framework—Assess, Quality Control, Upgrade, and Act consistently—the session provided a practical model for self-improvement and enterprise growth. The discussion further highlighted essential personality traits of successful aquapreneurs, including patience, risk awareness, discipline, emotional stability, financial prudence, and ethical responsibility. The session concluded by reinforcing that sustainable business success begins with managing oneself effectively before managing the enterprise.

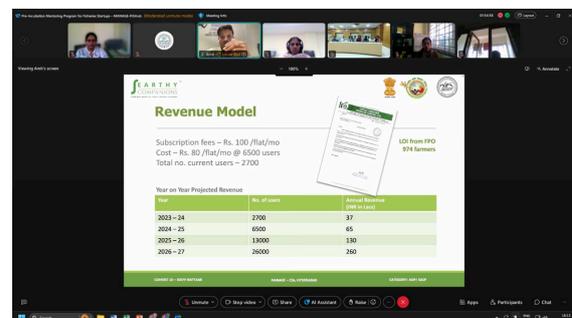
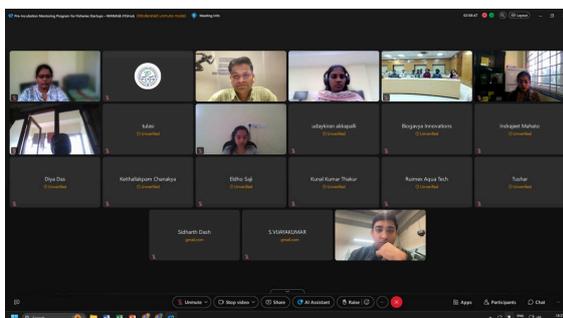
Session 13: The Investment Pitch: Strategy and Structure for Securing Startup Funding

Speaker: Mr. Amit Kale, Manager, IILM University

The session by Mr. Amit Kale focused on equipping participants with the essential skills required to develop an effective and investor-ready pitch deck. He clearly explained the key components of a strong pitch presentation, including problem identification, proposed solution, value proposition, target customers, market opportunity, business model, revenue streams, competitive landscape, and scalability potential. Emphasis was placed on maintaining a logical and coherent flow to ensure that the presentation tells a clear and compelling story.

He highlighted that investors prefer concise, data-supported narratives rather than overly technical or text-heavy slides. Participants were advised to simplify their content, focus on clarity, and present relevant metrics that demonstrate market potential and traction. Practical guidance was also provided on slide design, including maintaining visual consistency, using graphs and charts effectively, and limiting excessive text to enhance readability and engagement.

The session further addressed common mistakes observed in startup pitch decks and offered actionable suggestions to strengthen storytelling, presentation structure, and delivery confidence. Overall, the discussion helped participants understand how to communicate their business ideas persuasively and professionally during investor interactions.



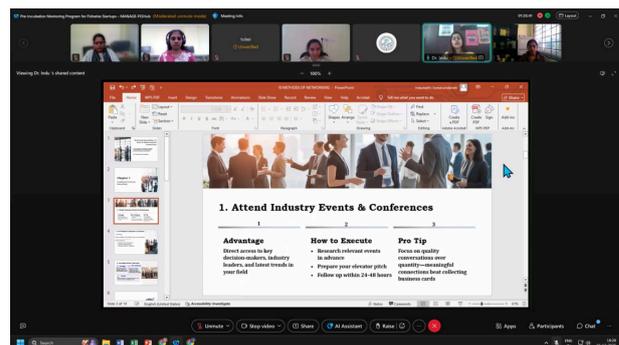
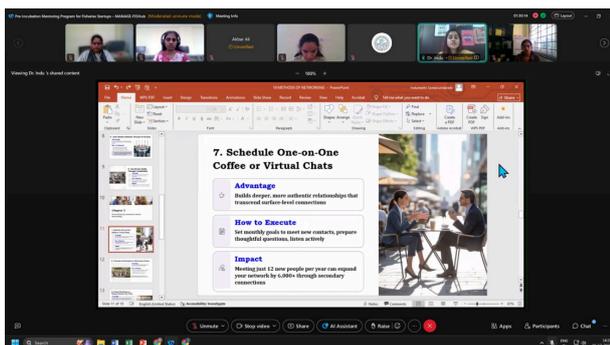
Session 14: Strategic Networking: Building Alliances for Aquapreneurial Growth

Speaker: Dr. Indumathi Somasundaram, Founder & CEO Versatile Indu Learning Academy

The session emphasized that networking is not merely about collecting contacts, but about intentional relationship building that creates mutual support, learning opportunities, and long-term professional growth. She highlighted that in today's competitive ecosystem, networking serves as a strategic advantage, especially considering that a significant proportion of opportunities emerge through referrals and professional connections rather than public listings.

The speaker outlined the core elements of effective networking, including building trust, sharing value, staying connected consistently, and maintaining a balance between giving and receiving support. Practical guidance was provided on developing the right mindset, setting clear networking goals, crafting an effective elevator pitch, and leveraging both online platforms (such as LinkedIn and professional groups) and offline events (workshops, conferences, and industry interactions). She stressed the importance of authenticity, active listening, and thoughtful follow-up in nurturing meaningful professional relationships.

The session also introduced practical tools such as informational interviews, structured follow-up within 24 hours, and maintaining periodic engagement to strengthen connections. Key success principles—quality over quantity, professionalism, curiosity, patience, and consistency—were emphasized as essential traits for sustainable networking. The session concluded with a motivating message that every meaningful opportunity begins with a single, well-nurtured connection.



Experience-sharing sessions

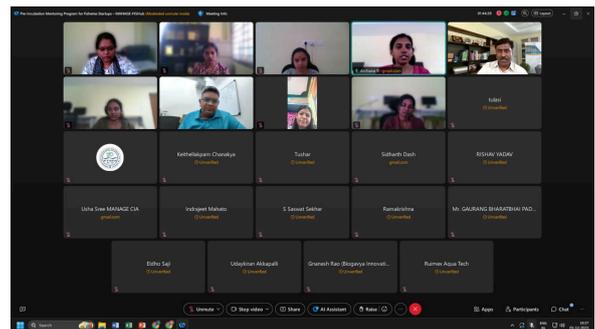
Theme 1: ICT & AI in Aquaculture

Speaker: Mr. Murugan Chidhambaram, Founder & CEO, Aquaconnect

The session highlighted how AI and geospatial technologies are transforming aquaculture through data-driven decision-making. He explained how Aquaconnect integrates satellite remote sensing, deep learning, and ground intelligence to support pond monitoring, demand–supply forecasting, and scientific farm management. The discussion demonstrated how technology can reduce risks, improve productivity, and enhance operational efficiency at the farm level.

The speaker further elaborated on the development of an integrated digital ecosystem covering the entire aquaculture value chain. Through platforms such as AquaBazaar, AquaPartner stores, and AquaCred, Aquaconnect provides farmers and other stakeholders with access to quality inputs, financial services, and structured market linkages. This integrated approach ensures that producers, retailers, processors, and buyers are digitally connected within a unified system.

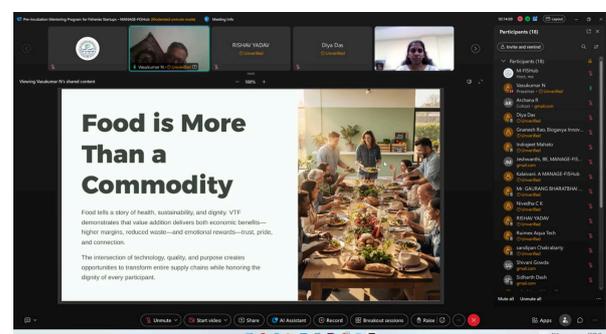
A key highlight of the session was the emphasis on full seafood traceability and scalable impact. Through digital onboarding, pond-level tracking, processing insights, export monitoring, and performance dashboards, the platform ensures transparency and accountability across the value chain.



Theme 2: Food Processing & Value Addition

Speaker: Mr. Vasukumar Nair, Founder & CEO, Vridhi Techno Farms Pvt. Ltd.

The session focused on the importance of value addition in transforming raw fisheries products into premium, market-ready goods. He emphasized that processing not only enhances shelf life and safety but also improves convenience for consumers, thereby increasing overall market potential and profitability.



A key highlight of the session was building consumer trust through traceability. The speaker explained how QR-based tracking systems and transparent supply chain practices enable consumers to verify the origin, quality, and safety of products.

This traceability mechanism strengthens brand credibility and differentiates products in competitive markets.

He further discussed the significance of maintaining residue-free standards through multi-stage testing and certification processes to ensure chemical-free and safe products. The session also underscored how ready-to-cook formats, improved packaging, and strategic branding contribute to enhanced consumer appeal and premium pricing. Overall, the session provided practical insights into leveraging processing, quality assurance, and branding to create higher market value in the fisheries sector.

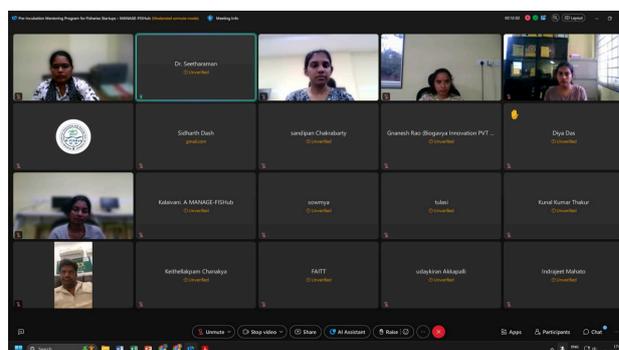
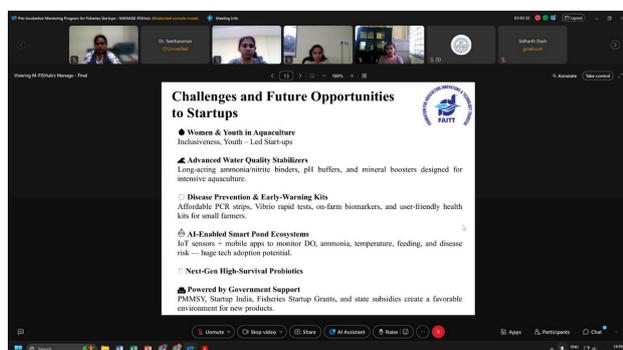
Theme 3: Aquaculture R&D and Innovation

Speaker: Dr. S. Seetharaman, Director, Foundation for Aquaculture Innovations and Technology Transfer (FAITT)

The session focused on identifying critical research and development gaps in Indian aquaculture and the need for innovation-driven solutions. The speaker highlighted persistent challenges such as soil-specific productivity constraints, inadequate disease management systems, and inconsistent seed quality, all of which continue to affect farm output and profitability. These gaps underscore the need for region-specific, science-based interventions to strengthen farm-level resilience.

Emphasis was placed on the transition toward technology-driven farming practices. AI-based monitoring systems, smart pond management tools, precision disease detection, and data-enabled advisory services were discussed as essential components of sustainable and export-oriented aquaculture. The session reinforced that modernization is no longer optional but necessary for improving efficiency, reducing risk, and maintaining global competitiveness.

The discussion also outlined significant opportunities for startups, particularly in developing affordable PCR diagnostic kits, advanced water-quality stabilizers, next-generation probiotics, and cost-effective aeration solutions suited to Indian farming conditions. Government initiatives, incubation support, and digital advisory platforms were recognized as enabling mechanisms that are fostering innovation and creating scalable, farmer-centric solutions within the aquaculture ecosystem.



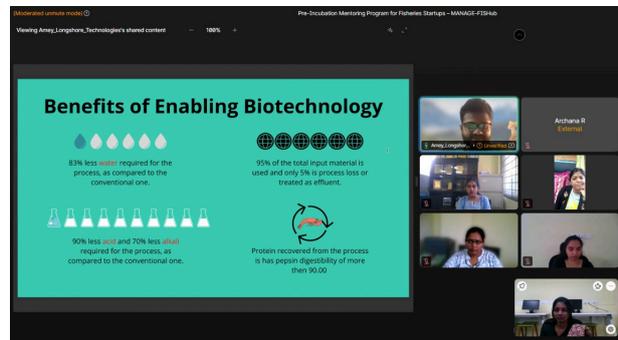
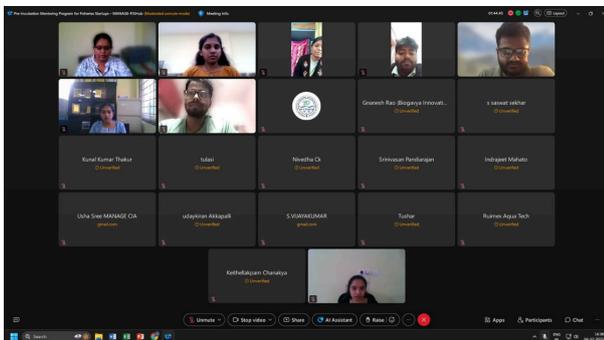
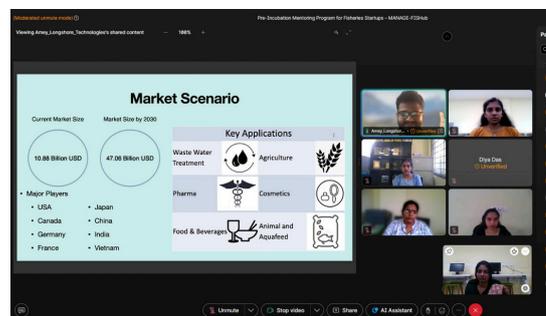
Theme 4: Waste to Wealth in Aquaculture

Speaker: Mr. Amey Naik, Founder & CEO, Longshore Technologies Pvt. Ltd.

The session addressed the pressing issue of prawn and fish processing waste, emphasizing the magnitude of the challenge and the urgent need for effective value addition strategies within the fisheries sector. The speaker highlighted how unmanaged shell and organic waste not only lead to environmental concerns but also represent a significant loss of potential economic value.

An innovative zero-waste model developed by LongShore was presented as a sustainable solution. The model focuses on converting shell waste into high-value products such as protein hydrolysates, chitosan, bio-bandages, and plant growth promoters. This approach demonstrates how biotechnology and circular economy principles can transform waste streams into commercially viable products.

The speaker shared encouraging trial results and discussed the broad market potential of these innovations across agriculture, pharmaceuticals, aquafeed, and cosmetics. The session concluded with insights into future expansion plans aimed at scaling up waste processing capacity.



Theme 5: Shrimp Nutrition, Health & R&D Leadership

Speaker: Dr Kathiravan Velusamy, Founder - Blueaqualife consultancy Co-Founder - Salt crops Think llp

The speaker shared his journey from research to enterprise, emphasizing the transition “from lab to livelihood” through practical and scalable solutions for the blue economy. He highlighted that research must be solution-oriented and commercially viable, moving beyond academic outputs to real-world impact.



He discussed major challenges in shrimp farming, including Running Mortality Syndrome, White Gut and White Feces Syndrome, Vibrio infections, nitrite and pH stress, and WSSV, stressing the need for rapid diagnostics and improved management practices. The lack of affordable, farmer-centric IoT tools and on-site pathogen detection systems was identified as a key technology gap in Indian aquaculture.

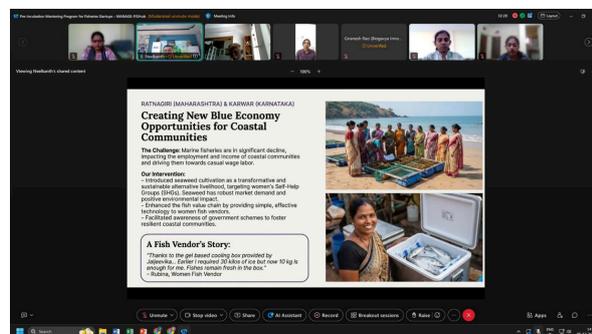
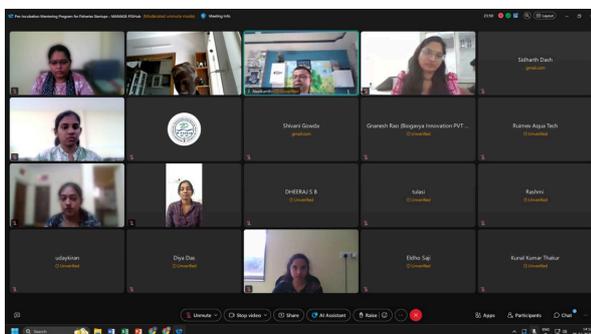
The session also touched on sustainable innovations such as insect-based protein in feed and commercial Salicornia cultivation for new value chains. Concluding with a strong business philosophy, he encouraged participants to build sustainable, scalable, and profitable models and to shift from lab data to farm-level impact.

Theme 6: Sustainable Aquaculture

Speaker: Mr. Neelkanth Mishra, Founder, Jal Jeevika Infotech Private Limited

Mr. Neelkanth Mishra shared his impactful journey of decentralising aquaculture through affordable MINI-RAS technology, demonstrating how innovation can significantly reduce water usage (up to 90%) and minimize land requirements. His approach highlighted the potential of low-cost, scalable systems to make aquaculture more accessible and sustainable.

He emphasized empowering rural and tribal entrepreneurs by providing technology support, ensuring regulatory compliance, and strengthening financial management practices. The session offered practical insights into building inclusive, resource-efficient, and economically viable aquaculture enterprises.



Theme 7: Aquaculture Insurance and Risk Mitigation

Speaker: Mr. Sambheet Samant Sinhar, Founder & CEO, Piscicare Private Limited

The session delivered a comprehensive perspective on risk management in aquaculture, highlighting the various production, environmental, financial, and market-related risks faced by farmers. The speaker emphasized the critical role of insurance in safeguarding farmer livelihoods and ensuring business continuity in an inherently uncertain sector.

He demonstrated how technology—such as satellite monitoring, AI-based risk prediction, diagnostic tools, and digital farm logs—can transform aquaculture into a more scientific, data-driven, and predictable enterprise.

Through the MeenSure model and real-world field experiences, participants gained practical insights into integrating insurance, credit access, and market linkages to strengthen farm resilience. The session concluded with motivating guidance for young entrepreneurs, encouraging them to adopt risk-mitigation strategies and technology-enabled solutions to build sustainable and secure aquaculture ventures.



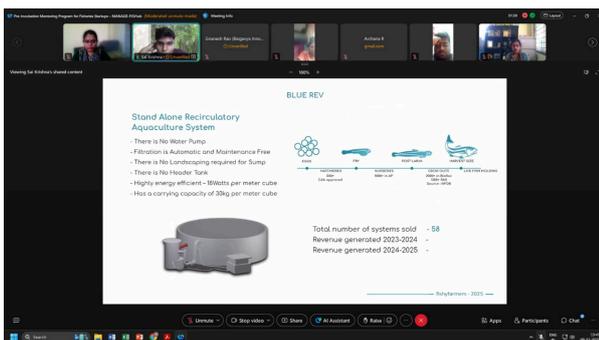
Theme 8: Innovations in Sustainable Water Filtration and Reclamation Systems

Speaker: Mr.Sai Krishna Teki, Chief Executive Officer, Fishyfarmers Pvt Ltd

The session featured insights on Fishy Farmers Private Limited, an innovative enterprise focused on sustainable and resource-efficient aquaculture technologies. The company specializes in designing and manufacturing energy- and water-efficient systems, including aquaponics, hydroponics, advanced filtration units, nanobubble technology, grid-free aquaculture systems, and India’s first automatic bead filter.

The discussion highlighted how their patented filtration and recirculatory solutions support intensive aquaculture while minimizing water use and operational costs. Emphasis was placed on scalable, farmer-centric technologies that enhance productivity with limited resources.

The session reinforced the company’s vision of enabling fish farmers to “grow more with less” and contributing to India’s Blue Revolution through practical, sustainable innovation.



Theme 9: Seaweed culture

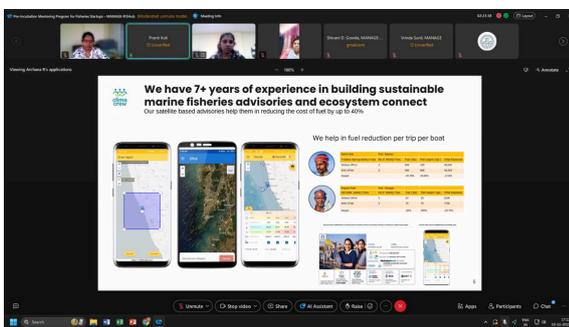
Speaker: Dr. Pranit Koli , Scientist, ClimaCrew Pvt. Ltd.

Dr. Pranit Koli presented an insightful session on leveraging the Blue Economy to build climate resilience in coastal communities. He highlighted the severe impacts of climate change on fisheries and mariculture, including sea-level rise, ecosystem disruption, species migration, and declining fishing days.

He introduced ClimaCrew’s model of integrating satellite-based marine spatial intelligence, GIS analytics, and in-situ validation to identify suitable seaweed cultivation sites and provide climate-smart fisheries advisories. Their digital monitoring systems analyze multiple marine, weather, and bio-geo-chemical parameters to improve crop quality, reduce risk, and optimize decision-making for fishers.

The session emphasized seaweed as a sustainable alternative livelihood, with strong potential in biostimulants, feed supplements, carrageenan, and value-added extracts. Dr. Koli also highlighted the enterprise’s community-driven approach, engaging SHGs, women farmers, and fishing societies across multiple coastal states.

Overall, the session demonstrated how technology, sustainability, and community participation can collectively strengthen coastal livelihoods while advancing climate-resilient aquaculture and fisheries.



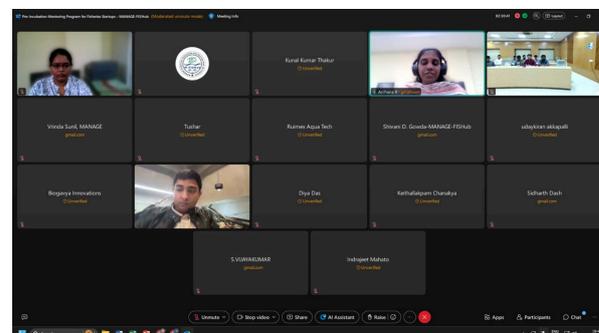
Theme 10: Trends and Best Practices in Contemporary Aquarium Styling

Speaker: Mr. Kshitij Gupta, Founder, Aquascaping

The session highlighted emerging trends and professional standards in modern aquarium styling, focusing on aesthetics, functionality, and sustainability.

The discussion covered best practices in aquascape design, selection of substrates and aquatic plants, lighting optimization, filtration systems, and water quality management. Emphasis was placed on balancing artistic creativity with scientific precision to ensure long-term ecosystem stability within aquariums.

The session also showcased how professional-grade equipment, customized installations, and technical support services cater to both hobbyists and commercial clients. Overall, the session provided valuable insights into contemporary aquarium styling, demonstrating how innovation, design principles, and technical expertise together elevate the aquatics industry.



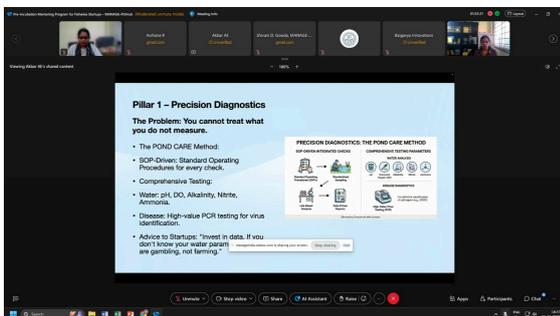
Theme 11: Integrated Farm Support for Sustainable Aquaculture

Speaker: Mr. Shaik Akbar Ali, Founder, IIFSA

The session highlighted the urgent need to shift aquaculture from guesswork to precision farming. The speaker emphasized that preventable disease outbreaks, poor water and soil management, and lack of scientific diagnostics lead to significant financial losses in the sector. He reinforced the message that sustainability is impossible without scientific intervention.

The IIFSA model was presented as a vertically integrated “Pond-to-Plate” ecosystem built on three pillars: precision diagnostics, targeted pond solutions, and a digital backbone. Through Pond Clinics, comprehensive water testing and PCR-based disease diagnostics eliminate uncertainty. The Pond Pharmacy provides scientifically formulated solutions for host health, bioremediation, and emergency response. A 7-app digital ecosystem ensures traceability, transparency, and real-time advisory support.

Impact metrics shared during the session included improved yields, reduced disease incidence, and increased adoption of diagnostic-based decision-making among farmers. The session concluded with a forward-looking vision of scaling the model internationally through modular expansion and partnerships, aiming to deliver sustainable, data-driven aquaculture solutions globally.

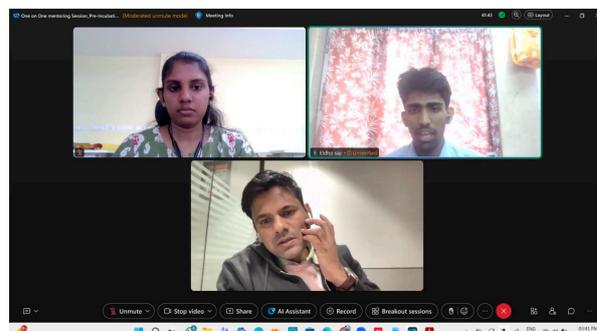
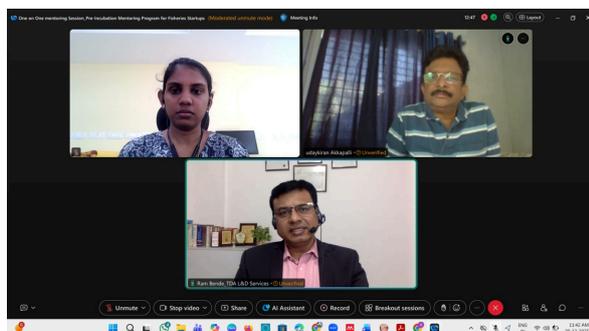
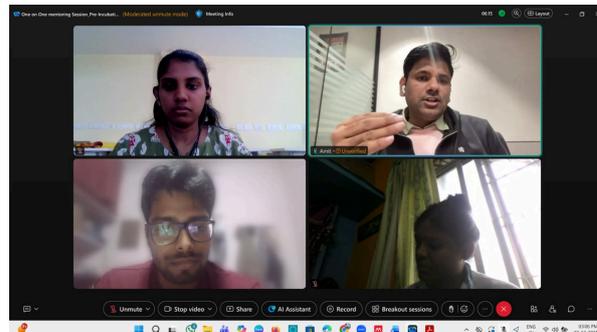
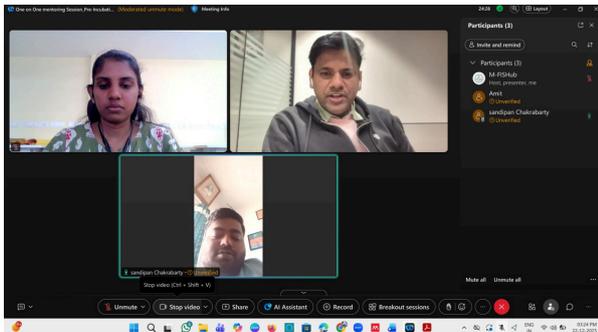


One-on-One Mentoring Sessions

During the final week of the program (18–24 December 2025), each participant was assigned one dedicated mentor from among the experts who had delivered sessions earlier in the program. These one-on-one interactions were designed to provide focused, personalized guidance tailored to each participant’s startup idea and entrepreneurial challenges.

A total of 13 participants received individual mentoring support. During these sessions, participants presented their business concepts, discussed operational or strategic bottlenecks, and sought expert advice on areas such as technology validation, market positioning, financial planning, and scaling strategies. The mentoring sessions were conducted in the presence of a MANAGE–FISHub team member to ensure smooth coordination. All discussions remained strictly confidential, creating a safe and professional space for open dialogue.

These personalized interactions added significant value to the program, offering participants practical insights, clarity in decision-making, and strengthened confidence in advancing their aquapreneurial ventures. In addition, two pitching sessions were conducted for interested participants. Ms. V. Usha Sree (Manager) attended the sessions and provided constructive feedback, offering specific suggestions for refining business models, strengthening value propositions, and improving presentation clarity.



Valedictory Session

The Valedictory Session of the Pre-Incubation Mentoring Program for Fishery Startups under MANAGE–FISHub was held on 24th December 2025. Ms. Archana R presented a brief overview of the program, highlighting the key sessions conducted, expert interactions, and major learning outcomes achieved throughout the mentoring journey.

Participants shared their feedback and reflections, expressing how the program strengthened their entrepreneurial understanding, clarified their startup ideas, and enhanced their confidence to move forward.

Dr. Saravanan Raj delivered the valedictory address, encouraging participants to translate their learning into practical action and build sustainable aquapreneurial ventures. The session concluded with the distribution of certificates to eligible participants, marking the successful completion of the program.

Testimonials



The Pre-Incubation Mentoring Program of MANAGE Fish Hub was instrumental in shaping our startup journey. The program offered structured mentorship, expert-led sessions, and deep sector insights tailored to fisheries and aquaculture ventures. It helped us sharpen our value proposition, strengthen our business model, and align our innovation with market and policy realities. The hands-on

guidance and continuous feedback enabled us to address real-world challenges with clarity and confidence. Peer learning and ecosystem exposure further enriched our perspective on building scalable solutions. Overall, the program significantly accelerated our readiness to grow as a sustainable and impact-driven startup.



The Pre-Incubation Mentoring Programme for Fisheries Startups by MANAGE FISHub was a highly practical and insightful experience for me. The sessions helped me understand the real fundamentals of building a fisheries-based startup right from problem identification and technical feasibility to market linkage and scalability. What stood out most was the clarity provided on sector-specific challenges in

aquaculture and fisheries, along with realistic solutions backed by field experience. The structured mentoring and interactive discussions helped me refine my startup idea and think more strategically about execution.



Participating in the Pre-Incubation Mentoring Programme for Fisheries Startups by MANAGE FISHub was an enriching learning journey. The programme offered a balanced mix of technical knowledge, business insights, and real-world exposure relevant to fisheries and allied sectors. The mentors broke down complex aspects of startup development, such as value proposition, cost structures, compliance, and

sustainability into simple, actionable steps. The peer interactions and case discussions further broadened my perspective on opportunities within the fisheries ecosystem.



The Pre-Incubation Program conducted by MANAGE-FISHub was highly enriching and well-structured. It effectively bridged the gap between innovative ideas and real-world fisheries entrepreneurship through expert mentorship, interactive sessions, and sector-specific guidance. The program provided valuable exposure to the fisheries startup ecosystem, enhanced our understanding of business development, and helped us refine our ideas with a practical and sustainable approach.



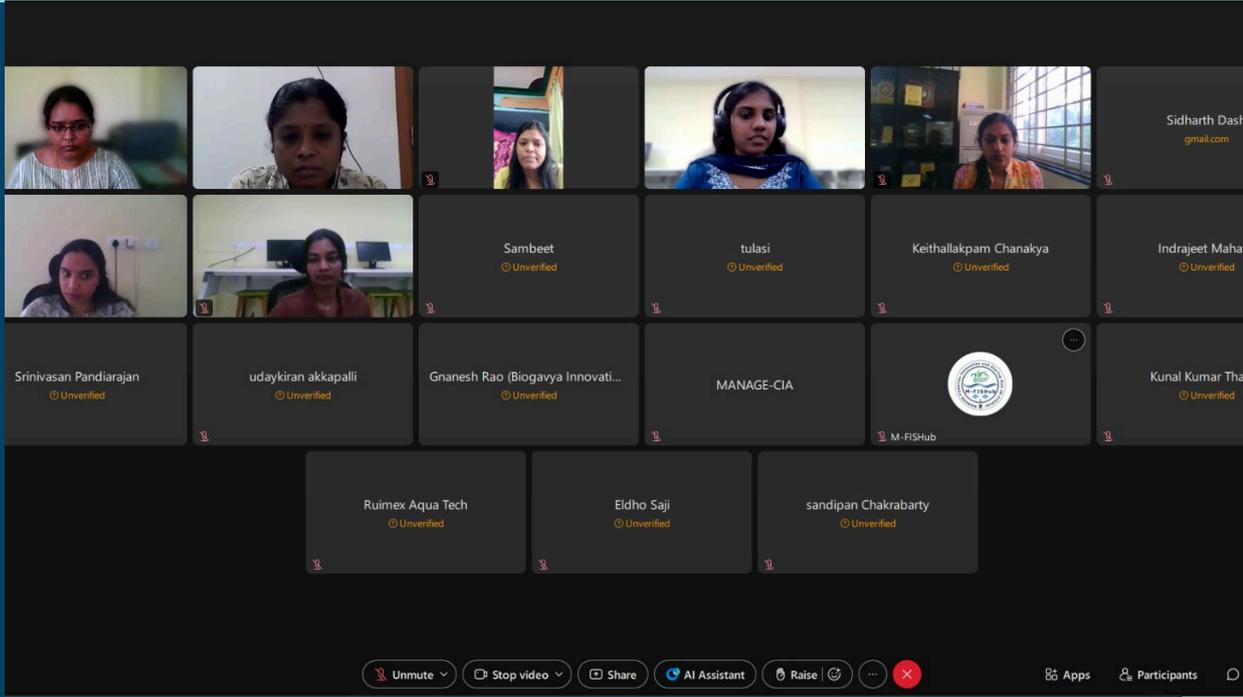
Being part of the MANAGE-FISHub Pre-Incubation Mentoring Program was a truly enriching experience. The program offered strong exposure to expert-led technical sessions and real startup insights. One-on-one mentoring helped refine our thinking and strengthen our business approach. Founder interactions provided practical lessons drawn from real entrepreneurial journeys. The sessions covered technology validation, market understanding, and funding readiness.

Regulatory compliance and scaling strategies were explained with real-world relevance. Each interaction added clarity on building sustainable fisheries-based innovations. The learning was practical, focused, and immediately applicable.

The coordination and mentoring support were highly commendable. Grateful to MANAGE FISHub for empowering early-stage fisheries startups.



The Pre-Incubation Mentoring Program on Fisheries Startup by MANAGE FISH Hub was great. I have learnt a lot from the program such as why we shouldn't have any second choice on entrepreneurship. Also, I would like to know about the different fishery startups happening in India. It was very insightful and I would like to thank you to the whole MANAGE team for organising this type of program. While it was online but it was very interactive.



Program Director

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(A National Fisheries Incubation Centre Supported by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India)

National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)

(An Autonomous Organization of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare,
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