DIGITAL STARTUP INDIA

The DPIIT Application Checklist

Tick every box before you click submit on NSWS — 2026 rules

Updated **September 2026**
Per Gazette **G.S.R. 108(E)**
dated 4 Feb 2026

What changed in February 2026: Turnover ceiling doubled to **₹200 crore** · New **Deep Tech** category (20 years, ₹300 crore) · **Cooperative societies** now eligible · New **negative list** on how startup capital is deployed · Applications are filed on **nsws.gov.in**, not the old Startup India form.

1 Eligibility — all six must be true

- ☐ **Entity type** is Private Limited, LLP, Registered Partnership Firm, or Cooperative Society — a sole proprietorship cannot apply **MUST**
- ☐ **Age** is within 10 years of the incorporation date on the certificate — 20 years if Deep Tech; not counted from launch or first revenue **MUST**
- ☐ **Turnover** stayed under ₹200 crore in *every* financial year since incorporation — ₹300 crore for Deep Tech **MUST**
- ☐ **Innovation** — you work on innovation, development or improvement of a product, service or process, or have a scalable model with employment/wealth potential **MUST**
- ☐ **Original entity** — not formed by splitting up or reconstructing an existing business **MUST**
- ☐ **Incorporated in India** **MUST**

2 Documents — scan clean, name clearly, upload as PDF

- ☐ Certificate of Incorporation / Registration **MUST**
- ☐ PAN card **of the entity** (not a director's) **MUST**
- ☐ MOA & AOA / LLP Agreement / Partnership Deed **MUST**
- ☐ Authorisation letter on company letterhead, signed **MUST**
- ☐ Innovation write-up (see section 4) **MUST**
- ☐ Board resolution approving the application (companies) **MUST**
- ☐ Business plan or pitch deck **STRONG**
- ☐ Proof of concept — prototype, screenshots, demo video **STRONG**
- ☐ Live website or app link **STRONG**
- ☐ Patent / trademark filing receipts **STRONG**
- ☐ R&D expenditure statement + research records **DEEP TECH**
- ☐ IP filings evidencing novel technology **DEEP TECH**

3 Data accuracy — where most rejections actually happen

- ☐ Company name spelling matches the incorporation certificate **character for character**
- ☐ CIN / LLPIN copied, not typed from memory
- ☐ Incorporation date matches the certificate exactly
- ☐ Registered address matches MCA records
- ☐ Every director / partner name, DIN or DPIN, email and mobile matches MCA records
- ☐ NSWS account created with a **business email** someone actually checks
- ☐ Every uploaded PDF opens cleanly, is not cropped, and is fully readable

The Innovation Write-Up & Final Check

The one box that decides your application

4 The innovation write-up — five blocks, in this order

1. **The problem** — specific, and quantified if you can. Who loses what, and how much?
2. **Your solution** — what it actually does, mechanically. Not what it "enables" — what it *does*.
3. **What makes it different** — compared to what exists today, named directly.
4. **The proof** — users, pilots, revenue, patents, prototypes, measured results.
5. **The scale** — market size, employment potential, why it can grow without physical limits.

Delete these words before submitting: world-class · best-in-class · one-stop solution · cutting-edge · revolutionary · customer satisfaction is our priority · latest technology

- ☐ Write-up is 300–500 words of plain, specific English
- ☐ Written by you — not copied from another company's application
- ☐ Contains at least one real number (users, pilots, % improvement, market size)
- ☐ A stranger could read it and explain your business back to you correctly

5 The 2026 negative list — do not park startup capital here

- ☐ No residential real estate (unless genuinely used for core operations)
- ☐ No non-operational land or buildings
- ☐ No luxury assets — yachts, aircraft, premium vehicles
- ☐ No speculative or unrelated investments
- ☐ No treasury securities unrelated to the business

Why this matters: breaching the negative list can cost you your recognition — and the Inter-Ministerial Board can revoke tax benefits retrospectively where recognition was obtained through misrepresentation. Check with your CA before a large non-operational purchase.

6 What happens next — realistic timeline

STAGE	TIME	NOTE
Documents & write-up ready	2–5 days	Do the write-up last, and unrushed
Filling the NSWS form	1–2 hours	nsws.gov.in → Add Approvals → Central Approvals
DPIIT review	**2–10 working days**	For a clean, complete application
If clarification requested	+1–3 weeks	Check your NSWS dashboard weekly
Section 80-IAC (IMB) certificate	**3–12 months**	Separate application, separate board

Remember: DPIIT recognition and the Section 80-IAC tax holiday are two different things. Recognition only makes you *eligible to apply* for the tax holiday. Fewer than 2% of recognised startups hold an IMB certificate. Government fee for recognition: **₹0**.

Get a second pair of eyes before DPIIT sees it

Digital Startup India · [yourwebsite.com] · [email] · [phone]