Yarl IT Hub

ANNUAL REPORT - 2025

The community that dreams of making Northern
Sri Lanka into an innovation hub

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ABOUT YARL IT HUB

Yarl IT Hub (YIT) is a not-for-profit social enterprise committed to fostering technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka's Northern Province. Established by and for the community, YIT brings together a diverse network of students, educators, professionals, entrepreneurs, and researchers united by a shared vision of transforming Jaffna into a vibrant regional technology and innovation hub.

Grounded in community ownership and collaboration, Yarl IT Hub functions as a catalyst for inclusive growth by enabling access to digital skills, entrepreneurial pathways, and innovation ecosystems. Through its programs, spaces, and partnerships, YIT bridges education, industry, and society—supporting individuals to translate ideas into `meaningful social and economic impact.

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Our Vision

Our vision is To Make Jaffna the next Silicon Valley

Our Mission

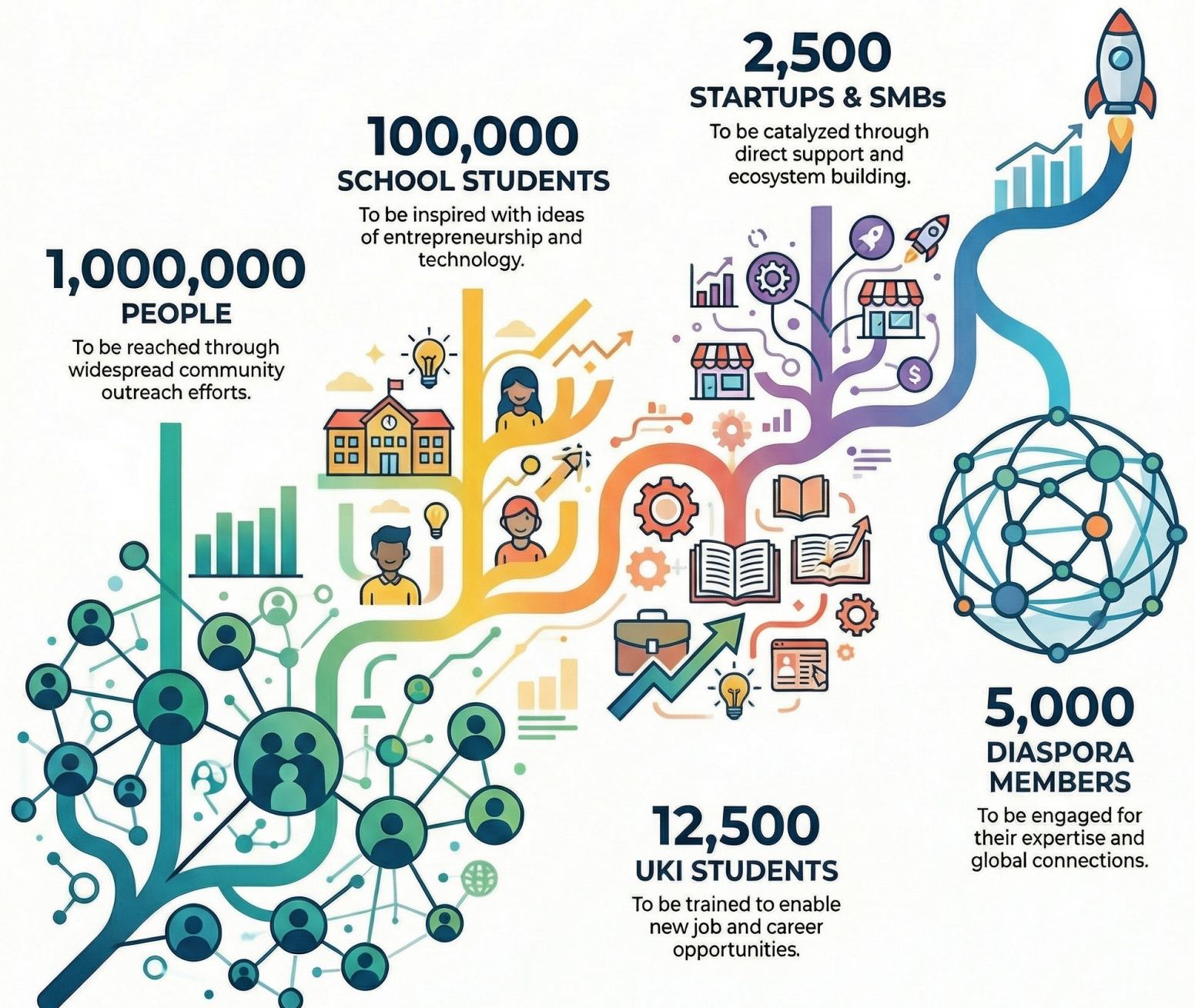To transform the Northern Province into a vibrant innovation hub.

Our Values

- Operate with transparency
- Empower the community with technology
- Be technology and corporate independent
- Be innovative
- Be apolitical
- Not for Profit
- To nurture and develop talent in the community

2030 GOALS

By 2030, Yarl IT Hub aims to deliver long-term, province-wide impact through the following strategic goals:

- Outreach to 1,000,000 people
- Seed the idea of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Technology in 100,000 secondary school students
- Train 12,500 students at Uki to enable job and career opportunities
- Act as a catalyst for 2,500 startups and SMBs
- Engage 5,000 diaspora members to contribute expertise and global connections

2,500 STARTUPS & SMBs
To be catalyzed through direct support and ecosystem building.

100,000 SCHOOL STUDENTS
To be inspired with ideas of entrepreneurship and technology.

1,000,000 PEOPLE
To be reached through widespread community outreach efforts.

5,000 DIASPORA MEMBERS
To be engaged for their expertise and global connections.

12,500 UKI STUDENTS
To be trained to enable new job and career opportunities.

YARL IT HUB INITIATIVES

The Yarl IT Hub is a dynamic platform empowering individuals through innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital literacy. For school students, it offers programs like YGC Junior, Aki Digital Learning, entrepreneurship clubs, and maker events. Young adults benefit from the Uki Technology School, YGC Senior, and community meetups. Entrepreneurs gain support through accelerators, digital content creation programs, and shared workspaces. The hub's research arm, Thulir, leads impactful projects, including apps for hearing-impaired children and digitally paired classrooms, driving technological and social advancements.

Initiatives for Young Adults

Initiatives like Uki Technology School and YGC Senior focus on building technical and leadership skills, alongside fostering community connections

Initiatives for School children

Programs designed to ignite young minds through competitions, STEAM education,

digital learning, entrepreneurship clubs, and hands-on maker activities, fostering creativity

and innovation among students.

Initiatives for the Entrepreneurs and Community

Provides tailored support through accelerators, content creation programs, and shared workspaces to help entrepreneurs scale their ventures.

Research Arm

Thulir serves as a vital social innovation center and the dedicated research arm of Yarl IT

Hub. It plays a crucial role in driving innovation and creating positive social impact.

PUTHIYA PAYANANGAL

Executive Summary

The Puthiya Payanangal (New Journeys) initiative continues to serve as Yarl IT Hub's flagship programme for nurturing innovation, creativity, and scientific thinking among students aged 11–14 across the Northern Province. Through a structured approach rooted in project-based learning and gamification, the programme fosters early engagement with STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics). In 2025, Puthiya Payanangal expanded its reach significantly, extending deeper into rural communities where access to technology-based learning opportunities remains limited.
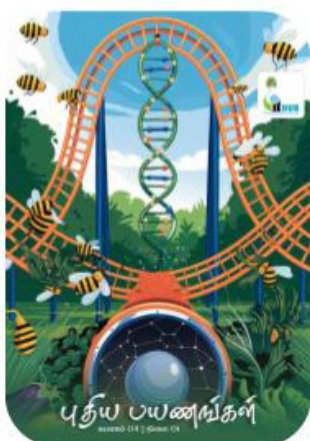
2025 Performance & Impact

During the year, the programme engaged 432 schools, marking a notable increase from the 342 schools reached in previous cycles. A total of 15,320 guidebooks, distributed in both printed and digital formats, supported self-learning and guided experimentation. In addition, more than 26,000 students were introduced to the programme through school-level engagements and awareness sessions.

Timeline

The 2025 implementation followed a carefully planned structure designed to offer both consistency and flexibility. The curriculum rollout commenced with Level 1 (Basics of STEAM) from January to March, followed by Level 2 (Quantum Computing) from March to May, and concluded with Level 3 (Entrepreneurship Skills) between May and August.

To promote inclusivity and allow adequate time for experimentation and completion, students were provided with a final submission window until October to complete all three levels and qualify for certification.

The programme concluded with a celebration of innovation at the YGC Innovation Festival, where the top 100 students—the first 20 from each of the five districts to complete the full programme—were recognised and awarded advanced electronic kits. Recognition also extended to key contributors within the ecosystem: Mannar was recognised as the Most Engaging Zone, while awards were presented to the Most Engaging School in each district and the Most Engaging Teachers for their sustained commitment and mentorship.

PUTHIYA PAYANANGAL   *Continue...*

Engagement Funnel

As in previous years, the 2025 programme was structured into three progressive levels of engagement. Based on programme tracking data:

Engagement Level	Total Participants	Focus Area
Level 1	5,269	Basics of STEAM & Fundamental Concepts
Level 2	2,204	Introduction to Quantum Computing
Level 3	1,158	Entrepreneurship Skills & Mindset

Strategic Highlights & Curriculum

- *Gamified Progress:* Certificates and motivational incentives, including stickers and badges, were used to encourage continued participation across levels.

- *Level 1 – Discovery:* Introduced foundational STEAM concepts through simple, interactive activities focused on core scientific and technological principles.

- *Level 2 – Future Tech:* Provided early exposure to Quantum Computing concepts, enabling students to engage with emerging technologies.

- *Level 3 – Leadership:* Emphasised entrepreneurship skills, guiding students to translate technical ideas into practical solutions while developing a problem-solving mindset.

- *Practical Application:* The provision of specialised electronic kits to the first 100 students who completed all levels, along with personalised incentives, helped bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application.
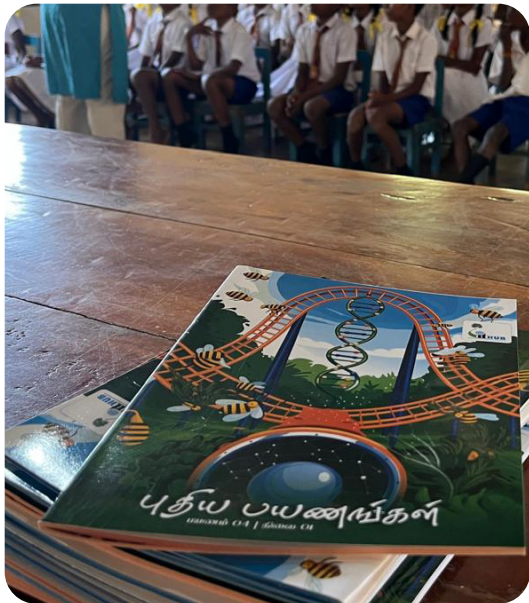
PUTHIYA PAYANANGAL   *Continue...*

Long-term Vision

As technology continues to play an increasingly central role in society, initiatives such as Puthiya Payanangal are critical in preparing young learners for future challenges. The programme aims to equip students with the skills, confidence, and mindset required to apply innovation in addressing real-world problems.

Acknowledgement

We extend our sincere gratitude to Ramoshan and his family, whose technical expertise and financial support were instrumental in enabling the programme's expanded reach and impact in 2025.

YARL GEEK CHALLENGE – JUNIOR | SEASON 14

Yarl Geek Challenge Junior (YGC Junior) continued its strong momentum in Season 14, recording significant growth in participation and deepening its impact across the Northern Province. Implemented by Yarl IT Hub with the approval of the Northern Provincial Department of Education, the programme remains one of the region's leading platforms for nurturing innovation, creativity, and technology-driven problem-solving among school students.

Key Highlights

- Applications Opened   : March 2025
- Applications Received   : 1,095 teams
- Students Engaged   : 3,000+
- Educational Coverage   : All 13 educational zones in the Northern Province
- Zonal-Level Competitions   : June 21–22, 2025
- Zonal Participation   : 663 teams
- Finalists Selected   : 125 teams
- Grand Finale   : July 12–13, 2025, Thiruvalluvar Cultural Centre, Jaffna

The season began with orientation and awareness sessions conducted across all 13 educational zones, providing students with guidance on the competition framework, evaluation criteria, and innovation fundamentals. These sessions helped students identify real-world social challenges within their communities and encouraged them to develop solutions using technology and scientific thinking. In total, more than 3,000 students were engaged during this phase.

Following the orientations, category-specific training workshops were conducted during May and June, facilitated by experienced mentors. Students received hands-on guidance in idea development, project planning, and solution refinement across four categories: Web Application Development, Mobile Application Development, Hardware Application Development, and Application of Science. These workshops played a key role in preparing teams for the zonal-level competitions.

YARL GEEK CHALLENGE – JUNIOR | SEASON 14   Continue...

The zonal competitions, held on June 21st and 22nd, witnessed the participation of 663 teams across the province—representing a 33% increase compared to the previous year. Based on the zonal evaluations, 125 teams were selected to advance to the final stage of the competition.

To further strengthen the quality of student projects, Yarl IT Hub organized structured mentorship sessions for finalist teams, including online mentoring, presentation preparation, and direct on-site guidance. These sessions supported students in refining both their technical solutions and communication skills.

The season concluded with the Grand Finale of YGC Junior – Season 14, held on July 12th and 13th, 2025, at the Thiruvalluvar Cultural Centre, Jaffna. The finals brought together the most promising young innovators from across the Northern Province, culminating in an awards ceremony that recognized outstanding projects, creativity, and commitment.
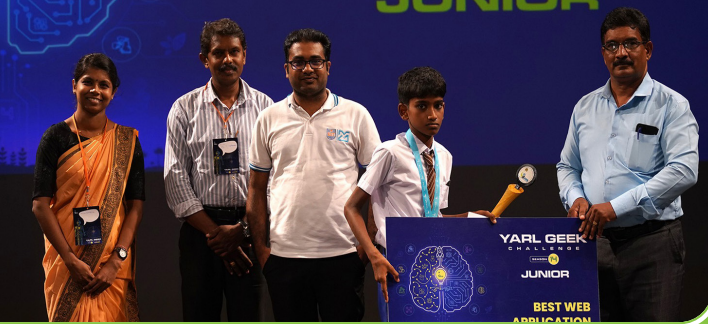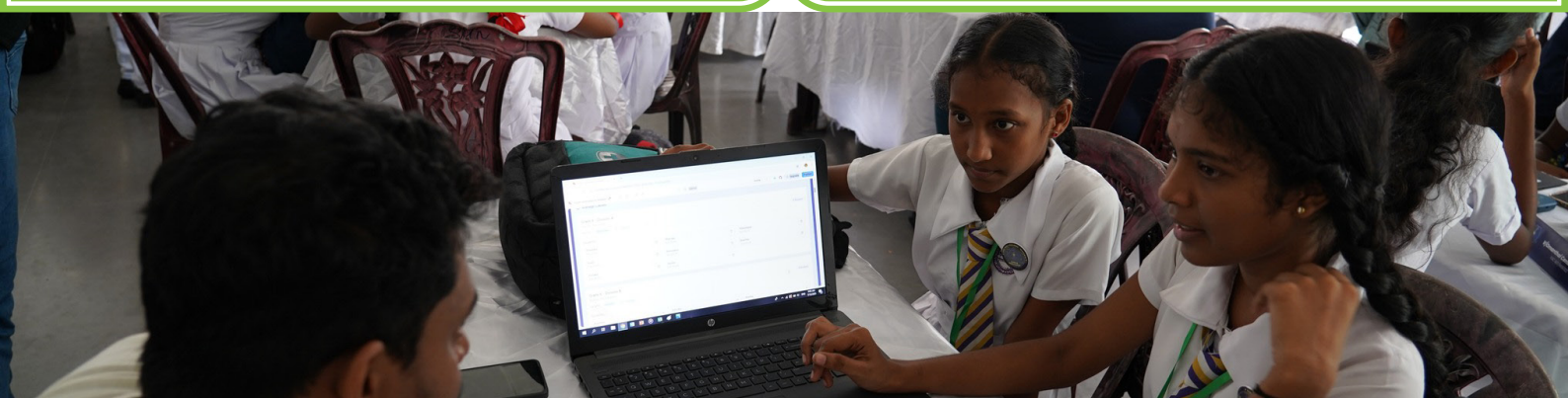

Hardware Application Development
Winner

Application of Science
Winner

Web Application Development
Winner

Mobile Application Development
Winner

SCHOOL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUB

Launched in July 2023, the School Entrepreneurship Club by Yarl IT Hub was conceived with a clear and ambitious mission: to cultivate entrepreneurial thinking, leadership, and problem-solving capabilities among secondary school students across the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. The initiative embeds entrepreneurship within schools through structured clubs, exposing students to real-world challenges and empowering them to design sustainable, community-driven solutions.

Over the past two years, the initiative has evolved into a region-wide movement, reaching more than 60 schools through a combination of structured workshops, formal club formation, mentorship, and hands-on business model development. By integrating experiential learning with institutional support, the programme has laid a strong foundation for nurturing the next generation of entrepreneurs in the region.

A significant milestone was achieved in September 2024, when Yarl IT Hub and Hatton National Bank PLC (HNB) formalised their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This partnership strengthened both the financial and mentorship components of the initiative. By March 2025, seed funding was successfully disbursed to 35 schools, reinforcing the programme's emphasis on action-based learning and enabling student-led ideas to progress from concept to execution.

Club Governance Model

Each School Entrepreneurship Club operates under a well-defined governance structure designed to promote accountability, responsibility, and experiential leadership. Students assume leadership roles that mirror real-world startup positions, supported by dedicated faculty guidance to ensure continuity and sustainability.

Student Leadership Roles

- *Chief Executive Officer (CEO)*: Oversees overall club operations and team coordination
- *Chief Financial Officer (CFO)*: Manages budgeting, financial planning, and utilisation of funds
- *Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)*: Leads branding, promotions, outreach, and communications
- *Club Advisor:* A full-time faculty member appointed annually to provide guidance, continuity, and institutional support

This governance framework allows students to gain hands-on leadership experience while maintaining structured oversight within schools.

SCHOOL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUB *Continue...*

District-Wise Implementation & Outcomes – 2025

Jaffna District

- Schools Reached   : 31
- Active Clubs   : 14 schools officially formed clubs and received HNB funding
- Clubs Trained   : 13

Workshops Conducted   → 22 February 2025: 8 school clubs established and trained
→ 4 July 2025: 5 school clubs established and trained

Mannar District

- Schools Reached   : 21
- Active Clubs   : 11 schools officially formed clubs and received HNB funding
- Clubs Trained   : 10

Workshops Conducted   → 13 March 2025: 4 school clubs established and trained
→ 17 March 2025: 6 school clubs established and trained

Vavuniya District

- Schools Reached   : 15
- Active Clubs   : 11 schools officially formed
- Clubs Trained   : 9

Workshops Conducted   → 25 January 2025: 4 school clubs established and trained
→ 2 February 2025: 5 school clubs established and trained

SCHOOL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUB *Continue...*

Final Evaluation & Recognition

Preparation sessions for participating clubs were conducted online, ensuring consistent readiness across districts. The initiative culminated in a final evaluation and award ceremony held on 29 August 2025 during the YGC Innovation Festival 2025.

After months of structured preparation and mentoring, 28 schools presented their entrepreneurial projects to a panel of judges, gaining valuable real-world pitching experience and professional feedback.

Awarded Clubs

Most Revenue-Generating Entrepreneurship Club:

Mn/Illupaikadavai T.M.V

Most Impactful Entrepreneurship Club:

J/Allarai G.T.V

Best Business Model Innovation:

V/Cheddikkulam Maha Vidyalayam

The School Entrepreneurship Club Initiative continues to serve as a strong pipeline for nurturing future entrepreneurs in the Northern Province. By combining structured learning, mentorship, seed funding, and real-world exposure, the programme lays the groundwork for sustained entrepreneurial growth, meaningful community impact, and long-term ecosystem development.

AKI

Aki is Yarl IT Hub's digital learning platform, focused on expanding access to quality education for students across the Northern Province and beyond. In 2025, Aki continued to strengthen its role as a comprehensive e-learning ecosystem by scaling academic, vocational, and institutional learning resources.

Digital Learning Platform

Secondary Education (Grades 6–11)

Aki offers 70+ secondary education courses covering multiple subjects for students from Grades 6 to 11. To support continuous learning and exam preparation, the platform features an 8,000+ question bank, enabling students to practice, assess, and strengthen their subject knowledge.

For Advanced Level students, Aki hosts 100+ online course materials across subjects such as Biology, Chemistry, ICT, Mathematics, and Biosystems Technology, supporting revision, subject mastery, and exam readiness.

Vocational Education

Aki provides 16+ vocational education courses focused on practical, career-oriented skills. These courses support learners in developing industry-relevant competencies and pathways toward employment and entrepreneurship.

Support for Yarl IT Hub Initiatives

Aki serves as a central distribution platform for educational content related to Yarl IT Hub programs, including Uki full-time and short-term courses, improving accessibility and consistency of learning materials.

Overall, Aki continues to play a key role in strengthening digital learning access and educational outcomes across the region.

MAKER EVENTS

To introduce students to technology and innovation through hands-on learning, Yarl IT Hub conducts Maker Events and Makerspace activities. These initiatives encourage experimentation, collaboration, and problem-solving by providing access to tools, guided sessions, and creative environments. Maker Events play a vital role in transforming curiosity into practical skills and innovative thinking.

During 2025, Makerspaces across Jaffna, Mannar, Kilinochchi, and Vavuniya conducted regular activities and workshops that strengthened technical capability, creativity, and community engagement.

District Makerspace Highlights

Jaffna

The Jaffna Makerspace at Yarl IT Hub Kalam actively engaged students in technical exploration and collaborative learning. Arduino-focused activities introduced programming and electronics, enabling participants to build simple hardware projects and gain exposure to embedded systems and IoT concepts.

Mannar

The Mannar Makerspace operates on a weekly basis for two hours at the Yarl IT Hub office. Sessions focus on Arduino programming and creative making, supporting students from Grades 6 to 9 in building confidence in coding, electronics, and practical problem-solving.

Kilinochchi

One of the most active Makerspaces in the network, the Kilinochchi Makerspace supports students aged 6 to 16 through activities such as Arduino programming, web development, handcrafting, and creative presentations. Participants also engage with initiatives including Puthiya Payanangal and YGC Junior, strengthening their innovation mindset.

Vavuniya

The Vavuniya Makerspace nurtures creativity through handmaking and innovation-focused activities. Regular sessions encourage imagination, design thinking, and collaboration, with many participants progressing to broader Yarl IT Hub programs.

Workshops Summary

Throughout 2025, in addition to regular Makerspace sessions, Maker Events across districts supported practical learning and innovation through a range of hands-on activities. These included technology-focused workshops, creative making sessions, introductory digital skill programs, and opportunities for students to explore application development using AI-powered tools.

Collectively, these initiatives strengthened problem-solving abilities, creativity, and collaborative learning, reinforcing Yarl IT Hub's commitment to experiential and future-ready education.

UKI TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL BY YARL IT HUB

Uki Technology School, the flagship scholarship-based technology accelerator of Yarl IT Hub, continued to strengthen the region's digital talent pipeline in 2025. With a strong focus on coding and industry-aligned skills, Uki provides structured pathways for youth to enter the technology workforce as interns, junior developers, or early-stage entrepreneurs.

The core six-month, full-time in-class program delivers intensive training in Full Stack Web Development, combining hands-on coding, project-based learning, foundational project management, and exposure to digital marketing. This holistic approach equips students not only with technical competence but also with the confidence and adaptability required to thrive in the fast-evolving tech industry. Graduates are prepared to contribute meaningfully to tech companies or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions with a strong practical foundation.

Program Overview – 2025

In its ninth year of continuous operations, Uki Technology School expanded its reach across three centres—Jaffna, Kilinochchi, and Vavuniya—delivering both full-time and flexible learning options.

Full-Time Programs

In 2025, Uki conducted six full-time cohorts in Full Stack Web Development:

- Jaffna   : Two cohorts, with Cohort 12 currently active (39 students in total)
- Vavuniya   : Two cohorts with a combined intake of 13 students
- Kilinochchi   : Two cohorts with a total of 16 students

Part-Time Programs

To cater to learners seeking flexible upskilling opportunities, Uki delivered multiple part-time cohorts:

- Full Stack Web Development: 2 cohorts, 19 students
- AWS: 2 cohorts, 30 students
- Python – A Beginner's Guide: 3 cohorts, 49 students (1 cohort active)
- Data Science: 1 cohort, 11 students

UKI TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL BY YARL IT HUB *Continue...*

Short Courses & Workshops

Responding to emerging industry demand, Uki introduced targeted short courses and workshops in 2025:

- UI/UX 2-Day Workshop: 50 participants
- In-person Short Courses at Uki Kilinochchi:

  → Introduction to Web Development: 18 participants
  → Introduction to Python: 5 participants

Learner Engagement & Impact

Through its diversified program portfolio, Uki engaged more than 250 learners in 2025 across full-time programs, part-time courses, workshops, and short courses. Key focus areas included Full Stack Development, AWS, Python, Data Science, and UI/UX—ensuring relevance to current and future industry needs.

The introduction of AWS, Python, and UI/UX short programs marked a significant milestone in Uki's mission to deliver flexible, inclusive, and employment-focused learning pathways. By lowering barriers to access and aligning training with market demand, Uki continues to play a pivotal role in strengthening the Northern Province's digital ecosystem.

Looking Ahead

As Uki Technology School moves forward, it remains committed to expanding access to quality digital education, deepening industry relevance, and creating sustainable employment pathways for youth across the Northern Province and beyond. Building on this foundation, Uki will increasingly integrate AI-enabled learning and tools across its programs—introducing students to practical applications of artificial intelligence, automation, and data-driven technologies. This focus on AI readiness will ensure learners are equipped with future-facing skills, enabling them to adapt, innovate, and thrive in an evolving global tech landscape.

Uki Technology School – A Stepping Stone to Tech Life

YARL GEEK CHALLENGE SENIOR – SEASON 14

The 14th edition of the Yarl Geek Challenge Senior (YGC Senior) in 2025 marked a defining chapter in Sri Lanka's youth entrepreneurship landscape. As one of the country's premier platforms for aspiring founders, YGC Senior continues to nurture the next generation of innovators by equipping them with the skills, mentorship, and confidence needed to transform ideas into meaningful ventures.

Season 14 unfolded under the vibrant umbrella of the YGC Innovation Festival 2025, a celebration of creativity, technology, and enterprise. The program brought together entrepreneurs, educators, technologists, investors, and community leaders, creating a collaborative ecosystem where emerging founders could learn, experiment, and grow.

The journey began with an extensive awareness and outreach campaign designed to ensure inclusivity and accessibility. Sessions were held across universities, higher education institutes, technical colleges, community hubs, and online platforms. These initiatives provided participants with a clear understanding of the competition framework, early-stage idea development, and preparation for the intensive learning journey ahead. The response was remarkable—Season 14 received a record 185 applications, reflecting the growing entrepreneurial ambition among Sri Lanka's youth.

From this competitive pool, selected teams entered the Uki Startup Essentials Bootcamp, a six-week intensive program that laid the foundation for entrepreneurial success. Participants explored key startup principles, including problem validation, value proposition design, business modeling, minimum viable product (MVP) development, marketing strategies, financial planning, and product–market fit. Practical exercises, guided mentorship, and expert facilitation helped teams strengthen both their execution capabilities and entrepreneurial mindset. By the end of the bootcamp, 79 teams had successfully completed the program, demonstrating commitment, discipline, and a drive to build real-world solutions.

YARL GEEK CHALLENGE SENIOR – SEASON 14   *Continue...*

Season 14 also offered international business mentoring, giving participants the opportunity to engage with global entrepreneurs and industry experts through one-on-one sessions. This exposure allowed founders to gain insights into scaling, innovation strategies, and global best practices, further refining their ideas and approaches.

The grand culmination of YGC Senior Season 14 took place from August 29 to 31 as part of the YGC Innovation Festival 2025. The finale began with intensive mentoring and pitch coaching, where finalist teams honed their presentations, financial models, and product positioning. A preliminary selection round evaluated clarity of problem understanding, validation efforts, execution strength, scalability, and innovation, ultimately identifying 36 teams to compete in the Grand Finale. Of these, 25 competed in the Tech category and 11 in the Tech-Enabled category, each delivering a four-minute pitch followed by a rigorous Q&A session.

The judges recognized outstanding teams across both categories for their innovation, execution quality, and potential real-world impact. Winners demonstrated exceptional problem clarity, strong solution design, and the ability to scale their ventures beyond the competition. In addition to the category winners, special mentions highlighted teams with unique approaches or remarkable execution.

Beyond the awards, YGC Senior serves as a gateway to long-term entrepreneurial growth. It does more than identify promising ideas—it builds capable founders, fosters resilience, and fuels the future of Sri Lankan innovation. As Yarl IT Hub continues its decade-long mission of community-driven technology and entrepreneurship, the Yarl Geek Challenge Senior remains a flagship platform, nurturing talent, strengthening communities, and shaping the leaders of tomorrow.

YGC ACCELERATOR

YGC Accelerator

The YGC Accelerator is a flagship initiative of Yarl IT Hub, designed to support and nurture early-stage startups by equipping founders with the knowledge, mentorship, and ecosystem access required to build sustainable and scalable businesses.

The program runs for six months and is conducted twice a year. It is carefully curated for startups at the MVP or early-growth stage. Selected teams receive structured startup training, tailored mentorship, exposure to funding opportunities, and access to a strong entrepreneurial network.

The accelerator's core objective is to empower entrepreneurs by strengthening startup creation skills, refining go-to-market strategies, expanding professional networks, and enabling meaningful engagement with investors and ecosystem partners.

In 2025, two accelerator cohorts were successfully delivered, representing diverse sectors including technology, education, food innovation, healthcare, AI, and creative industries.

- *Cohort 9,* which commenced in November 2024, concluded in May 2025 with four startups completing the program.
- *Cohort 10 began in June 2025.* After a structured screening and interview process, nine startups were selected and successfully completed the program in December 2025.

Together, these cohorts reflect the accelerator's continued role in strengthening the regional startup ecosystem and supporting founders in transforming ideas into viable ventures.

YGC Accelerator – Cohort 9

Ms. Maniquine

A customized fashion brand for women and children, focused on functional apparel and expanding its product range for local and international markets.

Cloud Parallax (Pvt) Ltd

A cloud solutions company delivering secure, efficient infrastructure and modern application development to help businesses optimize and scale.

2SF Labs – Co-working Space

A community-driven co-working space in Uduppiddy that provides essential infrastructure and a collaborative environment for entrepreneurs, freelancers, and startups.

TrendsED

An EdTech startup offering hands-on learning through bootcamps and courses, helping tech students gain industry-relevant skills and career readiness.

YGC ACCELERATOR   *Continue...*

Asta (Pvt) Ltd

A UX-driven software development company delivering web, mobile, AI, and IoT solutions, guiding products from MVP to scalable deployment.

Greshy Likes

A herbal cosmetics manufacturer specializing in perfumes and personal care products, alongside trading in fashion accessories and consultancy services.

YGC Accelerator – Cohort 10

EDORA – The AI Learning Partner

An AI-powered EdTech platform designed to improve English language learning through personalized and accessible technology. The solution combines conversational practice, adaptive assessments, academic support tools, and motivational assistance to enhance student engagement.

TWOMOR Healthy Foods

A food innovation company producing preservative-free, ready-to-cook traditional foods. The business emphasizes authentic recipes, clean ingredients, and scalable distribution while promoting healthy and heritage-based eating habits.

Xtellig (Pvt) Ltd

A technology solutions provider specializing in custom software development, automation, and AI-driven systems. The company focuses on building scalable digital products tailored to business needs across multiple industries.

NeuroFleets

A deep-tech startup developing decentralized fleet-management solutions for autonomous systems. The platform enables intelligent coordination among drones and robotic systems through advanced AI and edge-computing technologies.

Zenra

An AI-powered HR assistant designed to streamline recruitment workflows. The platform automates candidate screening, communication, and insights, helping organizations improve hiring efficiency and decision-making.

Aquinas College – Jaffna

A career-focused educational institution offering professional and vocational programs in IT, business, and creative disciplines. The college emphasizes practical learning, skill development, and real-world readiness.

YGC ACCELERATOR   *Continue...*

Detech

A technology company delivering AI-driven solutions, immersive AR/VR experiences, and full-stack web and mobile applications. Detech focuses on innovation, research, and scalable digital product development.

Glad We Talk

A digital mental-health and well-being platform providing accessible counseling, peer support, and mental-health education. The platform serves both individuals and organizations, promoting healthier and more resilient communities.

Natural Roots (Pvt) Ltd

A food enterprise producing premium sugarcane-based products using traditional methods. The company promotes chemical-free production, sustainable farming practices, and value addition for local agricultural communities.

Appreciation to Our Mentors

We extend our sincere gratitude to the mentors who supported YGC Accelerator Cohorts 9 and 10. Their guidance, insights, and commitment played a critical role in shaping startup journeys and strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Through continuous support and encouragement, our mentors have helped founders build confidence, clarity, and resilience.

Cohorts 9 Mentors: Mohan Markandaier, Sathish Bala, Vasanthan Dasan, Kula Sellathurai, Ragu Masilamany, Rajan Bala, Tharshini

Cohorts 10 Mentors: Jegan Sivanesan, Anand Ganeshalingam, Matheeswaran Tharmalingam, Velan Thillairajah, Kula Sellathurai, Ragu Masilamany, Mohan Markandaier, Vasanthan Dasan, Jayakrishnan Rajagopalasarma

DIGITAL CONTENT CREATOR (DCC) ACCELERATOR

Program Overview

The Digital Content Creator (DCC) Accelerator continued its mission in 2025 to uplift aspiring creators by providing intensive, time-bound support to help them scale and monetize their work. Supported by WUSC, the program delivers structured education, access to resources, and mentorship aligned with the realities of the modern creator economy. During the year, two full cycles—Cohort 3 and Cohort 4—were successfully completed, further sharpening participants' niches and strengthening their digital presence across platforms.

2025 Impact & Participation

Building on the momentum of previous years, the 2025 cohorts adopted a focused selection approach to identify high-potential creators. The 8-week accelerator remained the core of the journey, with a strong emphasis on storytelling, production quality, and marketing strategies.

Milestone	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Duration	2 Months	2 Months
Selected Participants	17	11

Key Program Pillars

- Strategic Training: Specialized sessions on high-quality content production and effective monetization enabled participants to transform their digital presence into viable professional pathways.

- Mentorship & Networking: Direct access to industry practitioners and peer learning fostered a collaborative creator ecosystem at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub.

- Diversity & Inclusion: In line with Yarl IT Hub's equity commitments, cohorts represented diverse genders, professions, and districts.

- Precursor Bootcamps: Each cycle was preceded by foundational workshops on storytelling and production techniques, serving as an accessible entry point to the full accelerator.

The Objective

The primary objective in 2025 was to bridge the gap between hobbyist creation and professional execution. By strengthening marketing acumen and elevating production standards, the DCC Accelerator positioned Northern creators to compete confidently within the global digital landscape—unlocking sustainable income opportunities and long-term growth.

WEHUB

WEHub is a women-focused entrepreneurship initiative by Yarl IT Hub, launched in 2024. As part of the GRIT Project, in partnership with the World University Service of Canada (WUSC), WEHub established its first centre in Kilinochchi. The initiative is dedicated to empowering women entrepreneurs across Sri Lanka's Northern Province by providing a vibrant and inclusive space that fosters innovation, leadership, and sustainable business growth. Aimed at bridging the gender gap in entrepreneurship, WEHub supports women through tailored programmes, mentorship, and access to essential resources. Training is delivered in key areas such as business planning, financial literacy, digital marketing, and technology integration—enabling women to build resilient and competitive businesses.

In 2025, WEHub prioritised digital inclusion and business resilience, supporting women to establish digital presence, improve marketing capabilities, and strengthen financial and emotional readiness. Despite weather-related disruptions toward the end of the year, WEHub maintained close engagement with entrepreneurs and supported progression into growth pathways such as the YGC Accelerator Programme.

2025 Highlights

Digital Presence & Content Creation:

Practical workshops enabled women entrepreneurs to create and manage online business platforms using budget-friendly tools and WEHub's digital facilities.

One-on-One Mentorship:

Personalised mentoring supported entrepreneurs in digital marketing, product photography, and day-to-day business challenges.

Regional Expansion:

WEHub extended its reach to Mannar and Vavuniya, strengthening access for women entrepreneurs beyond Kilinochchi.

Financial & Business Skills:

Foundational financial management training supported better record-keeping and informed decision-making.

Emotional Intelligence & Leadership:

Interactive sessions focused on resilience, stress management, and effective communication.

Innovation & Ideation:

Women innovators developed solutions addressing real-world challenges across multiple sectors.

WEHUB *Continue...*

WEHub 2025 – At a Glance

- Districts Reached: Kilinochchi, Mannar, Vavuniya, Jaffna

- Women Entrepreneurs Engaged: 50+

- Key Focus Areas: Digital inclusion, business resilience, leadership

- Growth Pathways: YGC Accelerator applications supported

Impact

In 2025, WEHub continued to emerge as a trusted platform for women entrepreneurs in Northern Sri Lanka. Through sustained engagement and practical support, WEHub contributed to economic empowerment, gender equity, and inclusive development, strengthening the foundation for long-term impact.

INTERN-PRENEURSHIP & AI INCUBATION

Intern-Preneurship

In 2025, Yarl IT Hub strengthened its talent-to-entrepreneurship pipeline through the Intern-Preneurship Program, a structured initiative designed to bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world execution. The program immersed young talent in hands-on, problem-driven projects that reflected real community and market needs.

Participants worked in team-based environments, applying their technical and creative skills to practical challenges while developing an entrepreneurial mindset rooted in ownership, accountability, and execution. Through this experiential approach, interns gained meaningful industry exposure and built the confidence to translate ideas into actionable solutions, contributing to solution-oriented innovation with tangible social and economic relevance.

AI Incubation

Complementing the Intern-Preneurship initiative, Yarl IT Hub launched the AI Incubation Program in 2025 to support early-stage innovators building solutions powered by Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI. Implemented under the GRIT Project in partnership with WUSC, the program guided participants from idea validation to prototype development and early-stage product creation, with a special focus on supporting women in technology entrepreneurship.

Participants benefited from structured mentorship, access to AI tools and infrastructure, and a collaborative incubation environment that encouraged experimentation, ethical AI adoption, and scalable product thinking. The program strengthened innovators' ability to translate emerging technologies into practical, real-world applications while reinforcing Yarl IT Hub's commitment to inclusive deep-tech innovation and the development of a sustainable pipeline of AI-enabled startups in the region.

KALAM BY YARL IT HUB

Kalam, the collaborative co-working and maker space located in Jaffna, continued to play an important role in supporting technology, creativity, and community engagement throughout 2025. Building on the strong foundation established in previous years, Kalam expanded its impact by serving professionals, entrepreneurs, students, content creators, and organizations.

Coworking Space

In 2025, Kalam operated two types of co-working spaces: the Common Coworking Space and the Standard Coworking Space.

The Standard Coworking Space, which offers dedicated seating and reliable internet connectivity, was actively used by startups and established companies seeking a private and professional working environment.

The Common Coworking Space, which had previously been popular among freelancers, entrepreneurs, and early-stage founders, was discontinued during the year. Following this transition, UKI relocated its operations to Kalam, using the space for its programs and activities.

Digital Content Creator Studio

The Digital Content Creator Studio, introduced in 2024 as part of the GRIT Project in partnership with the World University Service of Canada (WUSC), continued to see increased usage throughout 2025.

The studio supported content creators, videographers, and digital enthusiasts by providing access to professional equipment such as cameras, lighting systems, microphones, green screens, and editing workstations.

Maker Space for Students

Kalam remained an active hub for maker events and workshops, particularly for school students and children. Weekly sessions, especially on Wednesday evenings, enabled young participants to explore creativity, technology, and hands-on learning within the maker space.

These initiatives helped nurture innovation, problem-solving skills, and an early interest in technology among young learners.

Yarl IT Hub Events

Throughout 2025, Kalam continued to serve as the primary venue for Yarl IT Hub events, including community meetups, workshops, training programs, and knowledge-sharing sessions.

These events strengthened collaboration within the local tech community and supported skill development and networking opportunities in the region.

KALAM BY YARL IT HUB *Continue...*

Host Venue for External Organizations

Kalam also functioned as a host venue for external organizations, offering space for weekend events. The venue hosted a wide range of activities, including awarding ceremonies, workshops, tech events, digital storytelling programs, community meetups, and annual events.

This expanded use further positioned Kalam as a versatile and trusted community space in Jaffna.

Conclusion

In summary, throughout 2025, Kalam continued to strengthen its role as a co-working space, maker space, digital content creation hub, and event venue. Its ongoing contributions to innovation, collaboration, creativity, and community development have made Kalam a vital part of Jaffna's technological and social ecosystem.

THULIR

Thulir serves as the social innovation and research center within Yarl IT Hub, with its origins dating back to 2018. The initiative is strategically aligned with Yarl IT Hub's long-term vision of catalyzing 2,500 startups and small- and medium-scale businesses (SMBs) by 2030.

The Thulir team consists of dedicated full-time researchers focused on conducting in-depth research, producing insight-driven reports, designing sustainable business models, and developing practical technology solutions. These outputs are intentionally designed for community adoption, enabling grassroots stakeholders to leverage research-backed tools and frameworks to unlock economic opportunities, stimulate entrepreneurship, and create meaningful employment within local communities.

SUMMER INTERNSHIP

The Yarl IT Hub Summer Internship is designed to offer diaspora youth a meaningful and immersive experience that blends community engagement, professional development, and cultural exploration. The program provides interns with hands-on exposure to real-world projects across Yarl IT Hub's initiatives, while enabling them to contribute to entrepreneurship development and technological innovation within the Northern Sri Lankan ecosystem.

In 2024, the internship program was conducted with four international participants, including two from Canada and two from the United States, establishing a strong foundation for global collaboration.

Building on this success, the 2025 Summer Internship expanded its international reach, welcoming four participants from four countries—India, Canada, the United States, and Germany. This diverse cohort strengthened cross-cultural collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Each intern actively participated in and contributed to a wide range of Yarl IT Hub initiatives, including Puthiya Payanangal, YGC Junior, YGC Senior, Uki Startup Essentials, the School Entrepreneurship Club Initiative, and the YGC Innovation Festival. Through this exposure, interns gained a holistic understanding of Yarl IT Hub's end-to-end ecosystem—from school-level innovation to startup acceleration.

Overall, the Summer Internship continues to serve as a vital bridge between global diaspora talent and local innovation, reinforcing Yarl IT Hub's mission to nurture entrepreneurship, technology leadership, and community-driven development in Northern Sri Lanka.

YARL IT HUB – LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

The Leadership Excellence Program is a flagship initiative of Yarl IT Hub, designed to develop purpose-driven, ethical, and socially responsible leaders. Delivered fully in Tamil through intensive, in-person sessions, the program equips participants with essential leadership, strategic thinking, communication, decision-making, and systems-thinking skills required to create sustainable impact in their communities and professional environments.

Open to individuals aged 18 and above from diverse backgrounds—including students, professionals, educators, entrepreneurs, and emerging leaders—the program emphasizes personal growth, values-based leadership, and community engagement. Its structured curriculum covers leadership development, communication and influence, strategic and systems design, responsible use of AI in leadership, and networking, fostering a strong and collaborative community of changemakers.

In 2025, Cohort 02 was delivered over four full days on June 28–29 and July 5–6, 2025, at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub, engaging 27 participants. Through interactive sessions, peer learning, and practical application, the program strengthened participants' capacity to lead with integrity and purpose.

Overall, the Leadership Excellence Program continues to play a critical role in Yarl IT Hub's mission to build a sustainable leadership pipeline rooted in local context, language, and values—contributing to stronger institutions, empowered individuals, and long-term community development.

YGC INNOVATION FESTIVAL 2025

The YGC Innovation Festival 2025, held from August 29 to 31, 2025, in Jaffna, marked a landmark moment in Yarl IT Hub's annual calendar. Envisioned as the largest celebration of innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship in Northern Sri Lanka, the festival brought together students, educators, innovators, entrepreneurs, startups, industry professionals, and technology enthusiasts on a single collaborative platform, welcoming over 15,000 visitors across three dynamic days.

The festival was strategically structured with the first two days open to the general public, creating widespread awareness and engagement, while the final day was exclusively dedicated to entrepreneurs and startups, enabling deeper conversations, focused networking, and high-impact pitch and mentorship sessions.

Designed as a catalyst for experiential learning, community engagement, and idea creation, the festival successfully bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. Through a vibrant mix of exhibitions, competitions, workshops, and interactive experiences, participants explored emerging technologies, validated ideas, and built meaningful connections with peers, mentors, and industry leaders.

Key Components & Highlights

Fun Zone

The Fun Zone served as a vibrant and inclusive space that sparked curiosity and engagement, particularly among children and young participants. Interactive games, creative activities, and informal learning experiences offered an accessible entry point into technology and innovation, ensuring learning remained enjoyable, welcoming, and inclusive.

Maker Stalls – Hands-on Making Activities

The Maker Stalls emphasized learning by doing. Participants engaged in guided making activities that encouraged experimentation, creativity, and problem-solving while introducing electronics, design thinking, and basic engineering concepts. This environment played a crucial role in transforming curiosity into practical, hands-on skills.

Mini Expo

The Mini Expo showcased startups founded by Yarl IT Hub alumni alongside community innovators. Exhibitors presented working prototypes, products, and technology-driven solutions, offering participants valuable exposure to real-world innovation journeys. The expo fostered collaboration, dialogue, and feedback while highlighting local entrepreneurial success stories.

Student Expo — YGC Junior Finalists

A major highlight of the festival, the Student Expo, featured projects by YGC Junior finalists. Young innovators demonstrated creativity, technical understanding, and strong problem-solving skills across STEAM disciplines, reinforcing the importance of nurturing innovation from an early age.

YGC INNOVATION FESTIVAL 2025 *Continue...*

Experiential Learning Sessions

A series of experiential learning sessions, led by Yarl IT Hub and partner facilitators, enabled participants to actively engage with tools, technologies, and methodologies. These workshop-style sessions strengthened applied learning and reinforced hands-on skill development.

Pitch Competition (Yarl Geek Challenge – Season 14)

The Pitch Competition, conducted as part of Yarl Geek Challenge Season 14, provided aspiring entrepreneurs with a platform to present their ideas to an expert judging panel. Participants received critical feedback, mentorship insights, and recognition—strengthening entrepreneurial confidence and encouraging market-driven innovation.

Follow Your Path 3.0 – Robotics Challenge

Follow Your Path 3.0 was a robotics-based challenge designed for school-level participants. The competition encouraged teams to design, build, and program solutions, enhancing logical reasoning, engineering skills, teamwork, and computational thinking.

Participation: 77 teams

Poster Presentations

The Poster Presentation segment enabled participants to visually present research, concepts, and innovative ideas. This format encouraged discussion, peer learning, and knowledge exchange, creating an open environment for academic and creative exploration.

Posters displayed: 10

‹ Codestrom AI /› Challenge

The ‹ Codestrom AI /› Challenge was a dedicated AI-focused competition where teams developed and demonstrated intelligent, real-world solutions. The challenge deepened participants' understanding of artificial intelligence while showcasing practical applications of AI technologies.

75+ applications | 35+ submissions | 12 finalist teams

YGC INNOVATION FESTIVAL 2025 *Continue…*

Master Classes

The festival hosted a series of expert-led Master Classes covering contemporary topics in technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, and professional development. These sessions provided strategic insights, industry perspectives, and actionable knowledge, significantly enriching the learning experience.

- Financial Strategies for Startups: Navigating Investor Expectations and Growth
  - → A practical session on startup finance, investor readiness, and sustainable growth, facilitated by Shan Nanthakumar and Mathushangar Yogendran.
- Taking Your Idea to Commercially Viable Products in FinTech with Generative AI
  - → Focused on transforming ideas into market-ready FinTech products using GenAI, led by Kumar Giritharan.
- Mastering AI: From GenAI to Conversational AI, LLMs, and the Ethics of AGI
  - → An in-depth exploration of advanced AI concepts and responsible innovation, facilitated by Kumi Thiruchelvam.
- GenAI for Government Officers
  - → A session on the practical and ethical application of Generative AI in public-sector workflows, facilitated by Prof. M. Siyamalan and Dr. T. Kokul.

Impact & Reach

The YGC Innovation Festival 2025 successfully strengthened a culture of innovation, collaboration, and experiential learning across the Northern Province. By convening students, educators, entrepreneurs, startups, and industry professionals, the festival created a shared space for learning, exchange, and inspiration—reinforcing Yarl IT Hub's commitment to building a sustainable and inclusive innovation ecosystem.

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EVENTS & ENGAGEMENTS 2025

Robotics Meetup

On 12 January 2025, Yarl IT Hub hosted a Robotics Workshop at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub, bringing together robotics enthusiasts, students, undergraduates, and technology professionals.

The session was led by Dr. V. Sivapathasundaram, whose industry and academic experience enriched discussions on current robotics trends and emerging career pathways. The interactive format enabled meaningful dialogue, networking, and inspiration, positioning the workshop as a valuable platform for exploring the future of robotics.

Open Day: Leading By Design vs Drifting

On 16 January 2025, Yarl IT Hub hosted the Open Day session "Leading By Design vs Drifting" at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub. The session was facilitated by Dr. Suresh Gunaratnam, Senior Consultant at FranklinCovey.

Participants gained practical frameworks to replace reactive decision-making with intentional leadership, equipping them to lead their personal and professional journeys with clarity, purpose, and control.

Open Day: Structure Your Path

The Open Day session "Structure Your Path" was conducted on 1 March 2025 at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub and facilitated by Bernard Sinniah, a distinguished global leader and Founder of THE FLAG FORUM.

The session focused on empowering individuals to strategically plan their careers and lives, offering actionable insights for long-term success and personal excellence.

Introduction to Business Model – Mannar

On 9 March 2025, Yarl IT Hub delivered a session titled "Introduction to Business Model" at Yarl IT Hub – Mannar.

The session engaged aspiring entrepreneurs, school entrepreneurship club students, women entrepreneurs, and youth with early-stage ideas, providing foundational knowledge on structuring and launching sustainable business ventures.

Navigating Disruptive Technologies: From Startup to Scale-Up

Held on 13 March 2025 at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub, this session was led by Vivekananda Sahoo, former CIO & Board Director at AMTZ.

Participants explored how AI, cloud computing, and other disruptive technologies can be strategically leveraged to scale startups, gaining practical insights to accelerate venture growth through technology.

EVENTS & ENGAGEMENTS 2025   *Continue...*

Driving Results with KPIs and OKRs

On 30 March 2025, Yarl IT Hub hosted the session "Driving Results with KPIs and OKRs" at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub, facilitated by Ragu Masilamany.

The session equipped participants with practical frameworks to define meaningful objectives, track performance effectively, and transform goal-setting into a strategic driver of impact.

Online Session: What Are Foreign Partners Looking For?

On 19 May 2025, Yarl IT Hub hosted an online session via Zoom titled "What Are Foreign Partners Looking For?", led by Amit Gupta.

Facilitated with the support of the New Zealand High Commission to Sri Lanka, the session offered entrepreneurs critical insights into global partnership expectations, investment readiness, and international market alignment.

Build with AI – Hands-On Workshop

From 8–10 August 2025, Yarl IT Hub hosted the immersive "Build with AI" hands-on workshop in Jaffna, bringing together 35+ participants for an intensive, practice-driven learning experience. The three-day programme provided strong grounding in AI fundamentals, generative AI concepts, and vibe coding, enabling participants to move beyond theory into real-world application. By the end of the workshop, attendees had collaboratively and independently developed working software solutions, ensuring tangible skill development, practical exposure, and confidence in building with cutting-edge AI technologies.

Power Session on Transformation

On 15 November 2025, Yarl IT Hub hosted the Power Session on Transformation at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub, facilitated by Jürgen Samuel.

Participants explored practical approaches to overcoming transformation barriers and leading sustainable change with the right mindset and tools.

Holiday Workshop: Let's Create Applications Using AI

The student holiday programme "Let's Create Applications Using AI" was delivered across Jaffna, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi, and Mannar between 22 November and 13 December 2025.

Targeting students from Grade 6 to Advanced Level, the workshop successfully enabled participants to build both websites and mobile applications using AI tools—empowering the next generation of creators across the Northern Province.

EVENTS & ENGAGEMENTS 2025 *Continue...*

Building & Scaling a SaaS Business

Yarl IT Hub hosted the session "Building & Scaling a SaaS Business" on 2 December 2025 at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub. Facilitated by Ragu Masilamany, the session provided a practical, end-to-end view of building successful SaaS products—from defining strategy and validating product–market fit to selecting the right growth levers and avoiding common early-stage pitfalls. Participants gained clear, actionable insights to navigate scaling challenges and build sustainable SaaS businesses.

Zero to One in SaaS

The community meet-up "Zero to One in SaaS" was held on 14 December 2025 at Kalam by Yarl IT Hub, featuring Ashwin Balamohan as the speaker. The session focused on the foundational journey of transforming an idea into a viable SaaS product, covering problem discovery, MVP development, and early traction strategies. Attendees left with a clear roadmap and mindset to take their SaaS ideas from concept to real-world impact.

Year in Review

Throughout 2025, Yarl IT Hub delivered a comprehensive portfolio of programmes spanning entrepreneurship, leadership, AI, robotics, youth innovation, and community development, reaching learners and innovators across all five districts of the Northern Province. Collectively, these initiatives strengthened the regional innovation ecosystem, nurtured future leaders, and reinforced Yarl IT Hub's mission to build inclusive, technology-driven economic opportunities.

PARTNERS & THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS

With Gratitude to Our Valued Partners & Thousands of Volunteers

As we reflect on the impact created in **2025**, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our valued partners and the thousands of dedicated volunteers who made this journey possible. Your trust, collaboration, time, and commitment have been the driving force behind every milestone we achieved, enabling meaningful change across communities and industries.

We are deeply grateful to our **Pioneer Partner, ITEE Foundation**, for their continued vision and leadership. Our sincere thanks also go to our **Platinum Partners—Synamon Global, World University Service of Canada (WUSC), and Northern Uni**—for their invaluable support in driving innovation, strengthening leadership, and enabling sustainable growth. We also extend our appreciation to our **Gold Partner, Aravanai,** for their meaningful contributions and continued encouragement.

To our thousands of volunteers—students, professionals, educators, mentors, and community leaders—your passion, generosity, and belief in our mission brought every initiative to life. You are the heart of this ecosystem.

Together, we are building pathways for opportunity, innovation, and long-term impact. Thank you for standing with us and believing in the power of collaboration. We look forward to creating even greater impact—together.

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