

NICL TIMES

APRIL-JULY 22





MESSAGE FROM THE PROJECT DIRECTOR

Greetings,

On behalf of the NICL team, I am pleased to introduce the inaugural issue of the NICL newsletter and thank you for taking the time to review it. Let me also introduce myself as the Project Director of NICL, a position I assumed in April 2022. Playing a role in the ever-growing startup ecosystem of Pakistan and leading a young and driven team has so far been a wonderful experience for me, and what better way to share it than this newsletter.

At NICL, we are facilitating energetic, and motivated startups with the capital they need to solve scalable real-world problems. We do this through providing startups the complete set of dimensions required for creating and running a successful venture, and matching their skills with focused, identified challenges that the corporate world faces. Our incubated startups further amplify their work through access to our state-of-the-art Makers Lab which provides a unique opportunity for product-based startups to rapidly prototype their solutions and create impact.

As you work your way through the following pages, you will see the flow of our project and witness how despite multiple contextual and pandemic-driven challenges, we unlearned, learned, and continued to deliver effectively. I also thank our stakeholders and our fundamental partners in this endeavor, Ignite and LUMS, for continuing to build an impactful and enlightening platform with us, and for their relentless support and guidance.

In this issue, we will showcase our offerings and the key highlights of the first half of 2022. We will continue to build on this newsletter and share subsequent volumes with all our stakeholders to keep our community informed and involved in this journey.

Happy reading!

DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE

BOARD, COUNCIL, AND MENTORS' SUPPORT

Honoring our Advisory Board and Foundation Council

Our Advisory Board is at the helm of our work at NICL, helping us translate our mission of enabling pre-seed startups into revenue generating, scalable ventures. We rely on their proficient knowledge of investing into global markets and seek their guidance in helping NICL transform this nascent ecosystem.

The NICL Foundation Council comprises eminent business leaders and trailblazers in the Pakistani startup ecosystem. The council actively participates in helping shape our Foundry Program, from recruitment to mentorship, and monitors the progress of our startups, with a primary objective of ensuring their success.

Untiring efforts of NICL Mentors

NICL honors the support of our mentors who provide relentless and constant support to our startups. These industry experts, majorly LUMS alumni, coming from the Suleman Dawood School of Business (SDSB), provide one to one mentorship, access to networking platforms, and help our founders develop business acumen. We engage the mentors in various aspects of our incubation, including the Investor Summit. Amongst our roster of 70+ mentors, the following individuals recently advised our previous cohort:



Foundry Mentors

Rashid Muayyed

-PM, New Verticals at TaskRabbit

Naseem Aftab

- Ex - Head of Sales/Marketing, PSO

Muhammad Usman Hanif

- Director of Finance & Operations at Fatima Packaging Limited

Farhan Ateeq

- CEO & Founder Exper Labs

Ahmad Babar

Head of Commercial at KistPay

Hammad Arshad

- Director Operations, Careem

Habib Haider

- Head of External Relations and Corporate Affairs, Shell

Nabeel Khalid

- Marketing Consultant and Founder, Locals Talk

Rana Kashif

- Product Director, FENIX

Waqas Altaf

- Group Brand Manager, Service Sales Corporation

Haris Anwar

- AWS Finance, Amazon

Abdul Rahim Butt

- Head of Business Management, Faysal Bank

Ali Almakky

- Corporate and Investment Banking, JPMorgan

Danayal Zia

- Business Growth Expert, ActionCOACH

Fatima Khushnood

- Chief Operating Officer at Pact Capital

Tariq Habib Rana

- Head of Revenue Growth Management, Coca-Cola CCI

NATIONAL INCUBATION CENTER LAHORE AT LUMS

PARTNERS TO PROBLEM SOLVERS

National Incubation Center Lahore at LUMS (NICL) is inspiring, enabling, and facilitating Pakistani founders to develop high-impact, tech-enabled and financially inclusive solutions for the country, across a number of sectors including health, education, agriculture, environment and finance. Funded by Ignite, Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom (MOITT), Fatima Ventures, and housed in Pakistan's premier educational institute, Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), NICL is changing the landscape of digital and social entrepreneurship as a leading incubator, accelerator, and innovation hub in the nation.

At NICL, we empower entrepreneurs through our comprehensively designed curriculum which focuses on applied skills development, mandatory for creation of sustainable startups in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. Through NICL and LUMS connections, we enable network linkages with domain experts, industry leaders and alumni for collaboration, mentorship, and investment.

NICL: Creating multi-disciplinary linkages

We serve as a nexus between industry, academia, talent, and capital by:

1. Incubating and accelerating start-ups that solve problems in high impact sectors.
2. Facilitating corporate innovation to enhance productive capacity in industry.
3. Enhancing applied skills for our enterprising youth through broad-scale training.

With presence both in Lahore and Quetta, NICL serves as a platform for collaboration between talent, industry and applied academic research.

Our focus

NICL has identified high-impact areas for improvement in Pakistan including education, healthcare, agriculture, finance, and the environment. By harnessing the power of technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud, blockchain, Internet of Things, augmented & virtual reality, NICL partners with the next generation of innovators to solve Pakistan's most critical problems. This also gives start-ups supported by NICL a much larger commercial opportunity than offered by most.

Our Impact

NICL IN NUMBERS:



268

Number of start-ups incubated



152

Graduated ventures



84

Female entrepreneur



62%

Survival rate



55

Seed investments



589,920,837

Revenue generated by startups



1484

Employment generation



PLUG AND PLAY

NICL recognizes the need for accommodative workspaces for startups that are seeking to establish themselves on firmer grounds. The Plug and Play facility, covering a 23,000 square feet area, is well-equipped to provide an affordable and adaptive co-working space for startups and Small and medium-sized enterprises to house their teams.

Currently operating at 54% occupancy, prominent startups such as Kalpay, Turbo Labs, We > I, and mKhatta not only utilize the platform for operational engagements but also to established closer ties with investors and innovators. Businesses that occupy our space are also provided access to NICL events which include, but are not limited to, guest speaking sessions with industry leaders and market experts, opportunities to pitch to global VCs, and meet and greets with key national and international government officials.



MAKERS LAB: PROTOTYPING SOLUTIONS



The Makers Lab at NICL, supported by Fatima Ventures, comprises five state-of-the-art labs which provide a unique opportunity for product-based startups to rapidly prototype their solutions and create impact.

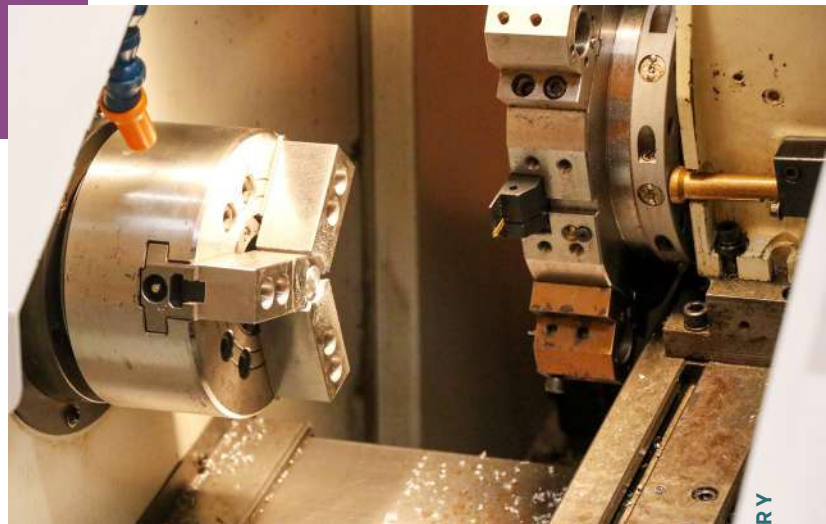
Features:

CNC LAB

- The Hartford LG-500 CNC machine
- 640*420mm table size and a table load of 300KG
- CNC Turning center and router

3D PRINTING LAB

- Craftbot XL and Flash Forge Hunter 3D printers with FDM & DLP technologies
- Capable of 3D printing in multiple sizes, resolutions & materials
- Supported materials include PLA, ABS & photopolymer resin
- 3D scanner to accurately scan objects



PCB LAB

- Capable of creating multi-layer PCBs
- Services of a trained lab technician

WOOD LAB

- Industry grade power tools, table saw, band saw, and surface planner
- Services of a master carpenter

METAL LAB

- Manual lathe, Arc & Tig Welding, grinders, drill presses, and pipe benders & other power tools





NEWS FROM OUR FOUNDRY PROGRAM

NICL's flagship Foundry Program, led by specialized LUMS faculty and international experts, successfully inducted its 10th cohort on the 20th of July, 2022. They were a total of 170 applications which underwent a three-stage, rigorous evaluation process conducted by NICL faculty members, the Foundation Council and Advisory Board. Our 10th Cohort consists of 21 startups, with diverse solutions focusing on financial inclusion, sustainability, media and entertainment, e-commerce, healthcare and lifesciences, and education.

1. **Garrari** - An eco-system comprising of automobile related services.
2. **ClebNet** - Aims to connect artists from the film production industry with entities interested in employing their services such as for an ad or endorsement.
3. **Chotay Ustaad** - A bilingual, interdisciplinary digital learning & teaching tool for early years education.
4. **Karobar technologies** - A full stack based solution architecture for B2B supply and demand needs.
5. **Embroid.AI** - Auto Digitization Tool to generate embroidery files input for any image file using AI and ML.
6. **Genesis Technologies** - WEB 3.0 SaaS Company.
7. **Godam** - An online B2B Marketplace to connect wholesalers and manufacturers to retailers.
8. **HomeoCure** - Creating a digital platform to connect homeo practitioner with patients.
9. **Ittehaad** - Mutual aid platform offering cancer hospitalization cover of upto Rs 1 million at only Rs 20 per month/member.
10. **LoveYourCar (LYC)** - An online one stop integrated platform, providing all the car related services and maintainace solution via pre-booking.
11. **Madox Creatives** - Madox helps in developing all kind of creatives.
12. **Mentree** - Mentree aims to connect South Asians globally with mental health practitioners from their home countries.
13. **NeuAmp** - Swappable battery based Charging Station Manufacturing.
14. **PMship** - A real-time role playing strategy game.
15. **RocketHire** - A tech-based recruitment company.

16. **ScrapShope** - An online scrap shop platform.
17. **Skill2Success** - 21st Century skill development EdTech platform to provide trainings in emerging technologies and Digital skills.
18. **Smart Self Defense Against Assail** - Fashionable attire inclusive of protective mechanisms curtailing physical harassments.
19. **SmartEye** - AI based CCTV cameras solution to save Electricity.
20. **Thevisionai** - AI assistance for intelligent warehouse analytics.
21. **Meatman** - One Stop Meat Solution.

NICL's very own Cohort 9 completes the Foundry journey!

NICL's 9th Cohort has completed the Foundry training and is now preparing to pitch their business plans to investors at NICL's capstone event, the Investor Summit. Through the course of their time at NICL, the cohort engaged and learned from not just leading LUMS Faculty but also with industry leaders shaping the startup ecosystem in Pakistan including the founders of Tajir, Baber and Ismail Khan, Amazon Web Services specialist from High Plains Computing, Baber Tufail, executives from Foodpanda, and Mamoon Hamid, Partner, Kleiner Perkins.



Celebrating Cohort 8

NICL hosted a graduation ceremony for Cohort 8 on 30th May 2022. The Federal Minister for IT & Telecommunication, Syed Amin ul Haque; Additional Secretary IT & Telecommunication, Ms. Aisha Humera; CEO Ignite, Mr. Asim Shehryar Husain; Executive Director NITB and Chairman Ignite Board, Syed Hussain Abbas Kazmi; General Manager Projects, Ignite, Mr. Muhammad Bilal Abbasi; VC LUMS, Dr. Arshad Ahmad and Rector LUMS, Mr. Shahid Hussain attended the ceremony amongst other distinguished dignitaries.

The event featured a meet and greet with the esteemed delegation and a showcase of solutions prototyped by NICL's high-achieving alumni as well as current start-ups. This was followed by a pitch session from Cohort 8's top performing startups, after which cash prizes and certificates were distributed. During his keynote address, Syed Amin ul Haque, Federal Minister for IT & Telecommunication congratulated the NICL Cohort 8 graduates and appreciated their hard work and efforts to successfully complete the incubation program and strive to further strengthen their entrepreneurship journey.



NICL LAUNCHES ITS INAUGURAL SUMMER PROGRAM



- Entrepreneurship for Kids |
- Game Development |
- Programming |
- Robotics |

In its effort to encourage critical thinking and creative skills from a young age, NICL ran the first batch of its inaugural Summer Program for children aged eight and above, and introduced courses in Entrepreneurship for Kids, Game Development, Programming and Robotics.

The Summer Program was delivered in collaboration with The Stem Educators (TSE) and Junior Founder. TSE, previously incubated by NICL in its second cohort, is a startup focused on promoting Education 4.0 in children aged 7 and above, with a vision to encourage computational thinking and creativity. Junior Founder, an entrepreneurial awareness and skill development platform, serves to empower kids to take off on a design thinking path through a dynamic interdisciplinary approach.

NICL Summer Program allowed young problem-solvers to think out of the box, be inspired, and undertake hands-on learning, embrace risk taking and adopt the passion to create and win. With over 100 successful enrollments and 80 graduates, the summer program at NICL was a enjoyable yet erudite experience!

VISITS TO THE CENTER

Country Manager, International Finance Corporation

NICL was pleased to host Mr. Zeeshan Sheikh, Country Manager of Pakistan and Afghanistan, International Finance Corporation (IFC) at the center for an in-depth discussion of the role incubators play in building the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The discussion was led by Mr. Ali Mukhtar, Foundation Council Member, NICL and Founder & General Partner of Fatima Venture. While deliberating over ideas and interventions that IFC could support with, the two representatives discussed enabling and facilitating more women entrepreneurs to further disrupt industries in the Pakistani market, as well as access to more financial instruments for startups.



Dilawar Syed, US Consulate

Mr. Dilawar Syed, Special Representative of the U.S Department of State for Commercial and Business Affairs, visited NIC Lahore at LUMS where he was apprised of the Center's mission and vision, by Mr. Saleem Ahmad, Chairman Advisory Board NICL, along with Mr. Shahid Hussain, Rector, LUMS. During a roundtable, Mr. Syed had a comprehensive discussion with the NICL team and incubated startups around bolstering

support and linkages between US businesses and Pakistani startups. Mr. Syed also gave extensive advice to the startups on how they can scale to a global standard and aim to go international. Furthermore, all stakeholders discussed how NICL's efforts can be further expanded to be more gender-inclusive and include entrepreneurs from hard-to-reach areas.

Nestle Strategy Team

A delegation of Nestle senior leadership visited NICL for a strategy meeting to discuss future collaborations and partnerships. The Nestle team comprised of Samra Maqbool, Head of Strategy and New Business Development; Faisal Rana, Head of Communications and Marketing Services; Ali Imran, Head of Media & Digital Acceleration; Habib Butt, Employees Relation Manager; Amber Naguib, Manager, Ecommerce; Adnan Tariq, Innovations Manager and Amna Bilal, Management Trainee - Sales. The two organizations collectively brainstormed and explored avenues of corporate innovation and disruptive approaches which can be leveraged to innovate and think differently when it comes to Nestle's internal structures. Furthermore, it was discussed how Nestle, as an industry leader, can provide startups mentorship, and opportunities within the foodtech sector. NICL and Nestle also set frameworks for future collaborations exclusively between the two entities, including knowledge exchange sessions, and coffee corners to discuss entrepreneurship for the Nestle team.



Shell Tameer

As one of Shell Tameer's long standing community partners, NICL was delighted to host the Shell Team including Mr. Brad Burke, Regional Head Corporate Relation; Mr. Habib Haider, Country Head Corporate Relations; Ms. Afshan Pasha, Programme Manager; Ms. Saaima Enver, Corporate & Internal Communications Advisor; Ms. Maria Angelica, Media Advisor; Mr. Imran Azeem and Muhammad Saifullah. Reiterating NICL's work,

specifically in the cleantech vertical, Mr. Nauman Zaffar, Project Director, briefed the Shell team and chaired the discussion regarding further strengthening the partnership between the two organizations. In the last few years, two of NICL incubated startups have won the Shell Tameer Award - a nationwide competition, to recognize, celebrate and reward young talent making significant contributions in the national entrepreneurship space.

STARTUP HIGHLIGHTS



Start-up: GirlyThings
[Cohort 3]

Highlight: Won the Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award at the Prince's Trust Awards 2022.

About: GirlyThings is a mobile application that helps differently abled women to order their menstrual hygiene kits online.



Start-up: Boltay Huroof
[Cohort 7]

Highlight: Won 2nd prize in the Innovation competition at the 6th Huawei ICT Competition 2021-2022.

About: Boltay Huroof is working on a software that translates and embosses braille books for the blind.



Start-up: Janwar Mandi
[Cohort 9]

Highlight: Was selected among the top 12 in the Pakistan Startup Cup 2022. This initiative was started by The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) - Islamabad Chapter.

About: Janwar Mandi is an online marketplace for livestock and cattle trade, with added on farm veterinary and animal inspection services.



Start-up: Milkify
[Cohort 3]

Highlight: Won 1st position with PKR 300,000 in prize money at the SEE Pakistan '22 Start-up Competition.

About: Milkify has developed a technology with a digital cooling and balancing mechanism, that enables them to provide 100% safe and pure milk to doorsteps.



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