

Bangladesh Innovation Fair 2026

From Dialogue to Opportunity | Emerging Ideas for Collective Action

An executive synthesis of ideas, opportunities and potential pathways emerging from the Fair. For further validation, prioritization and collaboration

THE CENTRAL NARRATIVE & ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION PATHWAY:



The opportunity is to translate Bangladesh's innovation potential into greater productivity, competitiveness and economic value

Unlocking Bangladesh's Innovation Potential

STRENGTHS

Large & Young Talent Base
Expanding Digital & Innovation Ecosystem
Globally Recognized Green Manufacturing
Leadership
Growing Research & Innovation Capacity

→
**OPPORTUNITIES
TO UNLOCK
SCALE**

Skills ↔ Employers

Stronger alignment between learning and
market demand

Research ↔ Markets

Faster pathways from ideas and IP to
commercialization

Innovation ↔ Finance

Greater access to catalytic capital

Digital ↔ Productive Economy

Address connectivity, data and logistics
constraints

Ecosystem ↔ Coordination

Stronger connections across government,
industry, academia and investors

The Next Frontier: From Innovation Adoption to Innovation-Led Growth

Technology Adoption → Technology Creation

Connect digital capabilities with productive sectors by supporting locally developed technologies and their application in manufacturing, agriculture and trade.

Bangla AI/LLMs, locally developed health technologies such as OxyJet, low-carbon construction materials and clean-energy solutions.

Pilots → Scale

Create clearer pathways for proven innovations to grow, including access to data, finance, procurement, partnerships and markets.

scaling port delivery-order automation, industrial rooftop solar, locally developed green technologies, and secure data-exchange solutions.

• Low-Cost → High-Value Growth

Invest in skills, technology and local value addition to help firms and workers move into higher-productivity products, services and export markets.

advanced digital services, semiconductor capabilities, higher-value freelancing, circular apparel and green manufacturing.

Bridging the Gap Between Graduates and Employers Through Applied STEM and Triple Helix Partnerships

Future-Ready Talent Pipeline

Early STEM & Inclusion, TVET: Expand practical exposure to AI, robotics, cybersecurity and other emerging technologies with deliberate pathways for girls and young women.

STEM/TVET/innovation clubs, hands-on technology challenges, mentorship and targeted measures to improve female participation and retention in STEM/TVET

- **Skills ↔ Employer Matching:** Create stronger feedback loops between what employers need and what universities and training institutions teach.

employer-defined competency needs, industry problem statements and a skills-mapping mechanism connecting graduate capabilities with changing labour-market demand.

- **Higher-Value Digital Work:** Help Bangladesh's freelancers and digital talent progress from task-based work toward higher-value technology services and global contracts.

advanced digital and AI skills, industry-recognized credentials, stronger international payment pathways and easier access to global digital-service markets

Bridging the Gap Between Graduates and Employers Through Applied STEM and Triple Helix Partnerships

Public–Private Partnerships for Talent, Research & Innovation

- **Co-Invest in Talent & Infrastructure:** Pilot PPP models where government, universities and industry jointly invest in applied STEM, advanced facilities and specialized talent pipelines.

industry co-invested university labs, including the ACI ARTIS semiconductor initiative, and industry-supported STEM and technology training.

- **Co-Solve Industry Challenges:** Create mechanisms for companies to bring real technical and business challenges together with funding and expertise to university teams.

industry-defined research challenges, funded university problem-solving, prototype development and joint testing with companies.

- **Co-Invest in Applied R&D:** Explore jointly funded research and innovation models that connect academic expertise with industry demand.

industry-backed applied research centres and university–industry collaboration in emerging technology and advanced manufacturing.

- **Research → Market:** Strengthen practical pathways for promising university research, advocacy for syllabus update, to move from lab to prototype, enterprise and market.

campus Technology Transfer Offices, IP and patent support, commercialization expertise and stronger industry linkages.

- **Reward Applied Impact:** Explore incentives that recognize research with demonstrated economic and societal value.

giving greater recognition to patents, IP disclosures, industry-funded research and commercial spin-offs alongside academic publications.

HEALTH & LIFE SCIENCES: FROM IMPORT DEPENDENCE TO INNOVATION HUB

Biopharma | APIs | Vaccines | Therapeutics | Diagnostics

Government de-risks → PPPs connect → Industry invests → IP protects → Innovation scales

Build a High-Value Growth Industry

Position pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical innovation as a new engine for health security, investment, exports and high-value jobs.

Create True PPP Innovation Hubs

Government helps de-risk early-stage R&D and provide enabling infrastructure, while industry brings investment, technology, commercialization capability and markets.

Leverage Public Assets

Explore EDCL as a facilitator for APIs, vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics, and specialized infrastructure such as the proposed animal-house facility to strengthen pre-clinical research and drug discovery.

Strengthen IP & Commercialization

A credible innovation economy requires strong, efficient IP protection. Explore modernization of DPDIT, including stronger performance incentives and faster pathways from research → IP → commercialization.

Turn Health Spending into Economic Opportunity

Build domestic capability to reduce billions in overseas medical spending, attract investment and position Bangladesh as a regional health and life-sciences innovation hub. Fair discussions cited approximately US\$5 billion annually in overseas tertiary-care spending.

Accelerating Lab-to-Market Pathways Through Fiscal Incentives and Local Green Codes

Applied R&D & Commercialization: Practical Policy Options

- **Incentivize R&D Investment :** Explore targeted incentives that make it easier for universities and businesses to invest in applied research and product development.

Fair examples: competitive R&D grants, potential fiscal incentives for qualifying R&D, and co-financing for university–industry research.

- **Government as an Early Customer:** Explore how public procurement and controlled pilots could help promising Bangladeshi innovations demonstrate performance and reach their first markets.

Fair example: locally developed technologies such as OxyJet illustrate the potential for validation and early adoption of homegrown solutions.

- **Make IP Easier to Commercialize:** Clarify practical pathways for researchers and universities to protect, license and commercialize publicly funded innovation.

Fair examples: clearer IP ownership, inventor benefit-sharing, patent support and university technology-transfer functions.

- **Make Research Easier to Do**

Identify practical barriers that increase the cost or time required to undertake laboratory and applied research.

Fair examples: review tariff treatment, HS classifications and procedures affecting specialized laboratory equipment, testing tools and research inputs.

Green & Industrial Transformation: From Proven Solutions to Scale

- **Scale Proven Green Manufacturing Solutions:** Build on Bangladesh's existing green manufacturing leadership by helping proven technologies spread across more factories and sectors.

Fair examples: low-carbon blended cement, cool paints, water-efficient production technologies and industrial energy-efficiency solutions.

- **Use Standards & Procurement to Create Demand:** Explore how building standards and public procurement can create early demand for locally tested green technologies.

Fair examples: wider application of BEEER and DA-SH performance standards and greater use of locally validated low-carbon construction materials.

- **Accelerate Circular Manufacturing:** Support industries to turn resource efficiency and industrial waste into new sources of competitiveness and value creation.

Fair examples: ozone denim processing, local yarn linkages and conversion of industrial waste into biomass pellets.

- **Expand Clean Energy for Industry:** Explore practical financing and partnership models that help factories invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Fair examples: industrial rooftop solar, battery storage and factory energy-efficiency assessments.

Establishing Productive Digital Foundations and Catalytic Capital for National Scaling

AI Infrastructure & Trusted Data

- **Shared AI Infrastructure**

Explore options for expanding affordable access to advanced computing capacity for universities, researchers, startups and public-interest innovation.

Potential options: shared GPU facilities, university–industry compute partnerships, and development of Bangla-language AI capabilities and locally relevant models.

- **Affordable & Inclusive Connectivity**

Assess infrastructure and pricing constraints that may limit the growth of digital innovation beyond major urban centres.

Potential options: review transmission costs and explore measures that could improve affordable high-capacity connectivity for regional technology and innovation hubs.

- **Trusted Data for Innovation**

Explore secure approaches that enable responsible use of data for research, AI and better public services while protecting privacy and data sovereignty.

Fair example: NRDEX and query-based data exchange approaches that can enable access without unnecessarily exposing raw personal data.

- **Trust & Quality Standards for Digital Innovation**

Explore whether stronger standards and assurance mechanisms could help build trust in locally developed digital and AI solutions.

Potential areas: cybersecurity, software quality, responsible AI and certification approaches that could strengthen export readiness

Establishing Productive Digital Foundations and Catalytic Capital for National Scaling

Innovation Finance & Market Access (Options to Explore)

- **Catalytic & Risk Finance:** Explore financing models that can help promising innovations move from early-stage development to commercial scale, particularly where conventional finance may not be suitable.

Potential options: blended finance, risk-sharing facilities, concessional capital and other instruments that can help crowd in private investment for green and deep-tech ventures.

- **Enabling Investment in Emerging Industries**

Assess fiscal and regulatory barriers that may constrain investment in new technology and green industries.

Fair example: the discussion on fiscal treatment of locally assembled EVs highlights the potential to examine incentives affecting domestic clean-mobility manufacturing and value addition.

- **Digital Logistics for Competitiveness**

Identify successful digital logistics solutions that could be evaluated for replication and scale.

Fair examples: Chattogram Port delivery-order automation and the potential use of traffic simulation and digital tools to improve urban mobility and trade logistics.

- **Easier Access to Global Digital Markets**

Explore practical ways to make it easier for Bangladeshi technology firms, startups and digital professionals to transact internationally.

Potential areas: cross-border payments, foreign-exchange processes and payment mechanisms for software, cloud services and digital-service exports.

From Dialogue to Collective Action: Roles Across the Innovation Ecosystem

Stakeholder	Potential Role	Practical Opportunities Emerging from the Fair	Possible Next Steps
GOVERNMENT	Enable & Catalyze	• Explore incentives for R&D and innovation • Review regulatory and procurement barriers to scaling local solutions • Strengthen enabling frameworks for digital, green and emerging technologies	Prioritize a small number of policy opportunities for technical assessment and stakeholder consultation
INDUSTRY	Invest, Co-Create & Scale *with government and academia	• Co-invest in applied STEM, university labs and R&D • Bring real industry challenges to universities • Expand apprenticeships and work-based learning • Test and scale commercially viable green and digital solutions	Identify industry partners and launch selected university–industry/PPP pilots
ACADEMIA	Develop Talent & Translate Research	• Expand applied and industry-linked learning • Strengthen research-to-market and technology-transfer capacity • Encourage applied research, IP and commercialization • Increase participation of women in STEM	Pilot applied learning, industry challenge and commercialization models with selected universities
INVESTORS & FINANCE	De-Risk & Finance Scale	• Explore blended and catalytic finance • Develop financing appropriate for green, deep-tech and innovation ventures • Connect promising innovations with investors and markets	Identify financing gaps and test mechanisms for promising scalable innovations
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS	Convene, Connect & De-Risk	• Support evidence, policy dialogue and technical assessment • Facilitate partnerships across government, industry and academia • Support pilots and validation of promising solutions • Help mobilize knowledge, expertise and catalytic finance	Support government-led prioritization, partnership building, piloting and learning