



CATALYST 3.0

STARTUP LAW
AND POLICY
SUMMIT 2026

22 AUGUST 2026

CHANAKYA
NATIONAL LAW
UNIVERSITY, PATNA

CENTRE FOR
INNOVATION,
INCUBATION AND
LEGAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
& STARTUP CELL



INTERNSHIP
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About Chanakya National Law University

Chanakya National Law University (“CNLU”) was established under the Chanakya National Law University Act, 2006 (Bihar Act No. 24 of 2006) on July 15, 2006, with the altruistic goal of serving society by disseminating high-quality legal education and legal awareness. CNLU provides quality multidisciplinary education in legal studies, keeping in view the demands of the global economy on the one hand and the needs of the domestic society on the other hand. It organizes advanced studies and promotes research in all branches of law to promote cultural, legal and ethical values with a view to promote and foster the rule of law and the objectives enshrined in the Constitution of India.

About CIILE & StartUp Cell

Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Legal Entrepreneurship is a not-for-profit Centre at CNLU. CIILE encourages startups in the areas of Legal and Social Entrepreneurship within the institute and the society at large. The goal of CIILE is to motivate, build, and promote outside-the-box thinking and the development of innovative ideas amongst startups. To build an environment that will facilitate the creation of social enterprise knowledge through research. CIILE also empowers students to apply their entrepreneurship abilities to develop solutions for greater social impact through academia.

The Startup Cell in CNLU was established by the Department of Industries, Government of Bihar, under the Bihar Startup Policy 2022. The objective of the Startup Cell is to foster an entrepreneurial culture in the university and its surroundings. It focuses on providing mentorship, resources, and networking opportunities to help students transform innovative ideas into viable startups, promoting self-employment and an innovation culture. Startup Cell has been ranked 3rd amongst all the startup cells of Bihar by the Department of Industries, Bihar Government.

About JSA Advocates & Solicitors

JSA Advocates & Solicitors (JSA) is a premier full-service national law firm headquartered in India. Founded in 1991 by Jyoti Sagar, the firm is highly recognized for its extensive expertise across major practice areas, including corporate and commercial law, mergers and acquisitions, private equity, banking and finance, projects, infrastructure and energy, and complex dispute resolution. JSA is celebrated for its institutionalized and professionalized management structure, operating under a unique “one nation, one firm, one balance sheet” approach that emphasizes a unified partnership rather than individual silos. They are widely regarded for their ability to deliver partner-led, strategic solutions tailored to a rapidly evolving and transformative global economy.

The firm has received numerous accolades and top-tier rankings from prestigious international legal directories like Chambers & Partners, The Legal 500, and IFLR1000, solidifying its stellar reputation in both domestic and international legal circles. JSA provides comprehensive services across three broad clusters of Corporate, Finance, and Disputes, comprising 30 distinct service lines and catering to a diverse clientele of Fortune 500 corporations, multinational banks, startups, and statutory authorities. With a strong pan-India presence, JSA operates out of 10 offices located in seven major cities: New Delhi, Gurugram, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad. The firm places a powerful emphasis on continuous legal education and thoughtful leadership, regularly publishing in-depth analyses, podcasts, and insights on critical regulatory and legal updates. JSA is widely known for its progressive and inclusive workplace culture, its dedication to deep industry specialization, and its active commitment to pro bono legal services and policy advocacy.

SCC ONLINE

SCC Online is the flagship digital product of Eastern Book Company (EBC), a law publishing house established in 1942 and an acknowledged leader in Indian legal publishing for over 75 years. Founded in Lucknow by brothers C.L. Malik and P.L. Malik, EBC has grown into a group of companies recognised globally for its contribution to legal literature. With a catalogue of over 550 authoritative titles spanning commentaries, law reports, digests, and student texts, EBC's editorial work has always stood for accuracy, reliability, and meticulous standards.

At the heart of EBC's legacy is Supreme Court Cases (SCC), a weekly law report published since 1969 and now spanning nearly 300 volumes. It remains the most preferred and cited law report in India, recognised across every court and tribunal in the country.

LL.B Mania

LL.B Mania is a legal intelligence platform for startups, creators, lawyers, and aspiring legal professionals. It is recognised by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, and registered as an MSME under UAM No. JH-04-0001870. LL.B Mania is also an incubatee under the Startup Cell at CNLU Patna. The platform supports startups, founders, professionals, and emerging businesses through legal consulting, business strategy, contract drafting and review, legal research, and tailored advisory services. Its work includes startup-related contracts and other business-focused legal requirements. Beyond advisory services, LL.B Mania advances legal awareness and professional development through research-backed publications, expert discussions, cohort-based training programmes, and digital learning resources. With a focus on clarity, reliability, and practical outcomes, LL.B Mania delivers solution-oriented support to individuals and organisations.

About CATALYST 2024 & 2025

The Catalyst summit series, organized by the Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Legal Entrepreneurship (CIILE) at Chanakya National Law University (CNLU), Patna, has established itself as a premier national platform for bridging the gap between legal expertise and entrepreneurial innovation. The inaugural 2024 edition focused on addressing critical challenges in the startup ecosystem, specifically regarding emerging technologies, intellectual property rights, cybersecurity, and healthcare data protection. This first summit featured distinguished legal professionals, including partners from leading firms such as Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas, Khaitan & Co., IndusLaw, Anand & Anand, and Saikrishna & Associates. Experts shared insights on IP issues in tech, cybersecurity, and the genesis of digital personal data under the DPDPA. A noteworthy achievement of this edition was the selection of 15 research papers for publication, demonstrating a strong commitment to advancing academic discourse.

Building on this success, Catalyst 2.0 emerged in 2025 as a significant forum for in-depth discussions on the critical intersection of law and the burgeoning startup ecosystem. The second edition centered its themes on Technology-Centric Mergers & Acquisitions, data-driven valuation, and compliance in sensitive sectors like defense. Under the leadership of a dedicated organizing committee and university faculties, the summit brought together bright legal minds from over 26 prestigious institutions nationwide. A highlight of the 2025 event was the Pitch Desk Competition, where 17 teams presented innovative startup ideas to a panel of venture capitalists and industry experts. The summit further bridged academia and policy by involving the Department of Industries, Government of Bihar, with Chief Guest Mr. Nitish Mishra highlighting the state's rapid startup growth.

CATALYST 2025 Media Coverage



The CATALYST Startup Law and Policy Summit 2025 garnered widespread media attention, with prominent coverage across national and regional publications. The Times of India highlighted the event and showcased how the summit successfully brought together legal experts and business innovators to nurture Bihar's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Live Law provided comprehensive coverage of the legal aspects discussed during the summit, emphasizing the importance of regulatory frameworks for emerging startups. Their detailed reporting focused on the distinguished speakers and panel discussions that addressed complex compliance requirements.

Regional publications like Dainik Bhaskar emphasized how the summit addressed region-specific challenges and opportunities, with Prabhat Khabar particularly highlighting the potential economic impact on the state.

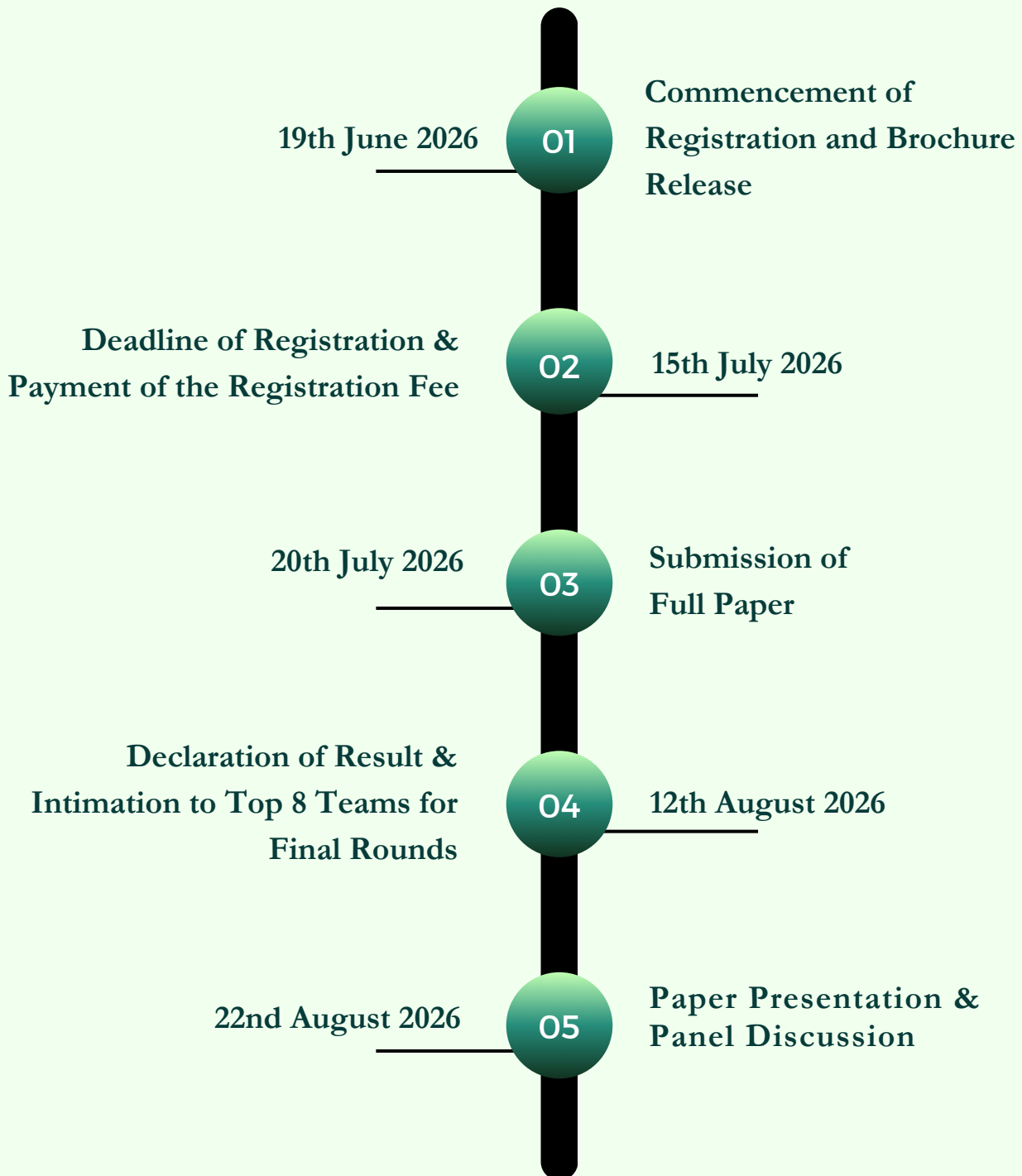
About CATALYST 3.0: Startup Law and Policy Summit 2026

CATALYST 3.0: The Startup Law and Policy Summit 2026 centers its focus on the critical intersection of banking, venture capital, and mergers and acquisitions (M&A) as the three pillars shaping the maturity of India's startup economy. As the ecosystem evolves, the synergy between institutional debt, equity financing, and strategic consolidation has become the new frontier for legal and policy innovation.

The 2026 edition of the summit will bring together leading voices from banking regulators, venture funds, transaction lawyers, and startup founders to critically examine how access to structured debt, term sheet negotiations, dilution management, and cross-border M&A frameworks determines the resilience and scalability of startups. The topics will range from RBI guidelines on venture debt and startup banking to SEBI's listing norms, FEMA implications in VC round structuring, and antitrust scrutiny in serial acquisitions. The Summit aims to decode the layered legal infrastructure governing capital flows and corporate control in the startup lifecycle.

Organised by the Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Legal Entrepreneurship (CIILE), CATALYST 2026 provides a robust platform for discourse on the convergence of banking discipline, venture risk-taking, and M&A execution. It will also explore emerging instruments like convertible notes, AIFs, and regulatory sandboxes for fintech lending, offering founders, investors, bankers, legal practitioners, and policymakers actionable frameworks to navigate banking, VC, and M&A as an integrated engine of sustainable growth.

Event Timeline



THEMES

1. **Bank-Financed Acquisitions and the Liberalisation of Acquisition Finance in India**
2. **Leveraged Buyouts, Structured Debt and Acquisition Financing in Corporate Transactions**
3. **Distressed Acquisitions and Resolution-Based Deal-Making under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code**
4. **External Commercial Borrowings (ECB), Cross-Border Capital Flows and Financing of Corporate Acquisitions**
5. **Regulatory Interface in Corporate Deal-Making: RBI, SEBI, CCI and MCA Oversight in Complex Transactions**
6. **Digital Lending, FinTech Regulation and the Evolving Architecture of Credit Markets in India**
7. **Private Credit, Alternative Capital Structures and the Transformation of Corporate Financing**
8. **Banking Governance, Risk Management and Regulatory Accountability in Contemporary Financial Systems**
9. **Financial Inclusion, Neo-Banking and Technology-Driven Innovation in Banking Regulation**
10. **Shadow Banking, NBFC Regulation and Systemic Stability in India's Financial Sector**

NOTE: THE SUB-THEMES ARE MERELY SUGGESTIVE IN NATURE. THE PARTICIPANTS ARE FREE TO CHOOSE THE TOPICS/THEMES BASED ON BANKING AND FINANCE (B&F), MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS (M&A) OF THEIR CHOICE

Structure of the Summit

I. Paper Presentation

The summit invites authors to submit original, unpublished manuscripts, along with an abstract, for presentation at the technical session under the themes of the summit to contribute to the discourse around the contemporary issues in Startup Laws & Policy Making. After reviewing all the manuscripts, the top 8 shortlisted authors/teams shall be invited to present their manuscripts before the experts on the day of the summit at CNLU Campus.

The presentation session will be a platform for authors to share their research and findings with startup and tech law experts and peers. This session will be an opportunity to engage in critical discourse and exchange ideas, as well as to showcase the author's contributions to their field of study. The purpose of this presentation is to disseminate the results of original research or investigation, to stimulate discussion, and to foster new insights and perspectives.

II. Panel Discussions

The Summit shall feature three high-level panel discussions bringing together leading law firm partners, startup founders, investors, policymakers, and industry experts to examine some of the most pressing questions shaping India's startup ecosystem. The discussions will explore whether venture debt and private credit are emerging as viable alternatives to traditional venture capital, how startups can navigate the increasingly complex regulatory framework involving RBI, SEBI, FEMA, and competition law, and whether IPOs, strategic acquisitions, or insolvency-led exits represent the most sustainable pathways for startup growth and investor returns. Through practical insights and real-world perspectives, the sessions aim to foster informed dialogue on the evolving relationship between capital, regulation, and corporate transactions in the startup economy.

EVENT DETAILS

Manuscript Submission:

- Word Count: 2500-3000 words (excluding footnotes)
- Submission Deadline: 20th July 2026 (Main Manuscript/Full Paper)
- Abstract Word Limit is 150-250 Words with 5 keywords.

Team Composition:

A maximum of two authors is permitted per team.

Registration Fees:

For NON-CNLU Students

- Single Author: INR 800
- Co-Authors: INR 1500

For the Finalists: Each finalist author shall be required to pay INR 2,000 towards accommodation and food expenses.

For CNLU Students

- Single Author: INR 600
- Co-Authors: INR 1100

Cross-institutional teams are permitted. The Registration Fees for the Event are non-refundable. It is to be noted that in case of cross institution teams, where one student is from CNLU and the other student is from another university, the fees applicable shall be of Co-Authorship mentioned in “For CNLU Students”.

We eagerly look forward to the participation of the talented students and their insightful contributions to the field of startup law.

GUIDELINES

ELIGIBILITY

The competition is open to students pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate, or PhD programmes at any recognized university in India. Participants are required to produce a university-issued ID card or a bonafide certificate issued by their respective universities confirming their enrolment.

LANGUAGE

All Written Submissions and further presentations (if selected) shall be made in English, which shall be the official language of the Competition.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submissions are expected to be the original work of the author(s) and to meet high academic standards.

The following guidelines ought to be followed:

- The full paper has to be submitted in soft copy in MS Word(.doc/.docx).
- The title must succinctly encapsulate the topic and explain the body of work.
- There must be an abstract (150-250 words) that briefly describes the idea behind the submission, its structure, and the author's conclusion(s). The abstract must highlight the novelty and significance of the proposed idea and clearly specify the contribution of the paper beyond the existing literature.
- The word limit (exclusive of abstract) for the written submissions is 2500-3000 words.
- The body of the manuscript should be in Times New Roman, Font Size 12, and 1.5-line spacing, automatic spacing between paragraphs, and justified alignment. One-inch margins should be maintained on all four sides.
- The title must be Times New Roman. Font Size 14, in CAPITALS, Bold, aligned CENTRE.

GUIDELINES

- The footnotes should be in Times New Roman font size 10, single line spacing, and justified alignment. The citations must conform to the style of OSCOLA [4th EDITION].
- Manuscripts should only use footnotes as a means of citation. No other method shall be permitted.
- Only original, unpublished work is sought. A submission will not be accepted if it exceeds the 10% plagiarism limit. The CNLU-CATALYST 2026 has a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism. Please note that any submission containing more than 10% plagiarized content will be outright rejected. Any manuscript submitted to present identical or substantially similar work already published or under review for any other publication will not be considered.
- The use of AI is strictly prohibited for the Competition.
- The manuscript, once submitted to us for this competition, should not be submitted to any other competition and/or for any other purpose. However, participants are free to pursue publication on other platforms if they are not placed on the merit list.
- The manuscript should not contain any reference to the identity of the authors. However, authors are allowed to cite their previously published work.
- Co-authorship is permissible only up to a maximum of two authors.
- In case of co-authorship, substitution of an author or alteration of team composition is not allowed after the date of Final Registration except in extenuating circumstances and only with the permission of the Organising Committee.
- The winners of the competition authorize the organizers to use their names and photographs, if required, for the publication of the competition and its results.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- All submissions shall be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

S. No.	Criteria	Marks
1.	Topic Selection & Relevance: Clarity, significance, and contemporary relevance of the chosen subject matter, including its contribution to ongoing legal, regulatory, policy, or business discourse relating to Startup Law, Banking & Finance, or Mergers & Acquisitions.	10
2.	Research Problem & Significance: Identification of a clear legal, regulatory, or policy issue, the rationale behind its selection, and the significance of the research question addressed.	15
3.	Originality & Innovation: Novelty of ideas, uniqueness of the approach adopted, and the extent to which the paper contributes fresh perspectives to existing scholarship and policy discussions.	15
4.	Literature Review & Use of Sources: Effective engagement with relevant statutes, regulations, judicial precedents, academic literature, policy papers, reports, and other authoritative sources.	15
5.	Depth of Analysis & Critical Engagement: Quality of legal reasoning, analytical rigor, critical evaluation of legal and regulatory frameworks, and engagement with competing viewpoints and counterarguments.	20
6.	Practical and Policy Implications: Extent to which the paper offers actionable recommendations, regulatory insights, business implications, or policy suggestions supported by the research findings.	10
7.	Structure, Clarity & Presentation: Logical organization, coherence of arguments, quality of writing, adherence to citation standards, grammar, formatting, and overall presentation.	15
	Total	100

GUIDELINES

- The decision of the Evaluation Committee shall be final and binding. The Committee reserves the right to adopt such evaluation procedures as it may deem appropriate for ensuring a fair and comprehensive assessment of all submissions.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- In case of any dispute regarding the interpretation or understanding of any matter concerning the competition, the decision of the Organizing Committee shall be final and binding on all those concerned.

MISCELLANEOUS

- If any one of the members of a team is notified or informed of any detail or information concerning the Competition, it shall be deemed as if the said team as a whole has been duly notified or informed.
- If any unplanned or unexpected contingencies arise, the Organizing Committee will address them, and the Organising Committee's judgment in this regard shall be final. Acceptance of the Organising Committee's decisions is a precondition for participation in the Competition.
- Teams must raise a conflict of interest and inform the Organizing Committee if they find themselves associated with any judge viz. as an intern, etc. at any point of the competition.

REGISTRATION

For Non-CNLU Students

- Registration & Payment [Link](#)

For CNLU Students

- Registration & Payment [Link](#)

Contact

- Ujjawal Priyadarshi (+91 8620001879) - Convenor
- Tanushree Singhal (+91 9060728668) - General Secretary
- Aman Raj (+91 9631408898) - Event Head

Please note: The team code, along with the link for full paper submission, will be communicated via email to all registered participants three days before the submission deadline.

Kindly scan the QR for UPI or use the info below for the payment of the registration fee.



STATE BANK OF INDIA
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PATNA, 800001)
Branch Code : 15996
Branch Phone : 9771468296
IFSC : SBIN0015996
MICR : 800002539
Account No. : 40831092400

PRIZES AND AWARDS

PRIZES

- **Publication Opportunity:** Top 15 manuscripts shall be published in an *ISBN-bearing book* by a National/International Publisher.
- **Presentation:** The Top 8 manuscripts will be invited for final rounds of presentation at the CNLU Campus.
- **Certificate of Merit for Top 15 Manuscripts.**
- **Certificate of Achievement for Top 8 (Finalists).**

AWARDS

- **Winner:** 30,000 INR Cash Prize + Internship Opportunity with J. Sagar Associates (JSA) + Gold Medal + Trophy and Certificate of Achievement
- **Runner-Up:** 20,000 INR Cash Prize + Internship Opportunity with J. Sagar Associates (JSA) + Silver Medal + Trophy and Certificate of Achievement

The Law Firm reserves all rights to determine the office, dates, and team under which the internship is granted.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Chief Patron

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Vice-Chancellor, Chanakya National Law University

Chair Person

Prof. (Dr.) S.P. Singh

Registrar, Chanakya National Law University

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Assistant Professor of Management

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

For any query reach out to us at: Email: ciile@cnlu.ac.in

Student Body

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Samridhi Singh (+91 88173 99741) - Deputy Editor-in-Chief



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