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Karnataka unveils K-HEAL to strengthen HealthTech, MedTech and advanced lifesciences ecosystem

18 November 2026 | News

New Centre of Excellence to connect clinicians, researchers, industry and startups; initiative aims to accelerate healthcare innovation, technology validation and adoption



Karnataka has announced K-HEAL (Karnataka Health Engineering & Advanced Lifesciences), a flagship Centre of Excellence to strengthen the state's HealthTech, MedTech and Assistive Technology ecosystem. Announced at the inauguration of the 29th Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS) 2026, the initiative aims to bring together clinicians, researchers, industry players and startups to accelerate the development and adoption of healthcare innovations.

A flagship initiative of the Department of Electronics, Information Technology and Biotechnology, K-HEAL will focus on identifying unmet healthcare needs, developing and validating innovative solutions and supporting their adoption. Its priorities include promoting accessible, affordable and globally competitive healthcare technologies.

The initiative seeks to establish stronger connections between clinical requirements and engineering capabilities, enabling innovators to develop solutions addressing gaps in healthcare delivery. By facilitating collaboration among healthcare institutions, research organisations, technology companies and startups, K-HEAL is expected to support the translation of research and innovation into market-ready products and solutions.

The announcement comes as Karnataka seeks to expand its technology leadership beyond information technology services into advanced research, biotechnology and next-generation industries. The state's established base of biotechnology companies, research institutions, healthcare providers and technology startups offers an ecosystem for developing solutions across medical devices, diagnostics, digital health and assistive technologies.

AI and research infrastructure to complement healthcare innovation

Karnataka also showcased the Karnataka AI Hub, established at IIIT-Bangalore, as an initial step towards its proposed AI University. The hub will focus on artificial intelligence research, skilling, entrepreneurship and capacity building, with the objective of translating research into real-world applications.

The proposed AI capabilities could create opportunities for applications across healthcare and life sciences, including clinical decision support, diagnostics, healthcare data analytics and research, although these are not specified as dedicated programme deliverables in the announcement.

The state also highlighted two semiconductor research initiatives at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

The proposed 2D Innovation Hub will support the development of a national-level 200-mm semiconductor research and development fabrication and pilot-line facility. The planned infrastructure includes an approximately 100,000 sq. ft. technology building, a 15,000 sq. ft. cleanroom and 80–90 process, metrology and testing tools.

INFIfab, being developed with IISc's Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE), will focus on semiconductor fabrication, advanced packaging, micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS), photonics, quantum technologies and neuromorphic computing. The proposed facility will span approximately 96,284 sq. ft., including a 20,000 sq. ft. cleanroom.

While these initiatives are not exclusively focused on healthcare, their research and advanced manufacturing capabilities could contribute to the broader technology base supporting medical electronics, diagnostics and healthcare devices.

Karnataka's wider innovation ambitions

Inaugurating BTS 2026, Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar said Karnataka was positioning itself to lead the next wave of global innovation across artificial intelligence, deep technology, semiconductor manufacturing and biotechnology.

The Chief Minister highlighted Karnataka's approximately $173 billion contribution through software and services exports, its 26.7 per cent share of India's FDI equity inflows in the first half of FY2025-26 and investments exceeding $1 billion through more than 30 new Global Capability Centres in 2025.

With more than 24,000 recognised startups and a strong base of research institutions and skilled talent, the state is seeking to strengthen its capabilities in advanced research and technology development.

The 29th Bengaluru Tech Summit, themed 'AI & Beyond', is being held from November 17 to 19, 2026, at the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre, bringing together global technology leaders, investors, startups, researchers and policymakers.