About nasscom foundation

Established in 2001, Nasscom Foundation has been witness to the transformative power of technology for over two decades. Part of the NASSCOM ecosystem, we are the only neutral not-for-profit organization representing the Indian tech industry. We remain rooted to our core philosophy of TechForGood, where our efforts are focused on unlocking the power of technology by creating access and opportunity for those who need it the most. We work on helping people and institutions transform the way they tackle social and economic challenges through technology. We have five key areas of intervention - Digital Literacy, Skilling and Employability, Women Entrepreneurship, Scaling Social Innovation and Empowering NGO Ecosystem.

About the Project

The **Women Enterprise Acceleration & Market Linkage Programme in North-East (WEP)**, supported by L&T Technology Services (LTTS), aims to strengthen women-led enterprises across Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura through enterprise acceleration, foundational training, specialised mentoring, market linkages, and digital enablement. The programme works with 100 women entrepreneurs through a dual-cohort model, supported by Digital Ambassadors.

As part of the programme's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework, Nasscom Foundation invites proposals from eligible academicians and researchers to lead a **Women's Enterprise Ecosystem Landscape Study**. The study will map the landscape of women's entrepreneurship across the three intervention states, benchmark it against the other North-Eastern states and India, and generate actionable evidence to inform state-level policies and programmes.

Scope of Work

The assignment will involve a comprehensive landscape assessment of women's enterprises, focusing on their scale, composition, sectoral distribution, growth potential, and enabling environment across Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura. The study will examine key sectors, including handicrafts, agriculture and allied activities, and trade, alongside access to credit, government schemes, digital technologies, market linkages, and institutional support.

The study will also explore the structural, social, gender-related, and regulatory barriers affecting women entrepreneurs; distinguish growth-oriented enterprises from subsistence enterprises; and examine the factors influencing enterprise growth, stagnation, and sustainability. In addition, it will document programme learnings from WEP and identify opportunities for State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs), state MSME departments, and ecosystem partners to strengthen support for women-led enterprises.

Methodology and Approach

The proposed study will primarily adopt a **secondary-data-driven research and evidence synthesis approach**, complemented by targeted primary consultations to validate findings

and address evidence gaps. The methodology will include a review of national and state-level datasets, government reports, administrative and MIS data, academic literature, and relevant policy documents.

Primary research will include a minimum of 18 key informant interviews (at least six per state) with relevant government departments, SRLMs, financial institutions, market platforms, and ecosystem stakeholders, alongside at least six focus group discussions (at least two per state) with women entrepreneurs, including WEP participants.

The study will incorporate a gender-responsive analytical framework, harmonised indicators, state-specific profiles, and comparative analysis across the North-East and India. Particular attention will be given to the relationship between digital access, digital capability, and actual business use, as well as the barriers and opportunities influencing women's enterprise growth. The approach will culminate in evidence-based, state-specific policy recommendations linked to relevant schemes, guidelines, and institutional mechanisms.

Deliverables and Timeline

The assignment will deliver an inception report, harmonised indicator framework, state-wise secondary-data analysis, preliminary findings, a draft landscape report, a final landscape report, and policy briefs for Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and the North-East region. It will also include a matrix mapping existing SRLM support and private-funding gaps, intended to inform Nasscom Foundation's fundraising and partnership-development efforts.

The engagement is scheduled from **20 October 2026 to 22 January 2027**, with the core study to be completed by the end of December 2026 and dissemination activities planned for January 2027. The final landscape report and policy briefs will provide actionable recommendations for strengthening the women's enterprise ecosystem and informing future programme design and policy engagement.

Eligibility and Submission Requirements

Interested academicians and researchers should have a doctoral qualification in Economics, Development Studies, Public Policy, Gender Studies, Rural Management, or a related field, with at least 10 years of relevant research experience in women's entrepreneurship, livelihoods, MSMEs, or rural development. Applicants should demonstrate expertise in mixed-methods research, secondary-data analysis, and policy writing for government audiences, along with knowledge of India's rural livelihoods and MSME policy landscape.

The proposed study team must have the language capabilities required to conduct consultations in Assamese and Bengali for Assam, Khasi and Garo for Meghalaya, and Bengali and Kokborok for Tripura, alongside other local languages as required. Where necessary, a North-East-based co-researcher or partner should be identified. Experience working in the North-East and familiarity with relevant sectoral value chains will be an added advantage.

Interested applicants are requested to review the detailed Statement of Work and submit an updated CV with relevant publications and projects, two writing samples, a technical proposal

outlining the research approach and study team, a financial quote in INR, and confirmation of availability for the engagement period. Applicants currently serving as faculty members should also provide an undertaking regarding the institutional No Objection Certificate (NOC), as specified in the SoW.

The total professional fee for the assignment is **₹6,00,000, inclusive of TDS**, covering the costs specified in the SoW.

For any further queries, please reach out to us at **rfp@nasscomfoundation.org**.

Proposal Submission Deadline: 5 November 2026