

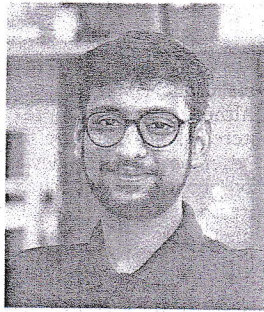
# With ₹340-cr corpus, Suzuki launches Next Bharat Ventures fund for start-ups

Our Bureau  
Bengaluru

Automotive major Suzuki has launched a venture investing arm — Next Bharat Ventures — with a corpus of ₹340 crore to back the social impact start-up ecosystem.

The fund will be set up as a subsidiary of Suzuki, dedicated to fostering impact entrepreneurs who create value for tier-II cities and lesser developed geographies. "Next Bharat aims to empower India by supporting these impact entrepreneurs. The primary mission is to cultivate and nurture a deep-rooted community of impact enablers in the country, who are solving social problems with sustainable business," said the company in its statement.

Next Bharat Ventures will



Vipul Nath Jindal, CEO and MD, Next Bharat

make investments in firms through a residency programme, the first cohort of which will begin in October this year, with applications starting on Thursday. This will be similar to residency programmes run by the likes of Antler and Y Combinator but will focus on firms that will make a social impact through their businesses.

The selection criteria focus is on entrepreneurs who are impact-first, have a clear problem-solving approach and are committed to contributing to the rural community or the informal sector of India.

#### SELECTION & FUNDING

The entrepreneurs selected for the programme will remain part of the Next Bharat community for life, receiving ongoing support and resources even after its conclusion. The platform will offer extensive mentorship sessions by industry leaders, providing opportunities for founders to collaborate and connect and form a meaningful support system to help start and run their businesses.

Post the residency programme, the selected start-ups will get ₹1 crore to ₹5

crore of equity investments. The objective is to equip these ventures with the essential knowledge, networks and resources including risk capital, to enable them to achieve scale and become small and medium-sized enterprises.

Vipul Nath Jindal, an IIT Hyderabad alumnus, will spearhead this initiative. "We are embarking on this journey to cultivate an impact entrepreneurship ecosystem that is profoundly community-oriented. The Next Bharat investment framework focuses on horizontal scaling, aiming to create hundreds of profitable SMEs over a fund cycle, rather than concentrating on creating just two or three unicorns per fund cycle," said Vipul Nath Jindal, CEO and Managing Director of Next Bharat.