

Ladakh's Skilling Initiative under NEP 2020 Wins Prestigious CIPS Innovation Award 2024

Srinagar, August 25, 2025: The initiatives of the Technical Education and Skill Development, to skill the students and youth of Ladakh, have been honoured with the CIPS Innovation Award 2024 for Ladakh's pioneering efforts in integrating skills with education. The Union Territory of Ladakh has achieved a proud milestone with its flagship skilling initiative, "Ladakh Skill and Education Forge", launched under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 by the Ladakh Skill Development Mission and Higher Education Department. The initiative has been recognised with the CIPS Innovation Award 2024 in the Education Sector.

The award was presented in a ceremony held in Srinagar on August 22, 2025, where Dr. Javed Mohammad Iqbal, UT Nodal Officer (Skill Courses), and Mr. Abied Hussain, Assistant Director, Technical Education & Skill Development Ladakh, received the award on behalf of the Administrative Secretary / Mission Director, LSDM. The award was conferred by the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir. The recognition comes from the Centre for Innovations in Public Systems (CIPS), Hyderabad, an autonomous centre of the Administrative Staff College of India, established by the Government of India to identify, support, and scale public sector innovations that strengthen governance and improve service delivery across states. Under NEP 2020, the Ladakh Skill Development Mission and Higher Education Department have successfully integrated NSQF-aligned skill courses into the undergraduate curriculum through the Skill and Education Forge initiative. With 11 specialised courses across Tourism, Handicrafts, Beauty & Wellness, Food Processing, Media, and IT, the programme has been rolled out in 7 higher education institutions, supported by 17 state-of-the-art skill centres in collaboration with 6 Sector Skill Councils and NIELIT.

Since 2023, the initiative has trained over 1,000 students in diverse trades including Graphic Designing, Hand Embroidery, Jam & Jelly Technician, Yoga, Pickle Making, High Altitude Trekking Guide, Mushroom Grower, Guest Service Associate, Assistant Beauty Therapist, and Professional Makeup Artist. Beyond campuses, the initiative has also reached out to non-college youth through PMKVY and Non-PMKVY schemes, skilling and certifying nearly 1,00 additional youths in sectors such as Beauty & Wellness, Handicrafts, Graphic Designing, and IT. Notably, a trainee from the Graphic Designing course represented Ladakh at India Skills 2024. Speaking on the achievement, Smt. Bhanu Prabha, IAS, Administrative Secretary (HED/TE&SD) and Mission Director, LSDM, said: "This award is a recognition of Ladakh's commitment to empowering youth by integrating livelihood-oriented skills into education in line with NEP 2020. As a result of this initiative, students now graduate with dual qualifications—an academic degree in one hand and a skill certificate in the other."



