

TROOP COMFORTS LIMITED

Guidelines for DRISHTI Challenges

1. Purpose:

These guidelines establishes a structured institutional framework for TCL to identify, publish, sponsor, fund, administer and manage innovation challenges within the iDEX ecosystem. These guidelines will enable TCL to directly support startups, MSMEs, innovators & academia in solving technology gaps relevant to defence production and strategic capabilities. The framework defines governance mechanisms, financial processes, evaluation procedures, contractual frameworks, project monitoring methods, intellectual property policy and transition pathways from prototype development to scalable production.

2. Strategic Context:

As India's defence innovation ecosystem undergoes rapid transformation toward self-reliance and technology leadership, there is an imperative need for a structured policy framework that actively engages startups and innovators — positioning them as system integrators, manufacturers, and long-term sustainment partners — through innovation challenges precisely aligned with the armed forces' internal technology gaps.

3. Objectives:

These guidelines are formulated with the following objectives:

- (a) To promote indigenous defence innovation by nurturing homegrown capabilities and fostering a culture of research, design and development that progressively reduces strategic dependence on foreign technology.
- (b) To actively engage Start-ups, Innovators and MSMEs as collaborative partners in identifying and solving critical technology challenges faced by the armed forces, thereby broadening the defence industrial base.
- (c) To accelerate the development of emerging defence technologies by creating enabling frameworks that provide structured support, mentorship and resources to innovators working on next-generation solutions.
- (d) To enable rapid prototyping and field validation through dedicated testing mechanisms and user-industry interfaces, ensuring that promising technologies are evaluated and refined under realistic operational conditions.
- (e) To create a sustained and robust pipeline of field-validated technologies that can be seamlessly transitioned into production programmes, strengthening the long-term defence manufacturing and supply ecosystem.
- (f) To support national self-reliance initiatives by aligning defence innovation efforts with the broader vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, positioning India as an emerging global leader in defence technology development and production.

4. Scope:

These guidelines shall apply to all business units, R&D centres, maintenance, engineering, quality and procurement divisions of TCL. All such units shall function within the framework established herein for the purpose of driving structured and outcome-oriented defence innovation. The scope encompasses the following areas:

- (a) Identification of technology challenges across operational, engineering and maintenance domains, wherein respective business units and technical divisions shall systematically assess and document capability gaps and unmet technology requirements that are suitable for resolution through external innovation.
- (b) Launch of innovation challenges through the iDEX platform, providing a formal and transparent mechanism for publishing technology problems to a wider ecosystem of Startups, Innovators and MSMEs, ensuring broad participation and competitive solutioning.
- (c) Funding mechanism governing the allocation, disbursement and monitoring of financial support extended to selected innovators, in alignment with applicable defence procurement and grant frameworks to ensure accountability and efficient utilisation of resources.
- (d) Selection and evaluation of Startups, Innovators and MSMEs through a structured, merit-based process that assesses technical feasibility, organisational capability, and alignment with the defined technology requirements of TCL.
- (e) Prototype development and monitoring through defined milestones, technical reviews and user engagement, ensuring that developed solutions are progressively refined, validated and aligned with operational requirements of the armed forces.
- (f) Technology transition and commercialisation, establishing clear pathways for the integration of successfully validated prototypes into TCL's production programmes and broader defence supply chains, enabling long-term value creation for both the innovator and the organisation.

5. Definitions:

- a) **DRISHTI Challenge** – DPSU- driven Research & Innovation for Strategic and High impact Technology Integration. A structured competition inviting startups/ MSMEs/ innovators/ academia to develop solutions for defined defence technology problems.
- b) **Startup** – A company recognized under relevant national startups policies or equivalent innovation entity.
- c) **Prototype** – A working model demonstrating functional capability of the proposed technology.

6. Governance Structure:

The implementation of the DRISHTI scheme shall follow a structured, sequential process as outlined below. Each stage builds upon the preceding one, ensuring transparency, accountability and operational efficiency across all phases of innovation engagement.

Stage 1 — Challenge Identification and Proposal

All units of TCL shall identify and propose technology challenges suitable for resolution through the DRISHTI scheme. These proposals shall reflect genuine operational, engineering or maintenance gaps and shall be submitted to the R&D Desk in the prescribed format within the stipulated timelines.

Stage 2 — Consolidation and Approval

The R&D Desk shall consolidate all challenges received from the respective units and present a compiled proposal to the Competent Authority for review and approval. Only challenges that meet the defined eligibility and relevance criteria shall be recommended for further processing.

Stage 3 — Upload on iDEX Portal

Upon receipt of approval, the sanctioned challenges shall be formally forwarded to iDEX-DIO for uploading on the iDEX portal. The challenges shall remain open for a defined application period, during which eligible Startups, Innovators, MSMEs and academia may submit their proposals against the published requirements.

Stage 4 — Receipt and Forwarding of Applications

Upon closure of the application window, iDEX shall compile and forward the consolidated list of received applications to TCL for further action. TCL shall acknowledge receipt and initiate the evaluation process in a time-bound manner. TCL Hqrs will issue a form of declaration seeking further information on personal details and sharing technical, commercial, financial and contractual details from the participating agency. This declaration form along with previously submitted documents (8.2.7) will be handed over to **Screening Committee** for recommending successful participants to the Technical Evaluation Committee.

Stage 5 — Technical Evaluation

Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC), constituted by TCL HQ, shall be responsible for undertaking a rigorous assessment of all received startup proposals. The TEC shall evaluate each application on the basis of technical feasibility, innovativeness, organisational capability and alignment with the stated challenge requirements (Details of marking and procedure elaborated at clause no 13), and shall recommend the most suitable innovator for selection.

Stage 6 — Project Monitoring and Fund Management

A. Project Monitoring Group (PMG), constituted by TCL HQ, shall oversee the end-to-end execution of approved projects. The PMG shall be responsible for:

Tracking project progress against defined milestones

Reviewing and approving budget allocations

Overseeing timely disbursement of funds to selected innovators

Ensuring audit compliance and financial oversight throughout the project lifecycle

Stage 7 — Contractual Agreements

The R&D Cell of the respective unit shall be responsible for executing all contractual agreements with the selected innovator prior to commencement of prototype development. These agreements shall define the scope of work, deliverables, timelines, intellectual property arrangements and conditions for milestone-based fund release.

7. Identification of Technology Challenges:

The identification of technology challenges forms the foundational step of the DRISHTI scheme and determines the quality and strategic relevance of all subsequent innovation activities. Each Production Unit of TCL shall conduct **periodic technology gap assessments** in a structured and systematic manner to ensure that challenges proposed under the scheme are operationally significant, technically viable and aligned with national defence priorities.

7.1 Process of Assessment

Each Production Unit shall undertake technology gap assessments at regular intervals as prescribed by TCL HQ. The assessment process shall involve cross-functional participation from engineering, R&D, quality, maintenance and procurement teams to ensure a comprehensive and multi-dimensional view of existing and anticipated technology gaps.

7.2 Sources of Challenge Identification

To ensure that identified challenges are grounded in real-world requirements and strategic priorities, Production Units shall draw inputs from the following sources:

Source 1 — Operational Feedback from Armed Forces

Inputs received directly from end-users, i.e., the armed forces, regarding performance gaps, reliability issues, or unmet capability requirements shall be treated as primary and high-priority sources for challenge identification. Units shall maintain a formal mechanism for capturing and documenting such feedback on a continuous basis.

Source 2 — Import Dependency Analysis

Each unit shall undertake a systematic review of components, sub-systems and technologies that are currently sourced from foreign suppliers. Areas of high import dependency with viable potential for indigenous substitution shall be prioritised as candidates for innovation challenges under the scheme.

Source 3 — Future Technology Road Maps

Emerging technology trends and long-term capability requirements as outlined in national and organisational technology road maps shall be reviewed periodically. Anticipated gaps between current capabilities and future requirements shall be proactively identified and translated into forward-looking innovation challenges.

Source 4 — Manufacturing Process Challenges

Inefficiencies, bottlenecks or technological limitations within existing manufacturing and production processes shall be identified through internal audits and process reviews. Challenges arising from the need to enhance productivity, precision, quality or cost-effectiveness shall be considered eligible for inclusion under the scheme.

Source 5 — Product Modernisation Requirements

Requirements for upgrading, enhancing or modernising existing defence products and platforms to meet evolving operational standards shall be systematically captured. Such modernisation needs, where they involve technology development or innovation, shall be formulated as structured challenges for engagement with the startup ecosystem.

Each unit at TCL will draft Problem Definition Statements (PDS) based on their specific challenges ensuring they include clear performance matrices and expected results. Once collected, TCLHQ will review and approve these statements. The finally approved PDS's will then be shared with iDEX to invite solutions from MSME's, startups, academia and innovators.

8. Preparation of Problem Definition Statement (PDS):

8.1 Purpose

The Problem Definition Statement (PDS) is the foundational document through which TCL formally articulates its technology challenges to prospective innovators. It serves as the primary reference for evaluation, selection and contract formulation and must therefore be prepared with accuracy, completeness and technical rigour. All units shall adhere to the prescribed structure outlined in this section while drafting the PDS.

8.2 Mandatory Components of a PDS

Every Problem Definition Statement submitted under the DRISHTI scheme shall compulsorily contain the following elements:

8.2.1 Title of Challenge

The title shall be concise, specific and descriptive, clearly conveying the nature and domain of the technology challenge. It shall avoid the use of classified terminology while remaining technically meaningful to prospective applicants.

8.2.2 Background and Operational Relevance

This section shall provide prospective applicants with adequate contextual understanding of the challenge. It shall include:

- The operational or functional context necessitating the challenge
- Current limitations or gaps in existing technology or capability
- Strategic relevance of the challenge to TCL's mission and national defence requirements
- All technical inputs, reference data and background information that TCL is authorized to share with applicants to enable informed proposal development

8.2.3 Technical Requirements

This section shall precisely define the technical specifications and performance parameters that the proposed solution must satisfy. It shall include minimum acceptable thresholds, desired performance benchmarks and any applicable standards, certifications or regulatory compliances that the solution must conform to.

8.2.4 Expected Deliverables

This section shall clearly enumerate the tangible outputs required at each stage of the project, including but not limited to design documents, proof-of-concept demonstrations, working prototypes, test reports and final validated systems. Deliverables shall be defined in measurable and verifiable terms to facilitate objective evaluation and milestone-based monitoring.

8.2.5 Development Timeline

A indicative project timeline shall be specified, outlining the expected duration for each phase of development from commencement to final delivery. The timeline shall account for key milestones, review points and field validation activities, and shall serve as the baseline for project monitoring by the PMG.

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8.2.6 Estimated Budget Requirement

An indicative budget envelope for the challenge shall be stated, providing prospective applicants with a reference for the financial scale of the project. The budget estimate shall be prepared in consultation with the finance and R&D divisions of the respective unit and shall be subject to approval by the Competent Authority prior to publication.

8.2.7 Project-Specific Proforma

Each PDS shall be accompanied by a standardised Project-Specific Proforma. Both PDS and Project specific proforma (Declaration Statement) shall be shared with the applicants. The project specific proforma must be complete in all respect and should be submitted by the applicant. The proforma shall capture the following:

Section	Details Required
Applicant Details	Organisation name, registration details, category (Startup / MSME / Innovator/ Academia), key personnel and contact information
Technical Details	Proposed solution approach, technology readiness level, prior experience and relevant credentials
Commercial Details	Proposed commercialisation strategy, market potential and scalability of the solution
Financial Details	Funding requirement, cost breakup, existing financial support received and projected expenditure plan
Contractual Requirements	Acceptance of terms and conditions, IP ownership declaration and willingness to comply with TCL's contractual framework
Declaration	A duly signed declaration by the authorised signatory of the applicant organisation, affirming the accuracy of all information submitted and acceptance of the evaluation process.

Note: Submission of a fully completed and signed Proforma is a prerequisite for eligibility. Applications received without the duly signed Declaration shall not be considered for evaluation.

9. Approval Workflow of Problem statements/Challenges.

9.1 Purpose

The approval workflow establishes a structured, multi-tiered review and authorisation mechanism to ensure that all Problem Definition Statements (PDS) submitted under the DRISHTI scheme are technically sound, financially viable and strategically aligned with TCL's organisational priorities before being published on the iDEX portal. No PDS shall be forwarded to iDEX-DIO without completion of the full approval chain as prescribed herein.

9.2 Approval Stages

The approval of a Problem Definition Statement shall progress through the following sequential stages. Advancement to the next stage shall be contingent upon the satisfactory completion of the preceding stage.

Stage 1 — Preparation of Problem Definition Statement by Unit

The concerned unit shall prepare the Problem Definition Statement in accordance with the prescribed format and mandatory components detailed in Section 8 of this policy. The drafting team shall ensure that

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the PDS reflects a genuine and well-defined technology challenge, with clearly articulated technical requirements, deliverables, timelines and budget estimates before submission for internal review.

Stage 2 — Technical Review by R&D Cell of Respective Unit

The PDS shall be submitted to the R&D Cell of the respective unit for a formal technical review. The R&D Cell shall examine the PDS for:

- Technical accuracy and completeness of the problem statement
- Adequacy and measurability of defined performance parameters
- Appropriateness of expected deliverables and development timelines
- Suitability of the challenge for resolution through external innovation

The R&D Cell shall record its observations and either recommend the PDS for further processing or return it to the drafting team with specific comments for revision. Only PDSs cleared at this stage shall proceed to financial review.

Stage 3 — Financial Feasibility Review by Unit Finance

Following technical clearance, the PDS shall be forwarded to the Finance Division of the respective unit for a financial feasibility review. The Finance Division shall assess:

- Reasonableness and basis of the estimated budget requirement
- Availability of funds and alignment with approved financial plans
- Compliance with applicable financial regulations and procurement guidelines
- Adequacy of the proposed financial structure for milestone-based fund disbursement

The Finance Division shall record its assessment and formally communicate its concurrence or observations to the R&D Cell for necessary action before the PDS is advanced to the next stage.

Stage 4 — Recommendation by Chief General Manager (CGM) of Respective Unit

Upon receipt of technical and financial clearances, the PDS shall be placed before the **Chief General Manager (CGM)** of the respective unit for review and formal recommendation. The CGM shall satisfy themselves of the operational relevance, technical merit and financial prudence of the proposed challenge before recommending the PDS for HQ-level approval. The CGM's recommendation shall be recorded in writing and shall accompany the PDS during its submission to TCL HQ.

Stage 5 — Final Approval by TCL HQ

The duly recommended PDS shall be submitted to **TCL Headquarters** for final approval. The approval shall be accorded by the **Director / Operations** in consultation with the **Director / Finance**, who shall jointly review the PDS with regard to:

- Strategic alignment with TCL's technology and innovation priorities
- Overall financial implications and organisational commitment
- Compliance with the DRISHTI scheme framework and iDEX guidelines

Upon receipt of final approval from the competent authority at TCL HQ, the PDS shall be treated as authorised and shall be formally transmitted to iDEX-DIO for publication on the iDEX portal.

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10. Commercial, Financial and Contractual:

10.1 Purpose

This section establishes the financial architecture governing the funding, disbursement, utilisation and accountability of project funds sanctioned under the DRISHTI scheme. All selected innovators, R&D Cells and Finance Divisions shall strictly adhere to the provisions set forth herein. No deviation from the prescribed funding framework shall be permitted without explicit written approval of the Competent Authority.

10.2 Approval of Funds

The sanction and approval of funds for projects under the DRISHTI scheme shall be governed by **Sl. No. 55 of the Delegation of Financial Powers of TCL**, which covers Internal Research and Development (IRD) projects under the Research and Development category. All financial approvals shall be processed in accordance with the powers and procedures prescribed thereunder.

10.3 Project Funding

(a) All projects approved under the DRISHTI scheme shall be **fully funded by Troop Comforts Limited (TCL)** under the applicable DRISHTI provisions of TCL.

(b) The selected applicant shall not be required to make any matching contribution, co-funding arrangement or financial investment of any nature toward the project. The entire sanctioned project cost shall be borne by TCL.

10.4 Dedicated Project Account

Upon selection and prior to execution of the project agreement, the selected applicant shall comply with the following requirements with respect to project fund management:

(a) The applicant shall open and maintain a **dedicated bank account** exclusively for the receipt and utilisation of funds disbursed under the sanctioned project.

(b) All project-related financial transactions shall be routed exclusively through this dedicated account. No other transactions shall be conducted through this account unless specifically approved in writing by TCL.

(c) Details of the dedicated project account shall be furnished to TCL and the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) prior to the release of the first funding tranche.

10.5 Budget Utilisation Norms

The applicant shall ensure strict compliance with the following budget utilisation norms throughout the project duration:

(a) A **minimum of 75%** of the approved project budget shall be utilised toward direct project development costs, including research, design, fabrication, testing and validation activities.

(b) Primary overheads and indirect expenses shall not exceed **25% of the approved project budget** under any circumstances.

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(c) All expenditure shall be incurred strictly for activities approved under the sanctioned project scope. Any deviation from approved expenditure heads shall require prior written approval of the PMG.

10.6 Milestone-Based Funding Framework

Project funds shall be released in a phased, milestone-based manner in accordance with the Delegation of Financial Powers of TCL. Disbursement of each tranche shall be contingent upon the satisfactory completion and acceptance of prescribed deliverables by the Project Monitoring Group (PMG). The funding structure shall be as follows:

10.6.1 Tranche I — Proof of Concept (PoC)

Funding: 20% of Sanctioned Project Cost

Deliverable	Description
Design Document	Detailed design approach and conceptual architecture of the proposed solution
Feasibility Report	Technical and operational feasibility assessment of the proposed solution

Upon successful submission and acceptance of the above deliverables, the first tranche amounting to **20% of the sanctioned project cost** shall be released to the Challenge Winner, subject to scrutiny and approval by the PMG.

10.6.2 Tranche II — Prototype Development, System Integration and Testing

Funding: 50% of Sanctioned Project Cost

Deliverable	Description
Functional Prototype	Working prototype demonstrating core technical capabilities
System Integration Report	Documentation of integration with relevant systems and interfaces
Testing Results	Outcomes of laboratory or bench-level testing conducted
Performance Validation Report	Validation of prototype performance against specified technical requirements

Upon successful completion and acceptance of the above deliverables, the second tranche amounting to **50% of the sanctioned project cost** shall be released to the Challenge Winner, subject to scrutiny and approval by the PMG.

10.6.3 Tranche III — Final Demonstration and Field Trials

Funding: 30% of Sanctioned Project Cost

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Deliverable	Description
Field Trial Reports	Documented results of field trials conducted under operational or simulated conditions
Final Prototype Demonstration	Formal demonstration of the fully developed prototype to TCL and user representatives
Compliance Report	Assessment of the final solution's compliance against stated operational requirements

Upon successful completion of field trials and formal acceptance of the final demonstration and all prescribed deliverables, the third and final tranche amounting to **30% of the sanctioned project cost** shall be released to the Challenge Winner, subject to scrutiny and approval by the PMG.

10.6.4 Documents Required for Release of Each Funding Tranche

For the release of each successive funding tranche, the applicant shall mandatorily submit the following documents to the PMG:

- (a) Milestone Completion Report, certifying the completion of all deliverables associated with the respective milestone.
- (b) Utilisation Certificate, confirming that funds released in the preceding tranche have been utilised in accordance with the approved budget and project scope.
- (c) Techno-Financial Progress Report, providing an integrated account of technical progress achieved and financial expenditure incurred to date.
- (d) Supporting Technical Evidence, including test data, photographs, demonstration videos, certifications or any other documentation substantiating milestone achievement.

Note: Release of the subsequent tranche shall be initiated only after the PMG has reviewed and accepted all prescribed documents for the current milestone. Incomplete submissions shall not be processed and shall result in a corresponding delay in fund disbursement.

10.7 Non-Permissible Expenditure

Project funds sanctioned under the DRISHTI scheme shall under no circumstances be utilised for the following purposes:

- (a) Refinancing of existing liabilities, loans or financial obligations of any nature.
- (b) Capital or operating expenditure not explicitly approved as part of the sanctioned project scope.
- (c) Entertainment, hospitality or travel expenses not directly related to approved project activities.
- (d) Any expenditure not directly attributable to or necessary for the execution of the approved project.

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Note: Any utilisation of project funds for non-permissible purposes shall constitute a breach of the project agreement and shall render the applicant liable for immediate recovery of misutilised funds along with such penalties as may be prescribed by TCL.

10.8 Financial Reporting and Audit

- (a) The applicant shall maintain accurate, complete and up-to-date financial records for all project-related expenditure throughout the project duration and for a period of **five years** after project closure.
- (b) TCL and the PMG reserve the right to conduct financial audits or inspections of the applicant's project accounts and supporting documentation at any point during or after the project period.
- (c) The applicant shall extend full cooperation to any audit team deputed by TCL, iDEX or any other authorised body, and shall make all relevant financial records available for inspection upon request.

11. Launch of Innovation Challenges

11.1 Purpose

The launch of innovation challenges marks the formal commencement of the open solicitation process under the DRISHTI scheme. This section prescribes the procedure, responsibilities and timelines governing the publication of approved challenges, the management of the application window and the receipt of proposals from the innovation ecosystem. All concerned authorities shall ensure that the launch process is conducted in a transparent, timely and well-coordinated manner to maximise outreach and participation.

11.2 Pre-Launch Requirements

Prior to the launch of any innovation challenge on the iDEX portal, the following pre-conditions shall be mandatorily fulfilled:

- (a) The Problem Definition Statement (PDS) for the challenge shall have been approved by the Competent Authority in accordance with the approval workflow prescribed under Section 9 of this policy.
- (b) The approved PDS, along with the Project-Specific Proforma and all supporting documentation, shall have been formally transmitted to iDEX-DIO by TCL HQ.
- (c) The **Director / Operations** shall have accorded explicit written approval for the launch of the challenge prior to its publication on the iDEX portal. No challenge shall be published without this authorisation.

11.3 Publication of Challenges on iDEX Portal

- (a) Upon receipt of the approved PDS and written authorisation from the Director / Operations, **iDEX-DIO** shall be responsible for uploading and publishing the innovation challenge on the official iDEX website. However, the publication agency will be decided depending on the extant guidelines issued by iDEX-DIO from time to time.

(b) The published challenge shall include all information necessary for prospective applicants to comprehend the problem statement, understand the technical requirements, and prepare a responsive proposal.

(c) TCL shall review the published challenge on the iDEX portal and confirm accuracy of all published information before the application window is formally opened, if desired by iDEX-DIO.

11.4 Application Window

(a) The application window for each innovation challenge shall ordinarily remain open for a period as per extant procedure of iDEX-DIO in this regard. The specific duration shall be determined by TCL HQ in consultation with iDEX-DIO, taking into account the complexity of the challenge and the depth of outreach required.

(b) The opening and closing dates of the application window shall be clearly stated in the published challenge notification and shall be binding on all applicants.

(c) Extension of the application window beyond the notified closing date may be considered in exceptional circumstances, such as insufficient number of applications received (Minimum three participations are mandatory) or technical issues affecting accessibility of the portal, subject to the written approval of the **Director / Operations** and formal request shall be forwarded to iDEX-DIO which it may consider as per their extant rules and regulations.

(d) No application received after the notified closing date and time shall be considered for evaluation, except where an extension has been formally granted and communicated in accordance with clause (c) above.

11.5 Outreach and Dissemination

To ensure maximum participation from eligible Startups, MSMEs, Innovators and Academic institutions, TCL and iDEX-DIO shall jointly endeavour to disseminate information regarding published challenges through any or all of the following channels depending upon nature of project and feasibility of information dissemination and number of participants:

(a) Official iDEX and TCL websites and social media platforms.

(b) Relevant industry associations, startup networks and defence innovation forums.

(c) Academic and research institutions engaged in defence-related research.

(d) Any other channels as may be identified by TCL HQ and iDEX-DIO to maximise reach and awareness (necessary outreach program through virtual/physical mode may be arranged)

11.6 Receipt and Forwarding of Applications

(a) All applications submitted by prospective innovators shall be received and collated by **iDEX-DIO** through the iDEX portal during the application window.

(b) Upon closure of the application window, iDEX-DIO shall compile a consolidated list of all applications received against each challenge and forward the same to **TCL HQ**.

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(c) TCL HQ shall acknowledge receipt of the consolidated applications from iDEX-DIO and shall initiate the evaluation process in accordance with the relevant clauses of this guidelines.

12. Application Process:

(a) Subsequent to receipt of applications from iDEX Portal, TCL will forward a project specific proforma including Applicant Details, Technical, Commercial, Financial, Contractual requirements and Declaration mentioned at para No. 8.2.7, to all the applicants. Accordingly, applicants are required to forward the same with the sought information, duly signed, within a period of 5 days.

Following information should be sought from the applicants along necessary documents through aforementioned proforma.

- Name of Applicant/Organization
- Type of Applicant (Innovator/MSME/Startup/Academia)
- Registered Address
- Contact Person Details
- Mobile Number
- Email ID
- Aadhaar Card of Authorized Signatory.
- PAN Number
- GSTIN (where applicable)
- Brief Profile of Applicant
- Details of Technical Team

In addition to the above following documents shall also be sought from applicants:

Sl No.	Type of Applicant	Document Required
1	Innovator	Note: An Individual Innovator is not required to have a registered entity. However, upon being declared a Challenge Winner under DRISHTI Challenge, the innovator shall be required to establish a legal entity (Public Limited Company, Private Limited Company, Partnership Firm, LLP, One Person Company, or Sole Proprietorship registered under applicable Indian laws as a Startup/MSME) prior to the execution of the Grant Agreement with TCL.”
2	MSME	(i) Incorporation Certificate (ii) UDYAM Registration Certificate (iii) Partnership Deed (for partnership firm)
3	Startup	(i) Incorporation Certificate (ii) DPIIT Registration Certificate (iii) Partnership Deed (for partnership firm)
4	Academia	(i) Bonafide Certificates/ Authorization Certificate from respective Institution.

13. Evaluation Methodology: Evaluation shall follow a multi-stage process:

13.1 Purpose

The evaluation methodology prescribed herein establishes a structured, transparent and merit-based process for the assessment and selection of the most suitable innovator for each challenge launched under the DRISHTI scheme. The evaluation shall be conducted in three sequential stages, with advancement to each successive stage contingent upon satisfactory completion of the preceding one. All evaluation proceedings shall be conducted with strict confidentiality, impartiality and adherence to the criteria prescribed in this section.

13.2 Overview of Evaluation Stages

The evaluation process shall comprise the following three stages:

Stage	Description	Responsible Authority
Stage 1	Eligibility Screening	Screening Committee
Stage 2	Technical Evaluation	Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC)
Stage 3	Final Selection and Approval	TCL HQ / Director / Operations

Stage 1 — Eligibility Screening

13.3 Purpose of Eligibility Screening

The objective of the eligibility screening is to verify that all applications received against a published challenge satisfy the minimum prescribed eligibility criteria before being advanced for substantive technical evaluation. Only applications that successfully clear Stage 1 shall be considered for Stage 2.

13.4 Scope of Screening

The Screening Committee shall examine each application for the following:

- (a) Completeness and accuracy of information submitted through the iDEX portal.
- (b) Availability, relevance and authenticity of all mandatory documents submitted by the applicant through the Project-Specific Proforma prescribed under Section 8.2.7 of this policy.
- (c) Compliance of the applicant with all eligibility conditions notified in the published challenge.

Note: The Screening Committee shall confine its assessment strictly to eligibility verification and document scrutiny. It shall not make any assessment of the technical merit or commercial viability of the proposals at this stage.

13.5 Composition of Screening Committee

The Screening Committee shall be constituted by TCL HQ and shall comprise the following members:

Sl. No.	Role	Criteria for Nomination
1	Chairman	Chief Indigenization Officer (CIO)
2	Member I	Single Point of Contact (SPoC) (From TCLHQ)
3	Member II	Point of Contact (PoC) (From respective factory)

13.6 Outcome of Eligibility Screening

(a) Upon completion of the screening process, the Screening Committee shall prepare a formal **Screening Report** clearly indicating the list of eligible and ineligible applications, along with recorded reasons for rejection of any application at this stage.

(b) The Screening Report, along with the complete application packages of all eligible applicants, shall be forwarded by the Screening Committee to the concerned factory for Stage 2 Technical Evaluation.

(c) Applicants whose applications are rejected at the screening stage shall be intimated accordingly.

Stage 2 — Technical Evaluation

13.7 Purpose of Technical Evaluation

The Technical Evaluation stage constitutes the substantive assessment of shortlisted proposals and is designed to identify the most technically capable and feasible solution for the stated challenge. The evaluation shall be conducted by a Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) through a structured presentation and scoring process.

13.8 Composition of Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC)

The Technical Evaluation Committee shall be constituted by TCL HQ and shall comprise the following members:

Sl. No.	Role	Criteria for Nomination
1	Chairman	Chief General Manager (CGM) of the concerned factory
2	Nodal / Project Officer	Technical Officer(s) from the concerned factory
3	Co-opted Member(s)	Domain experts co-opted as per the specific requirements of the project
4	External Expert	May be nominated by the Chairman of the TEC if specialised external expertise is considered necessary for objective evaluation

Note: The Chairman of the TEC shall have the discretion to co-opt additional technical members or external experts based on the complexity and domain specificity of the challenge. The decision to include external experts shall be recorded with reasons in the TEC proceedings.

13.9 Evaluation Process

(a) All applicants who have successfully cleared Stage 1 eligibility screening shall be invited to present their proposals before the TEC. The mode, duration and format of the presentation shall be communicated to applicants in advance by the concerned factory.

(b) The TEC shall evaluate each proposal on the basis of the prescribed scoring based evaluation criteria and shall independently assign marks to each applicant before arriving at a consolidated score.

(c) All evaluation proceedings, deliberations and scores shall be recorded in the official TEC proceedings document and signed by all members of the committee.

13.10 Technical Evaluation Scoring Criteria

The TEC shall evaluate each proposal on a total of **100 marks** distributed across the following criteria:

Sl. No.	Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Marks
(a)	Alignment with required performance parameters	20
(b)	Detailed solution to the problem statement / challenge	20
(c)	Technical merit of the proposed solution	20
(d)	Feasibility of implementation	20
(e)	Resource sufficiency	20
	Total	100

13.11 Resolution of Tie in Scores

In the event that two or more applicants obtain equal total marks upon completion of the technical evaluation, the tie shall be resolved through the following sequential mechanism:

(a) Priority shall first be determined on the basis of marks obtained in criterion (a) — Alignment with required performance parameters.

(b) If the tie persists, marks obtained in criterion (b) shall be compared, and so on progressively through criteria (c), (d) and (e), until the tie is broken.

(c) In the exceptional circumstance that a tie remains unresolved even after comparison across all individual criteria, the matter shall be referred to the Chairman of the TEC, whose decision, recorded with reasons, shall be final and binding.

13.12 TEC Recommendation

- (a) Upon completion of the evaluation, the TEC shall rank all applicants in descending order of marks obtained and prepare a formal **TEC Recommendation Report**.
- (b) The TEC Recommendation Report shall include the consolidated scores of all evaluated applicants, the proposed ranking, the recommended Challenge Winner.
- (c) The TEC Recommendation Report, duly signed by all members, shall be forwarded to **TCL HQ** for Stage 3 final approval.

Stage 3 — Final Selection and Approval

13.13 Approval by Competent Authority

- (a) Upon receipt of the TEC Recommendation Report, TCL HQ shall place the same before the **Director / Operations** for review and final approval.
- (b) The Director / Operations shall review the TEC's recommendations and, upon being satisfied as to the merit, process and compliance of the evaluation, accord formal approval for the selection of the Challenge Winner.
- (c) In the event that the Director / Operations seeks any clarification or has observations on the TEC recommendations, the matter shall be referred back to the TEC for reconsideration, and a revised recommendation shall be submitted within a period specified by TCL HQ.

13.14 Declaration of Challenge Winner

- (a) Upon receipt of formal approval from the Director / Operations, the selected applicant shall be officially designated as the **Challenge Winner**.
- (b) TCL HQ shall formally communicate the outcome to **IDEX-DIO**, which shall notify the Challenge Winner and all other participating applicants of the result through the IDEX portal (If asked by IDEX-DIO), otherwise the same will be communicated to the winner by TCLHQ.
- (c) The Challenge Winner shall thereafter be required to complete all pre-contractual formalities as prescribed under the contractual framework of the DRISHTI scheme within the timelines communicated by the concerned factory.

13.15 Confidentiality of Evaluation Proceedings

- (a) All deliberations, scores, rankings and proceedings of the Screening Committee and TEC shall be treated as strictly confidential and shall not be disclosed to any applicant or external party during or after the evaluation process, except as may be required by law or authorised in writing by the Competent Authority.
- (b) All members of the Screening Committee and TEC shall be required to sign a **confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration** prior to commencement of evaluation proceedings. Any member with a declared conflict of interest shall be recused from the evaluation of the concerned application.

14. Contractual Framework:

The primary contractual instrument governing all projects under the DRISHTI scheme shall be the Innovation Development Agreement (IDA). The IDA shall be executed between the selected Challenge Winner and TCL or the concerned unit of TCL, as designated by TCL HQ at the time of award.

15. Project Execution, Monitoring, Testing and Transition

15.1 Purpose

This section establishes the framework for execution, oversight, testing and technology transition for all projects sanctioned under the DRISHTI scheme. Every project shall be governed by the mechanisms prescribed herein from the date of IDA execution through to successful transition to production.

15.2 Project Execution

Each project sanctioned under the DRISHTI scheme shall have a designated **Project Monitoring Group (PMG)** responsible for end-to-end oversight of project execution. No project activity shall commence and no funds shall be disbursed prior to the constitution of the PMG and execution of the IDA.

15.3 Project Monitoring Group (PMG)

15.3.1 Constitution

The PMG shall be constituted by **TCL HQ** for each sanctioned project and shall be operationalised simultaneously with the execution of the IDA.

15.3.2 Composition

Sl. No.	Role	Criteria for Nomination
1	Chairman	Chief General Manager (CGM) of the concerned factory
2	Finance Officer	Officer(s) from the Finance Division
3	Nodal / Project Officer	Technical Officer(s) from the concerned factory
4	Co-opted Member(s)	Domain expert co-opted as per project requirements

Note: The PMG Chairman may co-opt additional members based on the complexity and domain requirements of the project. Such co-option shall be recorded in writing and communicated to TCL HQ.

15.4 Monitoring Mechanisms

The PMG shall oversee project execution through the following structured monitoring mechanisms:

(a) Quarterly Progress Reviews: The PMG shall conduct formal quarterly reviews to assess overall project progress against the approved milestone schedule, identify emerging risks and direct corrective action where required.

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(b) Technical Milestone Evaluations: At each prescribed milestone, the PMG shall formally evaluate all deliverables submitted by the Challenge Winner and record acceptance or rejection with reasons before recommending release of the corresponding funding tranche.

(c) Financial Utilisation Reviews: The PMG shall review Utilisation Certificates, Techno-Financial Progress Reports and expenditure statements at each milestone to ensure compliance with approved budget norms and non-permissible expenditure provisions prescribed under Section 10 of this policy.

(d) Prototype Demonstration Checkpoints: At designated stages of development, the Challenge Winner shall demonstrate the prototype to the PMG. The PMG shall assess functional performance against specified technical requirements and record its findings before authorising progression to the next project phase.

15.5 Prototype Testing and Validation

Upon development of the prototype, the Challenge Winner shall subject it to a comprehensive testing and validation programme as directed by the PMG. Testing shall be conducted in a progressive manner and may include the following, as applicable to the nature of the challenge:

(a) Laboratory Testing: Initial bench-level testing to verify core technical functionality and performance against specified parameters under controlled conditions.

(b) Environmental Testing: Assessment of prototype performance and structural integrity under varying environmental conditions relevant to intended operational deployment.

(c) Field Trials: Evaluation of the prototype under realistic or simulated operational conditions in coordination with the concerned unit and, where applicable, user representatives from the armed forces.

(d) User Evaluation: Formal assessment of the prototype by designated end-users to validate operational suitability, ergonomics and compliance with stated user requirements.

The PMG shall record the outcome of each testing stage and shall recommend progression to the next stage only upon satisfactory completion of the preceding one. All test reports shall form part of the official project record.

15.6 Transition to Production

15.6.1 General

Upon successful completion of all testing, validation and field trials, and upon formal acceptance of the final prototype by the PMG and TCL HQ, the validated technology shall be considered for transition to commercial production. Since all intellectual property generated under the project vests in TCL in accordance with Section 16.2, TCL shall have full authority to determine the mode, agency and terms of production transition without requiring additional consent from the Challenge Winner.

15.6.2 Modes of Transition

Transition may be effected through either of the following modes as determined by TCL HQ:

(a) Joint Manufacturing Programme: TCL and the Challenge Winner may collaboratively undertake production of the validated technology. The Challenge Winner's participation shall be subject to their status as an Established Supplier under Section 16.5. Roles, responsibilities, production obligations and revenue sharing shall be defined through a formal **Joint Manufacturing Agreement**. TCL shall retain

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the right to onboard alternate manufacturing agencies in parallel without requiring the Challenge Winner's consent.

(b) Licensed Production Programme: TCL may independently manufacture the validated technology by exercising its unrestricted and perpetual rights under Section 16.3, without requiring a separate licence from the Challenge Winner. Where a non-exclusive commercial licence has been granted to the innovator under Section 16.6, royalty obligations shall be governed by the parameters prescribed thereunder.

15.6.3 Transition Agreement

(a) The mode of transition shall be determined on a case-by-case basis taking into account the nature of the technology, manufacturing capabilities, commercial considerations and applicable defence procurement guidelines.

(b) Transition shall be formalised through a **separate Transition Agreement**, distinct from the IDA, which shall explicitly incorporate all IP ownership, licensing and royalty provisions of Section 16 and shall not contain any clause that dilutes TCL's rights thereunder.

(c) The Transition Agreement shall require approval of the **Competent Authority at TCL HQ** prior to execution.

Note: Participation in any mode of production transition shall not confer exclusive manufacturing, supply or procurement rights upon the Challenge Winner. The innovator's entitlement shall be limited to Established Supplier status under Section 16.5 and the non-exclusive commercial licence under Section 16.6, where expressly granted.

16. Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer:

16.1 Purpose

This section establishes the framework governing ownership, transfer and commercialisation of all intellectual property (IP) and technology generated under projects sanctioned through the DRISHTI scheme. All parties shall be bound by the provisions prescribed herein, which shall be incorporated without modification into the Innovation Development Agreement (IDA) executed under Section 14 of this policy.

16.2 Vesting of Intellectual Property

(a) All intellectual property generated during the course of a project under the DRISHTI scheme, including but not limited to Transfer of Technology (ToT), designs, formulations, source codes, patents, technical know-how and associated documentation, shall vest in or be irrevocably licensed to **Troop Comforts Limited (TCL)** upon generation.

(b) This provision shall apply regardless of the stage of project completion at which the IP is generated and shall survive the termination or expiry of the IDA.

16.3 Rights of Troop Comforts Limited

(a) TCL shall have **unrestricted and perpetual rights** to use, manufacture, modify, transfer, license, share and commercialise any technology or intellectual property developed under a DRISHTI scheme project.

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(b) TCL may transfer or license such technology to any government agency, production partner, manufacturing agency or third party as it deems appropriate, **without requiring additional consent** from the Challenge Winner at the time of such transfer.

16.4 Third-Party IP Compliance

The applicant shall warrant and ensure that the proposed solution and all elements thereof do not infringe upon any third-party intellectual property rights. In the event of any claim of third-party IP infringement arising from the project, the applicant shall bear full responsibility for resolution of such claims and shall indemnify TCL against any consequential liability.

16.5 Recognition as Established Supplier

An innovator who has successfully completed prototype evaluation under the DRISHTI scheme shall be accorded the status of **Established Supplier** for the item developed. The innovator shall be provided BNE status as per MoD ID No. 1(13)/D(Acq)/16 dated 30.06.2017 i.e Guidelines for inclusion of Buyer Nominated Equipment (BNE) issued by Acquisition Wing Secretariat, Ministry of Defence.

16.6 Non-Exclusive Commercial Licence to Innovator

(a) Depending upon the sensitivity and strategic nature of the project, TCL may, on a **case-to-case basis**, grant a **non-exclusive commercial licence** to the innovator to exploit the developed technology for commercial purposes.

(b) Such licence, where granted, shall be on a **royalty basis**, subject to the innovator agreeing to pay a royalty fee as follows:

Parameter	Applicable Condition
Royalty Rate	Up to 2% of the supply cost per manufactured unit
Maximum Royalty Cap	Up to 10 times the total cost incurred by TCL in developing the product or technology

(c) The terms and conditions of the non-exclusive licence, including the royalty rate, payment schedule, duration and scope of commercialisation rights, shall be incorporated into the contract executed between TCL and the innovator.

(d) Grant of a non-exclusive commercial licence shall be at the sole discretion of TCL and shall not be construed as an entitlement of the innovator. The decision shall be made by the **Competent Authority at TCL HQ** (Director/Operations) with reasons recorded in writing.

17. Audit and Financial Verification:

17.1 Purpose

This section establishes the audit and financial verification obligations of the Challenge Winner to ensure transparency, accountability and proper utilisation of funds disbursed under the DRISHTI scheme.

Compliance with the provisions prescribed herein is mandatory for all project participants and shall be incorporated as a binding obligation in the Innovation Development Agreement (IDA).

17.2 Obligations of the Challenge Winner

The Challenge Winner shall be bound by the following audit and verification obligations throughout the project duration and for a period of **five years** after project closure:

(a) Maintain complete, accurate and up-to-date financial and technical records of all project activities, expenditures and outcomes in a manner that facilitates independent verification and audit at any point during or after the project period.

(b) Cooperate fully and without restriction with all financial, technical and performance audits conducted by TCL, iDEX-DIO or any other agency authorised by TCL for this purpose. Such audits may be conducted with or without prior notice at TCL's discretion.

(c) Submit all documentation, accounts, records and supporting evidence sought during audit and verification processes within the timelines specified by the auditing authority.

Note: Failure to maintain adequate records or non-cooperation with audit proceedings shall constitute a breach of the IDA and may result in suspension of further fund disbursements, recovery of funds already released, or such other action as may be deemed appropriate by TCL HQ.

18. Manufacturing and Commercialisation Rights

18.1 Rights of Troop Comforts Limited

(a) Troop Comforts Limited shall retain **full and unrestricted rights** to identify, authorise, onboard and develop alternate manufacturing agencies for the production of any solution developed under the DRISHTI scheme, at any time and without requiring the consent of the original Challenge Winner.

(b) Participation in an innovation challenge under the DRISHTI scheme shall not confer upon the applicant any **exclusive rights** of any nature, including exclusive manufacturing, supply, licensing or procurement rights, with respect to the developed solution or any derivative thereof.

Note: The rights prescribed under this section are without prejudice to the provisions governing the non-exclusive commercial licence that may be granted to the innovator on a case-to-case basis.

19. Confidentiality

19.1 Purpose

All information, data, documentation and outcomes generated or exchanged in connection with a project under the DRISHTI scheme are of a sensitive and proprietary nature. The confidentiality obligations prescribed herein are binding on the Challenge Winner and shall form an integral part of the IDA.

19.2 Obligations of the Challenge Winner

The Challenge Winner shall comply with the following confidentiality obligations:

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(a) Execute a **Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)** in the format prescribed and provided by TCL, prior to commencement of any project activity or access to any project-related information (**Attached as Annexure –‘A’**)

(b) Maintain strict confidentiality of all project-related information, data, technical documentation, financial details and project outcomes, both during the project execution period and for a period of **five years** after project completion or commercialisation, whichever is later.

(c) Ensure that all personnel engaged by the Challenge Winner in connection with the project are made aware of and are bound by equivalent confidentiality obligations, and that appropriate internal controls are in place to prevent unauthorised disclosure.

(d) Not disclose any project-related information to any third party without the prior written consent of TCL, except where disclosure is required by applicable law or by order of a competent court or authority, in which case TCL shall be notified immediately and in advance of such disclosure.

Note: Breach of confidentiality obligations shall render the Challenge Winner liable to such remedies as are available under applicable law and as prescribed in the IDA, including termination of the project agreement and recovery of funds disbursed.

20. Risk Management

20.1 Purpose

Proactive identification and mitigation of project risks is essential to ensuring the timely and successful completion of innovation projects under the DRISHTI scheme. This section prescribes the risk management framework within which all projects shall be governed.

20.2 Categories of Project Risk

All projects under the DRISHTI scheme shall be assessed for the following categories of risk, which shall be monitored and addressed on a continuous basis by the PMG:

Sl. No.	Risk Category	Description
(a)	Technology Risk	Failure of the proposed technology to meet specified performance parameters or achieve proof of concept
(b)	Schedule Risk	Delays in project execution resulting in non-achievement of milestones within prescribed timelines
(c)	Financial Risk	Budget overruns, misutilisation of funds or inadequacy of sanctioned resources to complete the project
(d)	Regulatory Risk	Constraints arising from applicable statutory, regulatory or defence procurement compliance requirements that impede project execution

20.3 Risk Monitoring and Mitigation

(a) The **Project Monitoring Group (PMG)** shall be the primary authority responsible for periodic risk assessment and mitigation oversight for each project under its purview.

(b) The PMG shall review the risk status of each project at every quarterly progress review and at each milestone evaluation, and shall document its assessment in the official PMG proceedings.

(c) Upon identification of a risk or an adverse development, the PMG shall evaluate the situation and recommend appropriate remedial or corrective measures, which may include one or more of the following:

- Issuance of technical or operational guidance to the Challenge Winner
- Sanction of additional expenditure where warranted and within the delegated powers of the PMG
- Extension of the Project Delivery Commitment (PDC) date with reasons recorded in writing
- Closure or short closure of the project where continuation is assessed to be technically or financially unviable

(d) All recommendations of the PMG in respect of risk mitigation measures shall be placed before the **Competent Authority** for approval in accordance with the extent of the **Delegation of Financial Powers of TCL** applicable to the nature and quantum of the proposed measure.

(e) The Challenge Winner shall proactively communicate any emerging risks or adverse developments to the PMG at the earliest opportunity and shall not wait until a scheduled review to report a situation that may materially impact project progress.

26. Review and Amendments: The guideline shall be reviewed every three years or earlier, if required.

————— END —————

Above Guidelines are approved by the Competent Authority of TCL

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