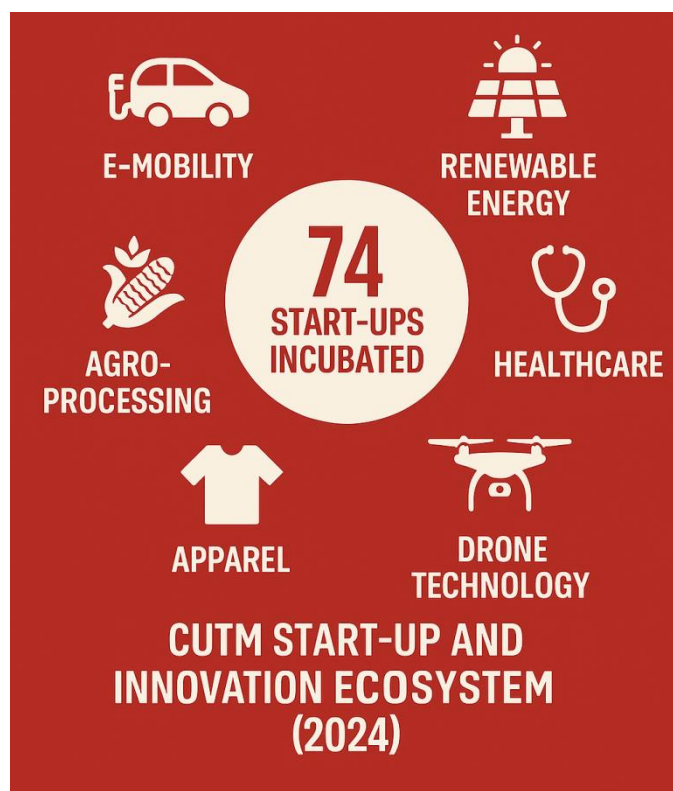


Financial assistance for startups and sustainable businesses

Centurion University's institutional approach to financially sustainable business development integrates education, research, and enterprise with community engagement. The University provides tangible financial support, incubation opportunities, and skill-based training to marginalized groups, thereby enabling local populations—especially youth and women—to establish self-reliant and sustainable enterprises.

Through its **Incubation Centres** and **Gram Tarang Employability Training Services (GTETS)**, Centurion University is pioneering an **entrepreneurship-driven approach to poverty alleviation**.



Unlike traditional models focused solely on financial aid, Centurion University emphasizes **innovation, incubation, and skill development** to create **sustainable livelihoods**. This model positions entrepreneurship as a catalyst for inclusive economic growth and long-term community resilience.

Recognized by **Start-up Odisha** and **Start-up India**, the University has successfully **incubated 74 start-ups** since 2014 across diverse sectors such as **e-mobility, renewable energy, agro-processing, healthcare, apparel, and drone technology**. Each enterprise reflects Centurion University's commitment to **innovation-led development** - empowering individuals to transform ideas into enterprises and generate meaningful employment within their communities.

Complementing this, the **Agri-Clinic**, operated by the **School of Agriculture** and the **Utkal Agri-Tech Centre**, ensures **year-round continuity** and **measurable local impact**.

Institutionalized as an **annual program**, it is supported by **ICAR, Krishi Jagran, and District Agricultural Departments**, establishing a sustained partnership between **academia, government, and**

industry. The Agri-Clinic and the **Utkal Krishi Mela** serve as living laboratories for **climate-resilient agriculture**, facilitating technology transfer, farmer -scientist dialogue, and access to eco-friendly agri-advisory services.

Together, these initiatives strengthen **livelihood security**, drive **rural innovation**, and build the foundation for **resilient, poverty-free communities** across regional and remote areas.



Fig 8: Drone Technology



Institutional Framework and Strategic Focus

Centurion University's financial support to local communities is anchored in three strategic mechanisms:

1. [Centre for Innovators and Entrepreneurs \(CIE\)](#) – A structured innovation and incubation ecosystem that nurtures startups from ideation to market success
2. [Gram Tarang Employability and Training Services \(GTETS\)](#) – A social enterprise of the University dedicated to skill development and employability enhancement among rural youth and women.
3. [Community Cooperatives and Farmer Producer Organisations \(FPOs\)](#) – Field-based platforms that integrate training, production, and financial inclusion for small producers and self-help groups.

Through these institutional arms, Centurion University provides both financial capital and human capital support, ensuring that entrepreneurship development leads to long-term, financially viable community enterprises.

Financial Assistance and Startup Support

Centurion University extends comprehensive financial and technical support through multiple channels. These mechanisms collectively enabled more than **₹ 3.6 crore** in start-up and livelihood finance between 2022 and 2024

Centre for Innovators and Entrepreneurs (CIE)

The CIE serves as Centurion University's flagship incubation platform for fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. It offers seed funding, mentoring, prototyping facilities, and investor linkages to early-stage entrepreneurs.

Key highlights include:

- **Startup grants of up to ₹5 lakh per enterprise**, supported through partnerships with government agencies and private investors.
- Focus on **green energy, health technology, agricultural innovation, and digital solutions** that generate both social and financial impact.
- Providing access to Advanced facilities such as 3D printing, CNC machining, drone development, and AR/VR labs, enabling rapid product development.
- Events like TECHSPARK, Hackathons, and Innovation Expos bring together students, local entrepreneurs, and industry mentors, providing a structured pathway from conceptualization to commercialization.

3.2 Gram Tarang Employability and Training Services (GTETS)

GTETS plays a critical role in creating employable skills and income-generating opportunities across the region.

- In 2024, 21,000 youth have been trained in domains such as construction, automotive repair, electrical maintenance, and apparel design.
- Many graduates have launched micro and small enterprises, aided by seed grants and access to the University's production facilities.
- The initiative particularly benefits first-generation learners from rural and tribal communities, linking training directly with financial independence.

3.3 Community-Based Enterprises

Centurion University supports the formation and strengthening of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), FPOs, and micro-cooperatives.

- These enterprises receive training in business management, marketing, quality assurance, and digital finance.
- The University facilitates credit linkages with NABARD, SIDBI, and Startup Odisha, helping community entrepreneurs secure capital.
- Centurion University's incubation support has led to the growth of rural ventures in agri-processing, fisheries, millet-based food products, and eco-friendly manufacturing.

Sectoral Interventions

Agricultural and Fisheries Enterprise Development

Centurion University has transformed the agricultural ecosystem through Utkal Krishi Mela, Mini Kisan Melas, and farmer-training programs.

- Farmers and women's groups are trained in Recirculatory Aquaculture Systems (RAS), biofloc fish culture, value-added processing, and post-harvest management.
- The University's live demonstration units and laboratories act as "*business incubators*" for farmer entrepreneurs.
- In 2024, over 500 small farmers have launched income-generating ventures through Centurion University's agri-entrepreneurship programs, contributing to rural resilience and market diversification.

Healthcare Enterprise and Access Initiatives

Centurion University's Healthcare on Wheels (HCOW) initiative combines social impact with livelihood creation.

- Mobile medical units provide diagnostics, vision screening, and emergency care to remote tribal areas, reducing healthcare-related financial burdens.
- The University's Jan Aushadhi Kendra distributes affordable medicines, while the Community Diagnostic Centre and health camps expand preventive care.
- The Diploma in Community Health Practice trains tribal girls to become certified community health workers—creating a cadre of self-employed professionals serving underserved areas. These initiatives reduce medical impoverishment while simultaneously generating sustainable livelihoods within the health sector.

Aboriginal Student Training and Skill Development

From June to September 2024, Centurion University conducted the Aboriginal Student Training Program, training two batches (five students) in Plumbing, AFL (Australian Football League) Activities, and Basic EV Maintenance.

- Participants gained hands-on experience in water management systems, electrical repairs, and green technology.

- Embedded modules on financial literacy, workplace ethics, and digital skills ensured employability readiness.
- The program exemplifies Centurion University’s commitment to inclusive skill education, creating employable youth capable of starting independent service enterprises.

Disaster Management and Legal Aid for Social Resilience

Centurion University’s Disaster Management and Safety Training (Dec 2024) trained NSS and NCC volunteers, in collaboration with the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and Fire Services Department. Students learned emergency response, fire safety, and community rescue operations, creating opportunities for enterprise in safety services and first-aid training centers. In parallel, the Legal Aid Clinic provides free legal advice and dispute resolution services for marginalized groups, promoting social inclusion and rights-based development.

Financial Ecosystem and Partnership Networks

Centurion University maintains partnerships with a range of national and state-level agencies to sustain its financial assistance programs:

- Startup Odisha and MSME Directorate for incubation grants and innovation funding.
- NABARD and SIDBI for credit linkage and agri-enterprise financing.
- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for vocational certification and employment.
- Private-sector partners such as Essilor, LTIMindtree, and Tech Mahindra Foundation support innovation, training, and healthcare initiatives.

These collaborations ensure continuity of funding, professional mentoring, and scalability of impact.

Table 1: Impact Assessment and SDG Alignment

SDG Target	Centurion University Action	Impact
SDG 1.4 – Equal access to economic resources	Seed grants, credit linkages, and SHG entrepreneurship	500+ community businesses supported
SDG 8.3 – Promote productive employment and entrepreneurship	Skill development and startup incubation	21,000 youth trained; 100+ startups incubated

SDG 3.8 – Universal access to health services	Mobile healthcare, low-cost pharmacies	15,000 rural beneficiaries annually
SDG 9.5 – Strengthen scientific research and innovation	TECHSPARK and R&D incubation	50+ innovation prototypes developed
SDG 1.5 – Build resilience of vulnerable groups	Disaster management and legal aid programs	400 students trained as community responders

The University’s multi-pronged approach translates policy commitments into measurable socio-economic outcomes, ensuring tangible poverty reduction through education, skill, and enterprise.

Centurion University exemplifies how higher education institutions can act as catalysts of financial inclusion and community empowerment. By integrating training, incubation, and financial assistance, the University nurtures an ecosystem where individuals and communities evolve from beneficiaries to entrepreneurs. From agriculture and fisheries to healthcare and technology startups, Centurion University’s initiatives have created a replicable model of grassroots entrepreneurship and sustainable development. Its alignment with national policies (Startup India, MSME, and Odisha Skill Mission) and global frameworks (UN SDGs) underscores its leadership in linking academia with inclusive growth. The University’s consistent engagement—through seed grants, community cooperatives, and training programs—ensures that financial assistance transforms into long-term economic resilience and social mobility. Through these efforts, Centurion University not only assists in the startup of financially sustainable businesses but also strengthens local economies, builds human capability, and contributes meaningfully to India’s pursuit of equitable and sustainable development.



Figure 1: Free eye check-up for students, staffs and faculties of Centurion University



Figure 2. Startup meeting with Hon. Minister with Centurion University faculty and Vice President, Centurion University



Figure 3: Disaster Management Awareness Training for the students of Centurion University

