

Summary: DSCI's Recommendations on the Draft National Deep Tech Start-Up Policy

The Data Security Council of India (DSCI) has submitted its detailed feedback on the Draft National Deep Tech Start-Up Policy (NDTSP), acknowledging the government's strong intent to position India as a global deep tech hub. The draft policy, which focuses on sectors like AI, semiconductors, quantum tech, and space, seeks to address challenges in R&D, funding, IP, regulation, and commercialization.

Drawing from its experience with cybersecurity innovation and startup incubation, DSCI made a number of constructive suggestions aimed at making the policy implementation-ready and responsive to market realities.

Key Highlights of DSCI's Submission:

1. A Broader, Evolving Definition of Deep Tech

DSCI highlights the lack of a standardized definition for 'deep tech' as a major bottleneck. It supports the creation of a Working Group to define deep tech startups and recommends a phased, sector-agnostic approach to accommodate emerging technologies. This would prevent narrow classifications and ensure the inclusion of future innovations.

2. From Research to Market: Focus on Productization

While the policy emphasizes R&D, DSCI stresses the importance of translating research into market-ready products. It proposes a bottom-up approach where startups conduct market-centric research to guide innovation. Greater enterprise readiness and two-way industry-academia collaboration are key to scaling deep tech solutions.

3. Enabling Open Science and Trusted Data Sharing

Open science and data sharing are central to deep tech innovation. DSCI recommends addressing barriers like access fees, infrastructure limitations, and IP concerns. Instead of mandating data sharing, the policy should create trust-based, incentivized mechanisms that promote voluntary sharing and reuse of data.

4. A Forward-Looking IP Regime

Recognizing the limitations of current patent frameworks, DSCI calls for patent protection for incremental innovations that offer disruptive potential. It recommends setting up systems for patent intelligence and expediting global IPR filings to increase the commercial viability of deep tech.

5. Timely and Scalable Funding Access

Funding “at the right time” is critical. DSCI recommends streamlining funding from both government and private sources across all phases of deep tech development. It advocates for equity-based government funding, joint public-private initiatives, and support in Tier 2/3 cities. Flexibility and risk tolerance should be embedded in funding design.

6. Tailored Support Across Sectors

DSCI points out that infrastructure, funding, and testing needs vary widely across sectors. The policy must tailor interventions accordingly. Government procurement processes should also create a level playing field for startups, enabling wider commercialization of deep tech innovations.

7. Fast-Tracking Testing, Certification & Market Entry

To boost adoption, DSCI proposes a centralized Proof of Concept (PoC) platform with real-world testing environments. It also calls for simplifying and fast-tracking certifications and standards to reduce costs and avoid bottlenecks in innovation rollout.

8. Enabling Supply Chains & Global Integration

Recognizing that many deep tech startups rely on global supply chains, DSCI suggests enabling flexible import mechanisms and improving access to essential raw materials, tools, and technologies.

9. Diverse Stakeholder Representation in Governance

To ensure well-rounded implementation, DSCI advocates for broader representation—across academia, industry, government, startups, and investors—within the Inter-Ministerial Committee proposed by the draft policy.

In conclusion DSCI’s recommendations are aimed at making the deep tech ecosystem in India robust, scalable, and future-ready. With the right implementation, the National Deep Tech Start-Up Policy can not only spark innovation but also enable Indian startups to lead in critical and emerging technologies globally.