

PROPOSED CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

INDIA AT THE POLICY CROSSROADS

Growth, Technology, Sustainability and the Citizen

21 – 22 NOVEMBER 2026

IIM CALCUTTA

Public Policy Batches

A working conference designed to connect national policy questions with practical experience and produce recommendations that can be taken forward.

DAY ONE Sat, 21 November | 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

A plenary, one chaired panel, a cross-batch roundtable, a scenario exchange, a delivery clinic and live policy pitches.

10:00–10:45**PLENARY****Opening Plenary — What Must Indian Public Policy Solve in the Next Decade**

FOCUS India's most consequential challenges in growth, livelihoods, agriculture, skills, entrepreneurship, demographic transition, inclusion and state capacity — considered beyond a single electoral cycle.

FORMAT Curtain-raiser keynote followed by a short moderated exchange and audience pulse poll.

OUTCOME Five national policy priorities that frame the rest of the conference.

VOICES High-visibility public policy leader · Development economist or field practitioner · Chair: IIM Calcutta faculty

10:45–12:00**PANEL****India's Energy Security Beyond Coal — Nuclear Power and Renewables**

FOCUS How India can secure reliable and affordable power while managing coal dependence, climate obligations, nuclear choices, renewable capital costs, policy instability and Centre–State divergence — alongside circularity, e-waste, worker safety, BEE/BIS standards, non-tariff barriers and FTA implications.

FORMAT Twenty-five-minute policy address by a senior bureaucrat, who also chairs the theme, followed by a moderated government–industry–academia panel and audience questions.

OUTCOME An Energy Transition Policy Map covering trade-offs, regulatory gaps and priority actions.

VOICES Chair: senior Rajasthan power / renewable-energy bureaucrat · Rajasthan power-sector industry leader · Nuclear or energy-policy expert · Tata energy or renewables alternate · Moderator: Prof. Runa Sarkar (proposed)

12:00–1:15**ROUNDTABLE****Cross-Batch Founders Roundtable — Beyond the Unicorn Narrative and the Next Phase of India's Startup Ecosystem**

FOCUS The barriers that remain after incubation: capital and VC expectations, GFR and public procurement, delayed payments, State-level implementation gaps and support for deep-tech and social-impact ventures.

FORMAT Batch-powered roundtable with short founder stories, a VC response, a government-procurement response and audience problem-mapping — not a conventional panel.

OUTCOME A Startup Friction Map and five reforms for government, investors and ecosystem institutions.

VOICES Ecosystem anchor: Sujit Jagirdar (proposed) · 3–4 IIMC founders or CXOs across batches · IIMC VC or investment professional · Government procurement respondent · Moderator

1:15 – 2:15**LUNCH****2:15–3:30****PANEL****AI for Public Good, or Automated Inequality**

FOCUS High-value applications in health, education and welfare; DPDP and privacy; bias and exclusion; human accountability, appeals, deepfakes and citizen trust.

FORMAT Two lightning perspectives, a moderated multi-stakeholder exchange and a live policy-scenario poll.

OUTCOME A Responsible AI for Public Services Framework covering safeguards, accountability and citizen recourse.

VOICES Global technology firm (such as Google or Microsoft) · AI-for-public-good startup · AI policy or ethics academic · Government or regulator · Moderator

3:50–5:05**CLINIC****Delivery Clinic — The Last-Mile State and Why Good Policies Fail Citizens**

FOCUS Where delivery breaks between policy intent and lived experience: frontline capacity, local institutions, documentation, digital exclusion, grievance systems and the practical limits of State implementation.

FORMAT Two short field cases, an implementation clinic with government and practitioner respondents, and audience diagnosis of the failure points.

OUTCOME A Last-Mile Delivery Checklist for the design, implementation and review of public programmes.

VOICES State or district official · Local-government or frontline practitioner · Civil-society implementer · Citizen-services or digital-delivery expert · Clinic moderator

5:05–6:00**FORUM****Interactive Policy Forum — If You Could Change One Policy Tomorrow**

FOCUS One change, its intended beneficiary, the barrier it removes, the responsible actor and the result that should be visible within one year.

FORMAT Selected sixty-second policy pitches, rapid audience testing and live ranking.

OUTCOME A preliminary list of Ten Policy Priorities for Action and candidate challenges for Day 2.

VOICES Forum facilitator · Lead rapporteur · Audience voting lead · Selected participant pitchers

DAY TWO Sun, 22 November | 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

From conference insight to a working Policy Lab. Working title and institutional form to be finalised with IIM Calcutta.

10:00–10:15

RESET

Interactive Reset — Day One in Five Moves

FOCUS The strongest agreements, unresolved tensions and most actionable proposals from Day 1.

FORMAT Five visual headlines, a live audience poll and one-minute rapporteur interventions.

OUTCOME A ranked shortlist of issues to carry into the Policy Lab launch.

VOICES Lead rapporteur · Session rapporteurs · Digital polling facilitator

10:15–10:35

LAUNCH

Official Launch — Policy Lab Mandate and Ambition

FOCUS A collaborative platform through which faculty, alumni, government departments and partners can work on live policy and implementation challenges, including State-level pilots.

FORMAT Short unveiling, founding proposition and challenge invitation — no panel discussion.

OUTCOME A shared understanding of the Lab's purpose, principles, proposed governance and first-year ambition.

VOICES IIM Calcutta faculty sponsor · Alumni convenor · Government or institutional challenge partner

10:35–11:25

STUDIO

Policy Lab Live — Challenge Studios: From Policy Problem to Pilot

FOCUS Small groups work on selected challenges from Day 1 or a partner department. Possible tracks include future of work and skills, energy transition, startup procurement, responsible AI and last-mile delivery. Each team defines the user, evidence gap, intervention, owner, risk and testable result.

FORMAT Facilitated table sprints using a common one-page canvas; roving experts challenge assumptions.

OUTCOME One pilot canvas and a ninety-second pitch from every challenge team.

VOICES Three challenge sponsors · Table facilitators · Roving government, industry, academic and civil-society experts

11:25 – 11:40

TEA

11:40–12:20

SELECTION

Pitchback and Selection — The Policy Lab Portfolio

FOCUS Which challenges are important, feasible, partner-ready and capable of producing a demonstrable public result.

FORMAT Ninety-second team pitches, audience dot-voting and a transparent decision-jury scorecard.

OUTCOME Two or three priority challenges shortlisted for formal scoping after the conference.

VOICES Decision jury: IIMC faculty, government, industry and civil society · Audience voting lead · Team presenters

12:20–12:45

COMMIT

Commitment Marketplace — Building the First Ninety Days

FOCUS Who will contribute expertise, data access, research time, government outreach, technology or implementation support to the shortlisted challenges.

FORMAT Visible commitment wall followed by a facilitated agreement on owners, milestones and the first review date.

OUTCOME A ninety-day roadmap, founding working group and contributor register.

VOICES Faculty sponsor · Alumni steering group · Challenge partners · Commitment facilitator

12:45–1:00

CLOSE

Closing — Launch Commitments and Next Steps

FOCUS Confirm what will be published, who will convene the next meeting and how the first pilots will be scoped.

FORMAT Five-minute commitment readout, closing remarks and launch photograph.

OUTCOME A clear public close and an accountable route from conference to action.

VOICES IIM Calcutta representative · Policy Lab convenor · Batch representative

CONFERENCE AND POLICY LAB DELIVERABLES

Five Policy Outcome Notes

One action-oriented note per thematic session.

Ten Policy Priorities

Tested, ranked and refined through Day 2.

Post-Conference Report

Perspectives with implementation steps.

Policy Lab Launch Package

Mandate, pilot portfolio, 90-day roadmap.

OUTCOME-NOTE LENS — Policy problem · Citizen perspective · Government enabler · Industry role · First action, owner, measure