

# The Sandbox Ecosystem

Nurturing Innovation and Entrepreneurship



Deshpande  
Foundation



Annual Report **2015-2016**



# 10 YEARS OF THE SANDBOX ECOSYSTEM



## Message from the Founders

Given the connected world, the innovation engine is growing exponentially. Many innovators have a deep compassion to help the people at the bottom of the pyramid. However, in addition to a new idea we need as much innovation in inspiring and building capacity within the bottom of the pyramid to absorb and localize the ideas. Social Innovation Sandbox was set up to make this happen. After ten years, the Sandbox is buzzing with energy and we are entering the next stage of connecting the Sandbox to innovators on peer to peer relationship and looking forward to this partnership leading to impactful outcomes.



We have built an ecosystem in the Hubli Sandbox to support mission-driven individuals to come up with sustainable and scalable enterprises that have both social and economic impact. We are sector agnostic to the problems that entrepreneurs want to solve. We encourage everyone to solve problems, in different areas including those in agriculture, health, education and livelihood.

Many young people in India's rural and semi-urban areas have extraordinary capabilities and entrepreneurial skills.

Through the Sandbox's bottom-up approach, Deshpande Foundation India (DF India) equips them with necessary skills and provides the grants and the infrastructure necessary to experiment with their ideas, connects them through the right networks to mentors and maximizes their potential by constantly engaging them. The Sandbox environment combines the execution excellence of for-profits with the compassion of non-profits.

The Sandbox ecosystem consists of several educational and mentorship initiatives such as LEAD, Sandbox Startups and Grantmaking that are enabling local youth, entrepreneurs and agripreneurs to be the catalysts of social change. Our efforts are bearing fruits in the Hubli Sandbox area in Northwest Karnataka.

We have touched the lives of many, with our differentiated approach and constructive interventions.

Inspired by our success in the Hubli Sandbox, two big-hearted philanthropists have replicated the model in two other locations in India – Kakatiya Sandbox in Nizamabad, Telangana; and Ek Soch Sandbox in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. We want to inspire more partners to come up with additional sandboxes in different parts of India that will empower more local communities to find contextual solutions for their local problems.

We are truly blessed to have incredible people – engineers, teachers, social workers, amazing advisors, great partners and fantastic leaders from all over the world, working with the Deshpande Foundation. This is just the beginning of our endeavor to create a better place by providing opportunities for all those who are passionate about pursuing their own dream of improving the lives of others. Your active participation with the Deshpande Foundation inspires us to do more. Thank you for being a part of the effort!

*Dr. Gururaj Desh Deshpande  
Jaishree Deshpande*



## Message from the CEO

**The Sandbox is a microcosm of the real world where enough scenarios are created to act as a touchstone for ideas. Innovators here learn how to tweak their solutions to make them relevant to a contextual problem. And they get all the support they need, be it financial assistance, mentoring, networking, or market access.**

On a personal note, my biggest takeaway from the Sandbox experience is the confidence that we are surrounded by enough number of problem-solvers who, if given an opportunity, are ready to come out of their comfort zones to find solutions to the challenges of a community or an industry. Such individuals, their ideas and indomitable spirit have been main drivers of our success at the Hubli Sandbox.

The major highlights were the demonstrated success with our agricultural initiatives, strides in providing skill-based education, and progress achieved with the startup ecosystem among others. As a support system for sustainable agriculture in climatically challenged regions, the Hubli Sandbox has helped over 15,000 farmers achieve 2-3 fold increase in income. We have created an empowering ecosystem that equips youth from 2nd and 3rd tier cities with employability based life skills, making them ready for career challenges. Today, more than 2,000 candidates have graduated from different skill education programs.

It's heartening that the end-to-end entrepreneurial ecosystem of the Hubli Sandbox has helped launch 70 startup ideas of entrepreneurs from semi-urban or rural backgrounds, and enabled over 200 micro-entrepreneurs to grow their businesses. The Sandbox's partnership with 136 social organizations have positively impacted 1.5 million lives.

The Sandbox has also enrolled over 10,000 University students for leadership building programs and supported nearly 5,000 community development projects led by them. We are also engaged in improving the health of 1,500 malnourished children with active interventions.

We are proud to associate with industry leaders who are enabling us in co-creating vibrant social entrepreneurship ecosystems. These social investments in our high-impact initiatives demonstrate their ownership in addressing the challenges faced by underserved communities.

The generous support of Tata Trusts has enabled us to construct over 2000 farm ponds in drought-afflicted regions. We are grateful for the long-term support received from YES BANK for supporting the training for 5000 unemployed youth, and IDH for the Better Cotton Initiative, making a difference in the lives of 10,000 farmers. We thank the Department of Science and Technology for supporting our startup incubation program under the TBI scheme.

I'm thrilled that the Sandbox model is being replicated by like-minded visionaries Raju Reddy, Phanindra Sama and Dilip Modi in Telangana and eastern Uttar Pradesh respectively. Special thanks to Spice Mobility and Spice Digital, State Bank of India, Hitachi Consulting and Hitachi Payments and Komatireddy Prateek Foundation for supporting the metamorphosis of our new Sandboxes into unique hubs of innovation and social entrepreneurship.

With growth and recognition comes more responsibility. Our visionary founders, renowned advisors, amazing partners, and the community of people we work with give us the strength to maintain this reputation and scale greater heights.

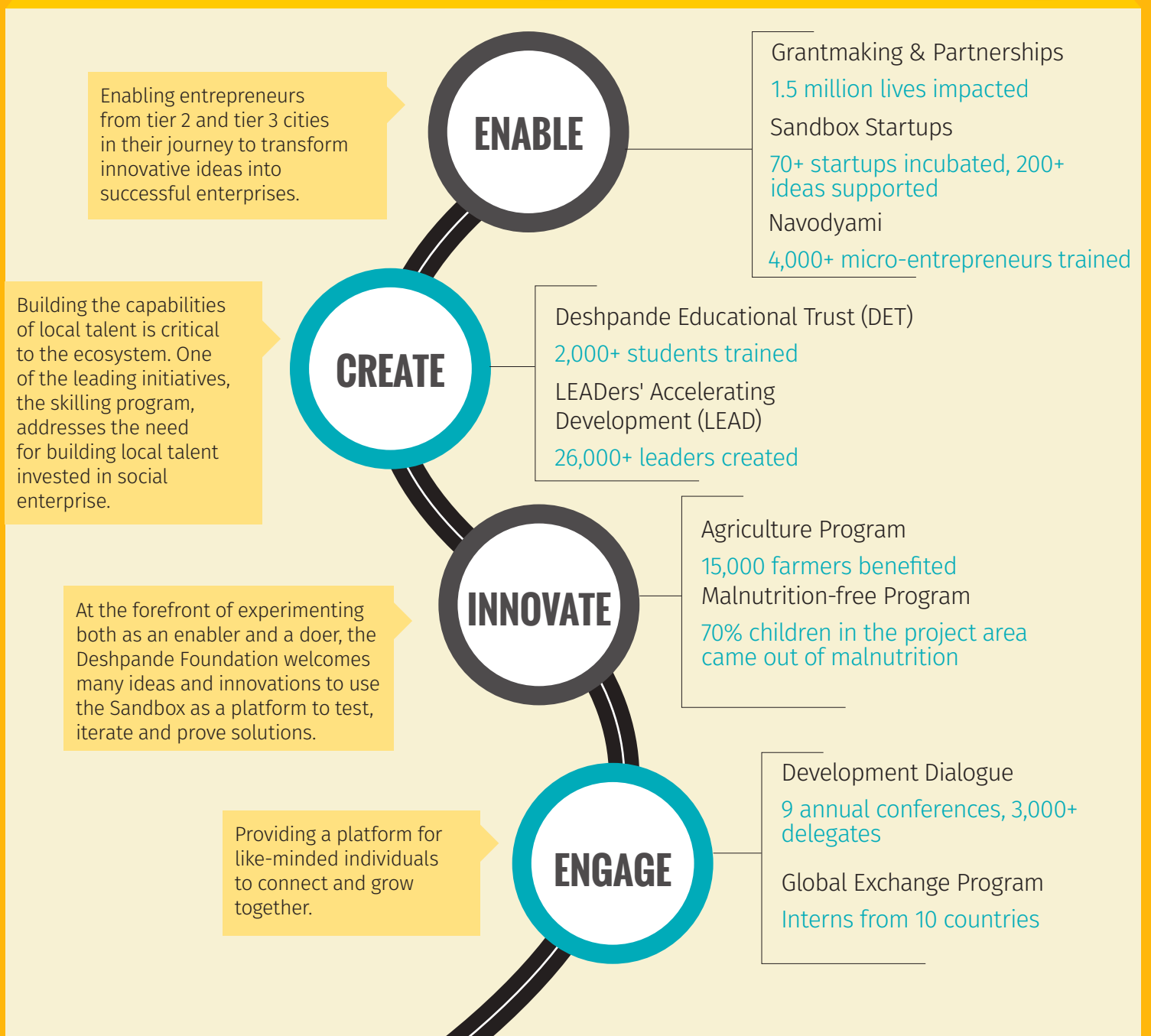
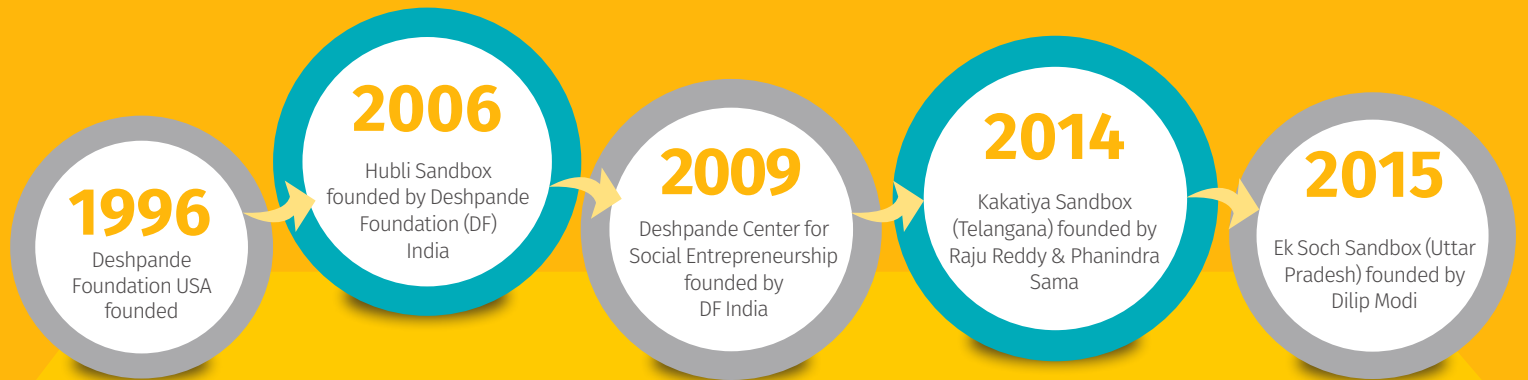
I thank my dedicated team for standing by me and the larger Sandbox objective of making this world a better place to live in, with hard work and dedication.

*Naveen Jha*



# THE SANDBOX STORY

Indian-American entrepreneur and philanthropist Dr. Gururaj 'Desh' Deshpande and his wife Jaishree Deshpande launched Deshpande Foundation in the USA in 1996. The idea behind the Sandbox is to take the ecosystem to where the problems are, to allow problem solvers to co-create solutions along with the stakeholders, and to test their relevance in real time. The Sandbox's bottom-up approach positions customers at the center, and works with three basic operating principles – entrepreneurship, execution and innovation. Deshpande Foundation pioneered the concept of the Social Innovation Sandbox in India. Encouraged by its success in Hubballi, the Sandbox model is being adopted by entrepreneurs and philanthropists in different parts of India, with the operational support of the Foundation.



# Contents

Grantmaking & Partnerships .....	08
Sandbox Startups .....	14
Navodyami .....	20
Deshpande Educational Trust (DET) .....	25
Agriculture Program .....	31
LEADers' Accelerating Development (LEAD) .....	38
Malnutrition-free Program .....	43
Global Exchange Program .....	47
Development Dialogue .....	49
Scaling by Proving .....	52
Transforming Vision into Reality .....	56

A woman with dark hair, wearing an orange patterned sari, is looking down at an open notebook. She has several bangles on her right wrist. A baby is sleeping peacefully in her arms, wrapped in a striped blanket. The scene is warmly lit, suggesting an indoor setting.

# Grantmaking & Partnerships

**Enabling catalysts of social change**

The Grantmaking and Partnerships program has impacted more than 1.5 million lives in the Sandbox region. It has partnered with over 130 non-profits as well as for-profits having a social side to their business models, helping them with initial funding, mentorship and network support to pilot their ideas, scale and achieve impacts.



# Grantmaking & Partnerships

The program aims at enabling problem solvers looking to test, reiterate and prove ideas on the ground. It has helped move over a hundred ideas from concept to proof of concept.



The core investment belief of the Grantmaking program is that 'an enabling ecosystem' along with financial resources accelerates the chances of a worthy idea to scale and achieve impact.

The other major principle of the program is rather than doing everything on its own, it invites problem solvers to leverage the Sandbox ecosystem to scale their programs.

The objective is to encourage the emergence of catalysts with unique and innovative ideas that then become demonstrated successes in the Sandbox and elsewhere.

The Grantmaking and Partnerships program is bringing about a change in the mindset of the organizations working in different problem spaces,

by instilling in them an entrepreneurial rigor and equipping them with an ability to scale and sustain. It guides partner organizations all along their journey until they become successful enough to show critical impact.

**The guiding principle of the Grantmaking and Partnerships program is to enable social enterprises to achieve execution excellence and impact in a way that is better, faster and cheaper.**

**In 2015-2016, the program added 39 new partners in Health (9), Education (13), Agriculture (10) and Livelihoods (8), impacting 3.29 lakh lives.**

## Focus areas



Wellness



Preventive health



Livelihoods



Water harvesting



Sustainable agriculture



Education



Disability



Technology initiatives

## Impacting 1.5 million lives through 136 partnerships

23

PARTNERSHIPS IN AGRICULTURE  
IMPACTING **72,000+** FARMERS

36

PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION IMPACTING

**12,80,000+**  
STUDENTS

40

PARTNERSHIPS IN IMPROVING  
LIVELIHOODS IMPACTING  
**61,000+** PEOPLE

27

PARTNERSHIPS IN HEALTH AND  
WELL-BEING IMPACTING  
**77,500+** LIVES

10

PARTNERSHIPS IN TECHNOLOGY IMPACTING

**20,000+**  
PEOPLE

## Working with partners



### Building organizations

The program brings to life, ideas to build sustainable and scalable enterprises by extending crucial support to the partners in the form of financial resources, mentorship, and human resources, in an ecosystem of like-minded people.



### Scaling with human resource

The Grantmaking team helps partner organizations in recruiting best human resources to achieve implementation excellence. In many cases, the organizations succeed when they hire trained human resources or students graduated from different skill education programs within the Sandbox ecosystem.

The program adopts a close hand-in-hand approach and a deep, ongoing engagement with the partners. This often results in refinement of business models and strategies, a process that calls for open-mindedness and patience from those involved.

### Proof of concept



The partner organizations are guided to implement ideas on a pilot basis in a limited space to demonstrate critical impact. The proof of concept (POC) stage is a barometer to assess the viability of ideas as well as the organizations' seriousness of intent and their commitment to the cause.

### Ecosystem building



The Grantmaking team constantly works to enrich the ecosystem with resources, people, mentors, knowledge network, mainstream institutions and like-minded organizations to help leverage impact. Partner meets, deep dive meets with experts, sectoral exposure visits and workshops are some of the ways to do that. Development Dialogue is one such large platform that connects people across sectors.

## Partners' perspectives



### Chipper Sage

*Bangalore based for-profit launched in Hubballi*

[www.thechippersage.com](http://www.thechippersage.com)

Chipper Sage is a for-profit company with the objective of helping children comprehend what they read. It focuses on English as a language and not as a subject. Chipper Sage works with Government and affordable private schools. Chipper Sage products start from familiarizing children with English alphabets, blending letters and sounds, syllabication, decoding, reading fluency development and later to multi-levels of comprehension attainment.

The Sandbox helped Chipper Sage run its pilot in Hubballi successfully, and establish a presence in 15 Government schools. It offered initial funding, office space and human resources to Chipper Sage and also conducted regular audits of the company's operation in the Sandbox region.



### Latha Srinivasan

*Founder- Director  
Chipper Sage*

Today we are in 15 government schools and many private schools in the Sandbox region. The periodic third party audit by the Sandbox really helped us get an impartial assessment of our progress. The kind of networking and mentorship opportunities that we get here have boosted our operations.



### Manuvikasa

*Scaling operations with mechanization*

[www.manuvikasa.org](http://www.manuvikasa.org)

The Sandbox partnered with Manuvikasa to help scale the latter's flagship program to harvest rainwater by constructing farm ponds for communities that faced acute water shortage.

Over the past four years, Manuvikasa has constructed over 1,700 farm ponds through capacity building and mechanization. The Sandbox helped the organization in reducing the per unit cost, strengthening the delivery mechanism and efficiently responding to the needs of the farmers. Manuvikasa could scale the initiative by inculcating a sense of ownership among the community members and encouraging them to share the cost, thereby making the model sustainable.



### Ganapati Bhat

*Executive Director  
Manuvikasa*

We came to the Sandbox looking for grants, but being with them changed our mindset. With continuous mentorship and entrepreneurial mindset taught to us by the Foundation, we are able to raise the community contribution and exceed our targets. We changed our approach from grant model to community participation.



### OpASHA

*Chasing the goal of TB-free community  
with fool-proof model*

[www.opasha.org](http://www.opasha.org)

OpASHA or Operation ASHA specializes in last mile delivery of treatment for tuberculosis, especially to ensure the execution of the government's TB control strategy DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course) in economically backward regions. The Sandbox partnered with OpASHA to help the NGO pilot its services in the Sandbox region and meet its objectives through a fool-proof system for tracking treatment delivery to villagers. This was achieved by using biometric verifications and other technology for follow-up and monitoring. OpASHA has been operating in the Sandbox region for more than a year now. It has successfully implemented a small pilot of its TB control program in the region, where it detected over 559 symptomatic patients and treated 78 patients.



### Sandeep Ahuja

*Founder and CEO  
OpASHA*

We are lucky to have been partnering with Deshpande Foundation in the Sandbox region for about a year and a half now. Our long-term vision is to make the Sandbox region absolutely free of tuberculosis in collaboration with the government, local administration and Deshpande Foundation.



## BAIF

*Providing additional sources of income for small farmers*

[www.baif.org.in](http://www.baif.org.in)

BAIF created the Wadi concept of tree-based farming, to help marginal farmers to revitalize barren lands and generate income through horticulture and tree-based farming. BAIF brought its Wadi program to the Sandbox region after it demonstrated success in Gujarat and Maharashtra. The Sandbox monitored, guided and provided human resources for the Wadi program to reach farmers in far-flung areas in Haveri and Gadag districts. Partnering with the Sandbox, BAIF brought down the costs of setting up Wadis from an initial INR 25,000 to a mere INR 3,500 per Wadi.

With the support of the Hubli Sandbox, we have improved the sustainability of farming systems through tree-based farming. Partner meets and the Development Dialogue provide us a good platform for networking, cross-learning and updating our knowledge. Our partnership has motivated us to move from being a grant-based model towards a cost-sharing approach; and helped us scale up.”



**M N Kulkarni**

*Regional Program Coordinator  
BAIF*



## Save A Mother

*Bringing customer-orientation to the process*

[www.saveamother.org](http://www.saveamother.org)

Save A Mother works to reduce maternal mortality rates among low income communities. Through a dynamic health literacy program, it trains volunteer health activists to educate, empower and connect pregnant women to public health systems. The organization has so far reached 108 villages, trained 183 health activists, and helped 3,262 women to ensure better health and safe delivery.

The Sandbox encouraged the non-profit to be customer-oriented and helped to build sustainable linkages with the beneficiaries. It also extended financial and operational support to build a network of community health workers to popularize its programs in one of the five districts in the Sandbox region.

SAM has learned the method of replicating and scaling up and we have found that healthcare can be a successful entry point into a community to start any development work.



**Shibhan Ganju**

*Founder  
Save A Mother*



# Program uniqueness

## Closeness to Program Participants

Works in a restricted geographical area and it gives an advantage of engaging closely with the partners along their journey. Encapsulating the Sandbox principle of helping social enterprises execute ideas and make larger impact in a limited geographic area, the Grantmaking and Partnerships program takes away the logistics issues associated with long-distance partnerships.



## Scope for experimentation

A good idea requires equally good implementation model for it to be successful. Emphasis is on motivating partners to experiment with different implementation models to achieve the stated objectives in better, faster and cost-effective ways. If one model doesn't work, partner organizations are guided to take a different approach based on past learnings.



## Constant engagement

Partner organizations working in similar areas like agriculture, sanitation etc. share their challenges and success stories during the quarterly review meetings. It gives clarity for program managers on what is working and what is not. They in turn guide the partners on next steps. Meantime, the impact made by the partners on end customers is regularly monitored through independent surveys by the program teams.



## An enabling ecosystem for diversity of ideas

The program is not wedded to a particular cause, but supporting a diversity of social enterprises that champion different causes. The objective is not to solve all problems, but to create an environment for a lot of problem solvers and ideas to thrive and scale.

The partner organizations receive quality mentoring from the best in the industry, and get ample networking opportunities to share, learn from their peers as well as to collaborate with them.

Our engagement varies with the need of a partner organization. Engagement remains high throughout the proof of concept stages. And once an idea takes off, achieves a critical scale with an operational model that is cost efficient, we work towards finding ways to make it sustainable. Eventually, we help build strong and stable organizations with high execution capabilities and sustainable programs.



**Neelam Maheshwari**

Director, Grants and Partnerships

# Sandbox Startups

**Transforming entrepreneurial dreams into reality**

Sandbox Startups is one of India's early incubators with a focus on supporting impactful entrepreneurs in tier 2 and tier 3 cities. This startup ecosystem with its end-to-end support for launching diverse ideas having local relevance has incubated more than 70 startups and supported over 200 entrepreneurial ideas.



# Sandbox Startups

Sandbox Startups supports mission-driven for-profit ideas and provides a platform for entrepreneurs to test their models without the fear of failure. Solutions tend to come from where the problems are and hence a robust ecosystem to test ideas in real-time scenarios is central to Sandbox Startups.



Sandbox Startups is a living laboratory for entrepreneurs to test and launch their ideas. With an ecosystem that comprises seed funding, co-working space, mentoring, network support, technology assistance, go-to-market strategies and much more, Sandbox Startups has enabled close to 300 aspiring minds in semi-urban and rural regions to turn their entrepreneurial dreams into reality. This has helped expand the country's startup horizon beyond bigger cities where a majority of impact incubators are located.

Creation of job opportunities and revenue generation by enterprises supported by Sandbox Startups is positively impacting the local economy and encouraging more problem-solvers to take to entrepreneurship.

Without the support of Sandbox Startups, companies like Safe Hands 24x7 that provides security guard jobs

Entrepreneurs in smaller towns and cities are at a disadvantage as they lack access to necessary infrastructure, investors, mentors and market among others. Sandbox Startups has provided them a level playing field to test and launch their ideas.

Started as a spin-off of the Deshpande Foundation, it is an independent company as per the Section 8 of the Companies Act of 2013.

to women in tier 2 cities, NanoPix that has developed a machine that automatically grades agricultural produce like cashew nuts, or, AquaSafi, a company that provides safe drinking water to the rural population at affordable prices, would not have existed.

The traditional startups in Silicon Valley and Bengaluru solve the problems of those who belong to the top of the pyramid. In addition to addressing these problems, startups in Hubballi also address the problems of those who live at the bottom of the pyramid.

**Dr. 'Desh' Deshpande**, Founder, Deshpande Foundation



STARTUPS  
INCUBATED

70<sup>+</sup>

REVENUE  
GENERATION

₹50 CR

IDEAS SUPPORTED

200<sup>+</sup>

JOB'S CREATED

500<sup>+</sup>

10

IDEAS RECEIVED SEED GRANT

## An impact story

### Helping VCARE launch safety monitoring services

VCare Safety Monitoring Center is a Sandbox incubatee founded by NRI entrepreneur Preeti Sawkar. The company leverages technology to offer 24x7 security services to commercial and residential buildings, as well as to individuals.

**Sandbox Startups helped VCare build a minimum viable product, scale its team, and develop a go-to-market strategy. It is also helping VCare in finding potential partners and tying up with fire and other emergency services.**

VCare works through a monitoring cell that is linked to security devices such as CCTV, fire and smoke detectors, and motion sensors set up at client locations. Aged people or those with health issues are monitored with wearable medical security devices like watches and pendants that can communicate



to the monitoring cell when there is a medical emergency.

These devices send out panic alarms when

emergency situations demand urgent attention. VCare responds to panic alarms by sending immediate help to client locations. For instance, an ambulance is sent in response to a medical alarm. Similarly, a burglar alarm or a fire alarm also receives suitable responses. The company has customized devices that suit customer requirements.

VCare, which is already working with beta customers acquired through the Sandbox network, is launching its services with customers in Hubballi before expanding to the rest of Karnataka.

## Incubator with a difference

### Emphasis on community impact

Besides sustainability and novelty of ideas, emphasis is placed on the potential impact of incubated ventures in an industry or a proximate community. Innovative ideas having relevance to local challenges can apply for the incubation support.

### Largest incubator with rural and semi-urban focus

Founders of a majority of the incubated startups are first-time entrepreneurs belonging to rural and semi-urban areas in Karnataka. The Sandbox is enabling them to overcome geographic and cultural barriers in entrepreneurship.

### Extensive mentor network and networking opportunities

Over 65 world-class mentors – industry leaders, experts and academicians – are part of the incubation ecosystem. Close partnership with the Hubballi chapter of TiE, a global entrepreneurship network, has increased the reach of the incubatees.

### Diverse profile of incubated ideas

Any idea that has a potential to solve the problem of an industry or a community stands a chance to receive incubation support. This is a major departure from the country's startup story that is largely dominated by technology-driven, urban-centric ideas that focus on homogenous problem spaces.



## Some of the current, prominent incubatees



**Freshboxx Ventures**

www.freshboxx.in

The e-commerce startup delivers farm-fresh, chemical-free fruits and vegetables straight from farmers to consumers, eliminating the middlemen bottleneck. Launched by management graduate Rohan Kulkarni, the venture caters to customers in tier 2 cities like Hubballi that are not the focus of big ecommerce players. Freshboxx has built a network of farmers, procures farm produce directly from them and delivers orders received online, via phone calls or messages.

If we were not incubated at the Sandbox Startups, we would have taken 20 or more months to achieve what we did in seven months. We have grown 10x since we got incubated. It is an ecosystem that drives entrepreneurs like me to streamline, speed up and scale the business quickly. When something goes wrong in our venture, the Sandbox team steps in and helps us with course correction.



**Rohan Kulkarni**

Founder

rohankumar25@gmail.com



**Artwaley**

www.artwaley.com

A marketplace for paintings, Artwaley sells through a hybrid model of online sales as well as offline retail. Founded by artist-entrepreneur Priyal Ostwal, it enables local artists to sell their works to connoisseurs across the world. Artwaley aims to provide a level-playing field for lesser-known artists engaged in high quality work to showcase their work to the global audience.

We get a chance to interact with experts visiting the Sandbox. We were helped in testing our idea and refining the business model. We receive good exposure during events like the Development Dialogue as it connects us with the right people who can help us take our venture to the next level.



**Priyal Ostwal**

Founder

priyalostwal@gmail.com



**Navodyami**

www.navodyami.com

Making authentic ethnic crafts available at the doorstep of customers is the aim of [Navodyami.com](http://Navodyami.com). Gearing to be the 'Flipkart for Crafts,' the company leverages an ecosystem of 4,000 artisans from several states built by Navodyami program since 2011. Assured quality, reasonable prices and a robust delivery arm ensure customers having a liking for regional ethnic craft can purchase them anywhere, anytime. Artisans on the other hand get better returns and inspiration to scale up their business further.

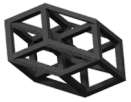
Functioning as an independent entity comes with its own set of challenges that confront any startup. We have the challenge of scaling the venture by expanding the market presence and be a sustainable enabler of micro-entrepreneurship at the grassroots level. Being an incubatee in Sandbox Startups gives us a big leverage.



**Neelam Maheshwari**

Founder

neelam.maheshwari@gmail.com



**NEXUS 3D**  
www.nexus3dprint.com

## Nexus 3D

www.nexus3dprint.com

Nexus 3D is an online marketplace for 3D printing, serving the B2B market. Nexus 3D brings 3D designers, engineers and printers on one platform and connects them with people who are in need of their services in different industry sectors such as health, home décor, education, fashion etc. It makes the emerging 3D printing technology affordable and accessible to B2C markets.

Unlike the established businesses, companies in their startup phase need all kinds of help. Sandbox Startups connects us with a wide range of network. It helped me validate and refine my business model, provided end-to-end support from mentorship to market linkage. The weekly scrum meetings are very useful in order to constantly assess ourselves.



### Vikas Hutagikar

Founder

vikas@nexus3dprint.com



## LinkEZ Technologies Private Limited

www.linkeztech.com

LinkEZ leverages IoT (internet-of-things) technology to deliver innovative solutions for the connected industry. Different industry verticals need to exchange multiple types of data with their peers and vendors. The company provides the technology needed by enterprises to achieve seamless exchange of data in a secure and stable environment. It enables companies to be smarter, more efficient and productive.

We received two beta customers through the Sandbox Startups network to test our technology, and it helped us reduce our go-to-market time. The industry connect, mentorship, constant monitoring and the brand value we receive here put the startups incubatees on a fast track.



### Divyesh Kumar Shah

Founder

divyesh@linkeztech.com



## nanoPix-ISS

nANOPIX

nanoPix Integrated Software Solutions has built an image and video processing technology that help farmers to sort agriculture products such as cashew by quality, shape, size and colour. NanoPix's current mandate is to increase the ability and efficiency of agriculture processors in grading and selling high quality produce through an automated process. The first application of this technology has been for the cashew industry. 'nanoSorter', a machine developed by the company, automates the process of grading cashew with machine-vision based sorting. The machine offers 10% less breakage than traditional methods, with 95% accuracy or better. This machine has helped over 100 farmers to improve their productivity manifold.

In entrepreneurial journey, just money doesn't help beyond a certain point. The Sandbox support system not only gave us the financial help, but also a dedicated bunch of people with good work ethics. At any time, whatever ingredient was required for the recipe of success in business, Sandbox made it readily made available for us.



### Sasisekar Krish

CEO and Co-founder

ksasisekar@nanopix-iss.com



The startup incubatees receive high-level mentoring from proven leaders who are part of the Deshpande Foundation's world-class mentor network.

## Collaboration with DST

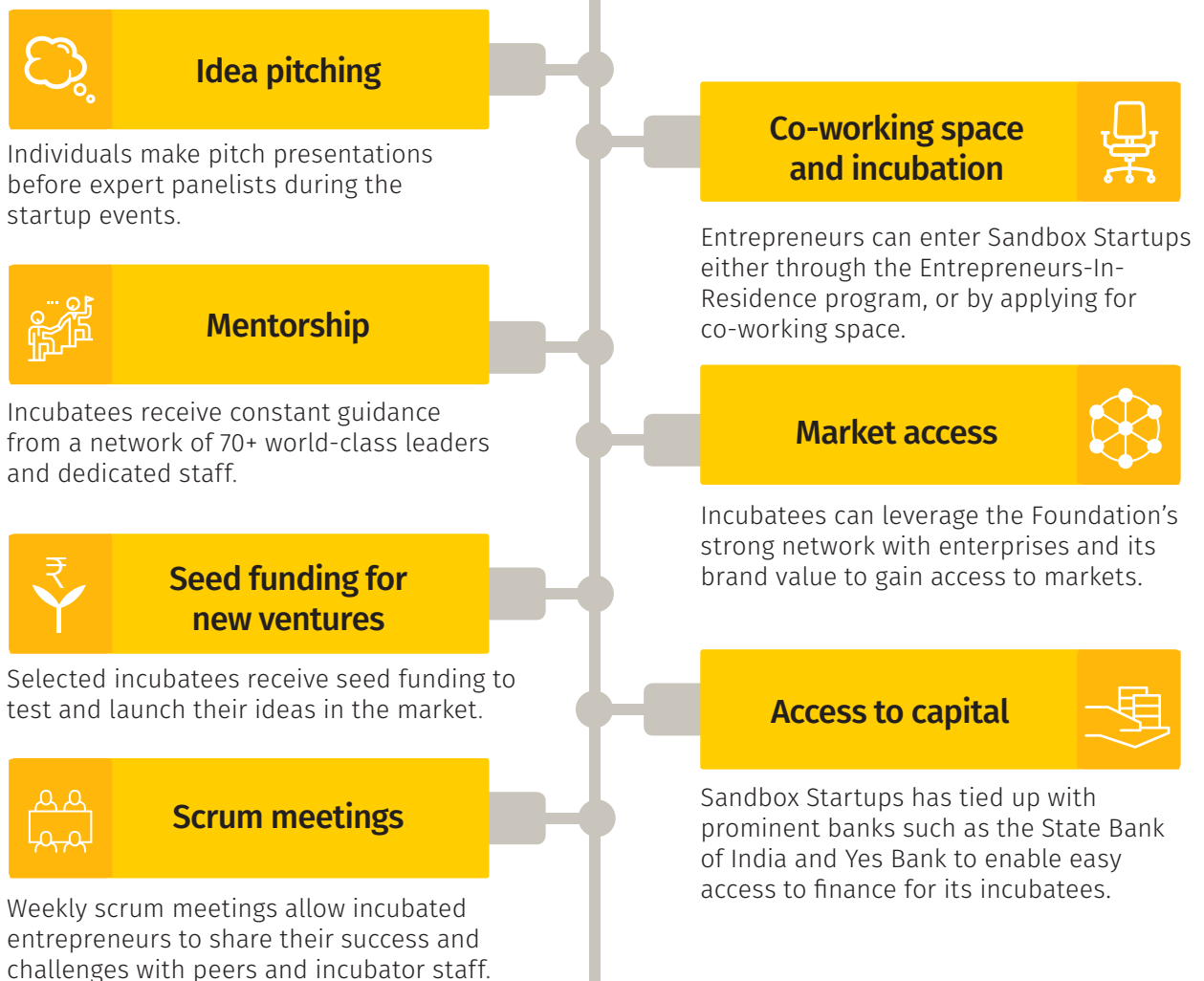
Sandbox Startups has entered into a collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. This is a recognition of its role as an impactful startup incubator in the country, and in promoting enterprises that are tackling challenges with technological solutions having impact.

Entrepreneurs in tier 2 and tier 3 cities have a range of problems to solve with technology-driven or service-driven solutions. Sandbox Startups provides an enabling platform that helps bring diverse entrepreneurial ideas.



**Naveen Jha**, CEO, Deshpande Foundation

## How it works

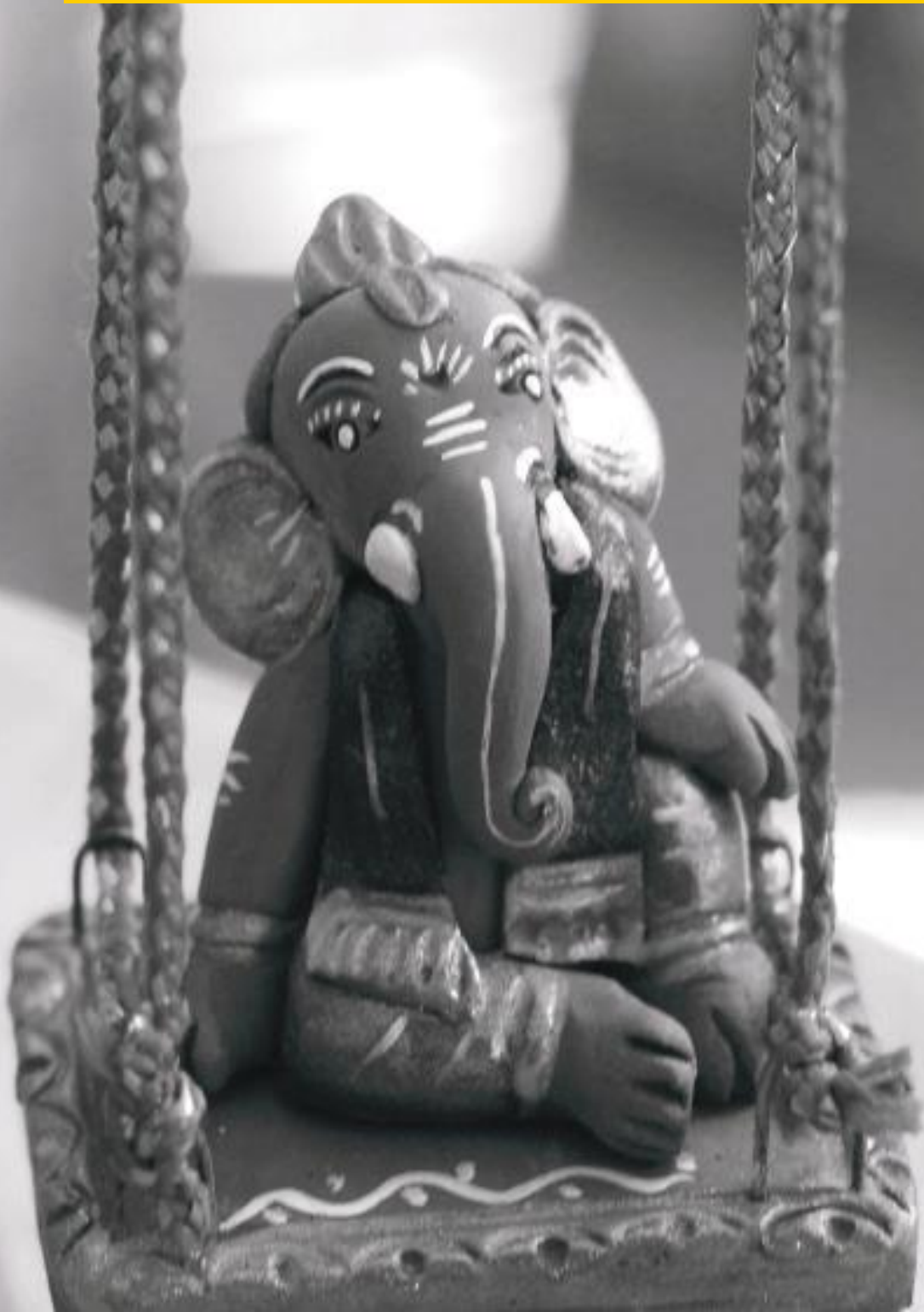


# Navodyami

## **An ecosystem for micro-entrepreneurs to scale**

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Navodyami has built an ecosystem for micro and small entrepreneurs to scale faster and better. It caters to small or home-grown entrepreneurs in rural and semi-urban areas, helping them come out of their traditionally constrained businesses model to achieve scale, profitability and long-term sustainability. It has empowered more than 4,000 micro-entrepreneurs and helped over 200 businesses to scale.



# Navodyami

Small entrepreneurs in rural areas lack understanding of market dynamics and ways to scale their ventures. This program provides an ecosystem to small entrepreneurs by offering support, network and resources. The Navodyami ecosystem raises the chances of small enterprises scaling up by ten times.



Tirumeleshwar started producing Sukeligargi with 10kgs a month. After Navodyami, it is now about 5 ton a year. Kumar Kundagol, a cane entrepreneur, would have been barely able to support his family had he continued with his business in a modest way as he did for 13 long years. Now, his monthly turnover is around INR 1,00,000, and he is able to support more families by creating jobs.

According to the 2014-2015 annual report of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of India, there are over 50 million micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, contributing around 37% to the country's GDP. Despite being the major contributors to local economies, small entrepreneurs in tier 2 and tier 3 locations in the country lack crucial hand-holding.

**Navodyami promotes micro-entrepreneurship as a viable proposition for supporting livelihoods at the grassroots level. It is enabling small entrepreneurs in rural and semi-urban areas having unique products by helping them scale up their business. This is creating a ripple effect on the lives of the communities by creating job opportunities.**

Mostly owned by individuals from humble backgrounds with little exposure to the market dynamics, understanding of customer satisfaction, and gaps in

their models, these enterprises lack access to mentoring support and financial resources. As a result, many promising ventures die young or grow at a sluggish rate.

**Navodyami is addressing the gaps in the existing system by building an ecosystem for small entrepreneurs to demystify business concepts into relatable experiential learning. It provides access to peer and mentor networks as well as ongoing hand-holding until the entrepreneurs scale up their business. The Navodyami ecosystem includes industry exposure, training, mentoring, network and market support.**

There are a number of success stories that convey the impact on small businesses. For instance, Laxmi M Naidu received help in reviving her small, struggling garments company into a thriving business by training her to spot and manage skilled employees.

Similarly, Lalitha Kantaraj, a Navodyami winner, transformed her small computer training business that earns her a minimum of INR 40,000 per month in Dharwad. Navodyami helped her in getting INR 4 lakh from a bank, besides providing her all other support needed.

4,000<sup>+</sup>

MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS TRAINED

MOBILIZED OVER 60  
ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH  
CREDIT LINKAGES₹1<sup>+</sup> CR

170

NAVODYAMIS  
SUPPORTEDNAVODYAMI  
MEMBERSHIPS

210

BOOSTED BUSINESS  
TURNOVER BY UP TO

30%

(TURNOVER OF UP TO  
₹60 LAC PER ANNUM)

₹50 LAC

MARKET LINKAGE THROUGH  
NAVODYAMI DIRECTOVERALL TURNOVER  
RAISED FROM

₹4 CR

TO

₹6.5 CR

(ALMOST DOUBLE)

JOBS CREATED

300<sup>+</sup>

## An impact story

### Small-scale entrepreneur aims to be a global exporter



Hailing from an agricultural family, Suresh was disappointed by the lack of income and recognition that farmers received despite their

hard work. A newspaper article about coconut milk and virgin oil production in Malaysia drew his attention and he decided to make a foray into the virgin coconut oil business. Prior to launching his virgin oil manufacturing business in 2012, he researched and gathered information about the products, technology and market for virgin coconut oil, and eventually sought training in the processes.

Navodyami gave a new direction to Suresh's company to reach the benchmarks. It not only helped him financially, but also boosted his confidence. Now, he aims to reach a production of 2,000 liters per month with the help of technology, and plans to export his products globally, in the next five years.

When he heard of Navodyami, he approached the team and enrolled in the program. The training at Navodyami increased his confidence level. Today his

aim is to substantially increase his market share.

"The Navodyami team encouraged me when my family members asked me to give up. I had left studies to pursue my dream and Navodyami gave me inspiration, mentor network and pushed me to focus when I began to lose it. I expect a major growth in my production levels and aim to reach a production of 2,000 liters per month with the help of technology. I am also customizing our technology to fit my specifications. In the next five years, I plan to go global with my products," says an elated Suresh.

Only three in ten small businesses succeed and only one scales by up to ten times. But with Navodyami, we are able to help at least six businesses to stabilize and three businesses to scale four to six times over a period of three years. It is an enabling ecosystem that works to help small entrepreneurs to overcome barriers.



**Neelam Maheshwari**, Director, Navodyami

# The Navodyami ecosystem



## Screening & selection

### Businesses that are:

- Environment-friendly
- Ethically sound
- Viable in the foreseeable future
- Less than 10 years old
- With a turnover of INR 1 to INR 5 lakh/month
- Located in Sandbox regions

Candidates who have entrepreneurial spirit and high commitment towards their business ideas are selected for Navodyami program.



## Presentation before panelists

At the end of the 2-month period, entrepreneurs make presentations before a panel comprising of entrepreneurs, bankers, and investors, about their plans and the support they need.

## Training & bootcamp



Shortlisted candidates undergo a two-day workshop and one-day bootcamp spread across 2 months.

### During this period, they understand:

- Business viability
- Market and competition
- Growth potential
- What they need to scale

### They get access to:

- Mentor meets
- Events such Navodyami Prabhavi Pratiyogita, buyer seller meets, exhibitions, exposure visits
- Info sessions on accounting, interaction with experts from CFTRI, premiere institutes etc.
- Annual Navodyami Conference
- Deep-dive review meets for accelerating businesses
- Market linkages
- Registration with MSME and DIC

## Navodyami finalists



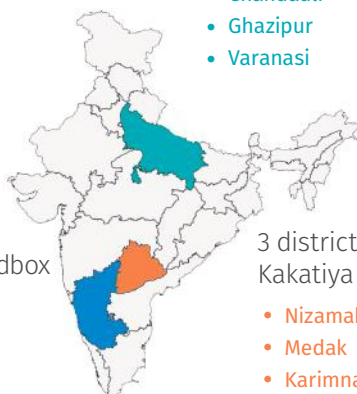
### Selected Navodyami members/winners receive:

- Continuous on-ground training support
- High-touch mentorship
- Market access through DF connections, distribution channels, online platforms
- Credit linkage with MicroGraam: Not just low-cost capital, but also helps small entrepreneurs build credibility, in turn encouraging mainstream banks to lend them as well.
- Links to formal credit institutions

## Geographical coverage

7 districts in Ek Soch Sandbox

- Azamgarh
- Sant Ravidas Nagar
- Mirzapur
- Chandauli
- Ghazipur
- Varanasi



5 districts in Hubballi Sandbox

- Belagavi
- Dharwad
- Gadag
- Haveri
- Uttar Kannada

3 districts in Kakatiya Sandbox

- Nizamabad
- Medak
- Karimnagar

## An impact story

### Scaling up a terracotta business

Terracotta artist Nagaraj Chakrasali was uncertain about his fluctuating pottery business. He didn't know how to take his small business to the next level, so that it would become sustainable and profitable.

Joining Navodyami was "a turning point", he says, as it taught him how to market his business, and also helped him get INR 5 lakh loan from MicroGraam. With this, his business saw a turnaround. Increasing his portfolio of products, and receiving orders from all over the country, Nagaraj's income has increased by more than three times.

# Navodyami uniqueness

## Training and support



Rigorous training environment transforms passive businesses to become market-driven enterprises. Better understanding of accounting and marketing concepts makes them better managers.

## Credit linkage



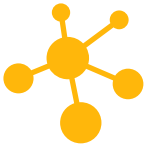
Leveraging the Sandbox's relationship with credit institutions, Navodyami facilitates access to credit from banks and government agencies, thereby addressing the fundamental problem of small businesses.

## Market linkage



Helps increase market access for the entrepreneurs through the Sandbox's networks, distribution channels and online platforms.

## Network advantage



Navodyamis become a part of a larger network of fellow entrepreneurs and mentors in the Sandbox ecosystem. It facilitates peer learning and better visibility in the entrepreneurial world.

## An impact story

Here is how handloom entrepreneurs built a sustainable business

Vishwanath Devendrappa Kenchi, who owns a handloom business, is one of the ten founding members of 'Adhi Shakthi Handloom Weavers' Multipurpose Self-help Society'. When it was in need of money to build a cooperative facility, the Navodyami team helped it to get INR 10 lakh bank loan without any security, and also facilitated INR 6 lakh assistance under a government scheme. The cooperative society thus born now has 200 members.

With Navodyami support, the cooperative society makes a turnover of INR 25-30 lakh per month. It has grown its business many fold by supplying to brands like Fab India and Charaka.

**Says Vishwanath, "The Hubli Sandbox helped us travel to places to gain knowledge of the trade. Navodyami meetings gave us confidence."**

## An impact story

This Sukeli seller scaled up his business with Navodyami support



Tirumaleshwar from Yallapur in Uttar Kannada was oblivious of the growth possibilities of his small trade until he became a part of the Navodyami program.

He sold Sukeli, a dry banana product that was popular in North Karnataka but little

known to markets outside. Sukeli production involved procuring fresh banana, washing, drying and packaging and selling the packets to clients, on a small scale.

The Navodyami team helped place his Sukeli packets, branded "Nammooru," among distributors and retailers, assisted in creating market awareness about Sukeli, and even suggested a new shop location for Tirumaleshwar.

**The Navodyami bootcamp exposed Tirumaleshwar to business plans, marketing strategies, quality maintenance and logistics. He was chosen as the Navodyami winner, which allowed him to be nurtured by the Sandbox ecosystem.**

Today, he has expanded his product range to include eight to ten varieties, besides adding pickle to the product portfolio. His turnover, which was at INR 40,000 per month in 2011 has increased manifold to touch INR 3,00,000 per month.

## Metamorphosis

Not all small business people are entrepreneurs. Navodyami aims to find the latter. Upon their selection, entrepreneurs are helped to build networks, access resources and mentorship which usually is hard to get otherwise.

**Navodyami's association brings credibility to small entrepreneurs, encouraging them to scale better and faster.**

For a typical small entrepreneur, lack of literacy, working capital, dependency on seasonal raw material, limited mobility, lack of structured market, high usage of labor and limited scale of business poses additional problems. The Navodyami ecosystem works to help them overcome such limitations. It has been observed that, once scaled, a Navodyami business provides livelihoods to five to forty people at a time. In a mostly agrarian economy, assured jobs in non-farm sector is not only desirable but are extremely beneficial to the local economy.



# Deshpande Educational Trust

## Imparting life skills and entrepreneurial mindset

Skilling that goes beyond employability towards upward career mobility is what the students gain from the fellowship programs of Deshpande Educational Trust (DET). With hands-on experiential learning in a rigorous environment, the graduates develop an entrepreneurial mindset and qualities they need to succeed in their work and life. With 11 fellowship programs and an alumni strength of more than 2,000 fellows, the Trust is one of the largest skill education providers in the country in terms of the number of students learning in one single hub.



# Deshpande Educational Trust

The Trust focuses on empowering youth from rural and semi-urban areas to create a strong pipeline of human resources who power enterprises and innovation.



Deshpande Educational Trust (DET) builds an entrepreneurial mindset among the youth and aims to fulfil the industry and sectorial needs of skilled human resources, especially in tier 2 and tier 3 cities. It brings a holistic approach to train students for real-life challenges and builds multiple skill-sets while enhancing the core capabilities of individuals.

The short-term residential fellowship programs build high quality human resources for different industry and sectorial roles. There are specific fellowship programs for electricians, teachers, accounting and HR professionals, entry-level and mid-level managers needed in social enterprises, commercial establishments and agriculture.

India is among the countries that are having the highest 'skill gap' in the world. Even with a high number of graduates churned out every year, 64% of firms in the country have difficulty finding qualified employees. The gap is caused by the mismatch between the skills possessed by the youth graduating out of colleges and what the employers are looking for in them. Employers are struggling to find trained manpower to perform specialized roles. To overcome this problem, a few corporates in the country run in-house training programs to make fresh graduates hired by them ready for the actual job scenarios. The DET programs are an effort to bridge this gap.

The impact created by DET is visible through its rapid pace of scaling, industrial placements, and gender equal payments – an uncommon occurrence in tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

In 2015-2016, over 1,200 students graduated from different fellowship programs. Over 90% of the fellows have been successfully placed in jobs in different organizations or as entrepreneurs working with Deshpande Foundation. About 30 fellows from DET have turned entrepreneurs, providing employment to more than a thousand people.

The DET programs do not focus on scoring marks but on building multiple skills and values, besides strengthening their core competency. On an average, DET graduates earn about three times more salary than their peers in similar roles in the industry.

The DET programs charter a new path for local youth to experience entrepreneurship first hand, imbibing global standards of efficiency and excellence. It addresses the grave need for skilled and motivated employees and entrepreneurs in community and economic development.

2,000<sup>+</sup>  
FELLOWS TRAINED

48%  
FEMALE GRADUATES

74%  
RURAL CANDIDATES



## Skilled manpower for tier 2, tier 3 cities

Youth in rural and semi-urban areas face many disadvantages compared to their counterparts in bigger cities. They lack exposure to the outside world, communication and soft skills. In the meantime, as part of the country's economic growth, tier 2 and tier 3 cities are witnessing development in terms of industrialization and business activities. Employment opportunities are emerging in small towns and cities and enterprises setting up bases here need skilled manpower. The fellows graduating from different programs of DET are a ready fit for such employment opportunities. Our fellows also have the option of moving to bigger cities in search of better livelihoods.

## Industry connect

DET leverages the Sandbox's strong industry connect to scale its fellowship programs as well as to provide students the much-needed exposure to real world scenarios.

The Trust has several funding partners from the industry, notable among them being Yes Bank, V Guard and HSBC. They are providing financial support to DET's programs with their corporate social responsibility (CSR) grants.

The collaboration has enhanced the impact of the learning environment as industry leaders often visit DET for sessions that inspire fellows to excel in their areas.

## DET programs:

### ● Build entrepreneurial mindset

The students learn to explore entrepreneurial opportunities in the problems they see in their vicinities, communities or industries.

### ● Impart employability skills

The fellows specializing in their core areas are confident, possess good communication and inter-personal skills, which make them a ready fit for jobs.

### ● Instill leadership qualities

The students develop leadership skills by the industry exposure they receive in the Sandbox ecosystem. They also get to interact with leaders who have solved difficult problems.

We set up the Deshpande Educational Trust (DET) so that we can really inspire people and help them achieve their full potential. The programs are based on experiential learning. It's not just reading about things but actually getting out there and doing things.



**Dr. 'Desh' Deshpande**, Founder, Deshpande Foundation

# DET uniqueness

## Value-based education



Imparting ethics and values is a key part of DET. Fellows learn to appreciate punctuality, honesty, hard work and others' points of view.

## Best infrastructure & facilities



Best infrastructure to facilitate learning. DET provides state-of-the-art classrooms, library and accommodation facilities.

## Student-trainer connect



As most of the trainers are the alumni of DET, they understand the needs of the students who come from similar backgrounds, and relate with them better.

## Experiential learning



Emphasis on experiential learning enables fellows to acquire industry skills by applying their learning in actual situations in a rigorous environment.

## Globally recognized alumni



Several DET alumni have participated in national and international events, won awards and are employed by reputed organizations.

## Strong feedback mechanism



A strong feedback mechanism between students and trainers provides scope for self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

## An impact story

### How Aparna landed a job in her dream company



Hailing from Hubballi, a tier 2 city, Aparna Hiremath found it hard to get a job with her BCom degree. She joined the Deshpande Koutilya Fellowship (DKF); a career oriented program that aims to transform commerce graduates from rural and semi-urban areas

into competent accounting professionals. Soon after she completed the five-month residential course, she got placed in her dream company, Infosys Technologies, as a junior accountant, through a campus recruitment drive.

*"Koutilya provided me hands-on learning experience and exposure to field work. I think these are essential for an individual to be prepared for the work culture in a corporate setting. It enhanced my skills, taught me how to handle pressure at work, how to excel in what I do and made me confident."*

"I always dreamt of working in a company like Infosys, but never thought it would be a reality given my semi-urban upbringing and my poor communication skills. But Koutilya changed my life," says Aparna.

DKF is one of the popular programs offering hands-on training in accounting, banking and finance, to equip students for jobs in banking and financial sectors.

In our observation, a DET graduate may start with another talented employee but is likely to make a steeper climb in the career ladder and move fast in the upward direction. Our fellows go beyond fixed roles of jobs, but adapt and learn as per situations and volunteer to take on bigger roles, while remaining grounded and honest all the while. This is the secret of the success of DET which goes way beyond skilling. It is a program to help people thrive.

**Naveen Jha**, CEO, Deshpande Foundation

## An impact story

### When ITI course didn't help, Anil turned to Susandhi fellowship



"Thanks to the Deshpande Susandhi Electrician Program for helping me get the right job by polishing my skills. It also transformed me into a better and smarter human being."

Anil Warikalmath from the Malapura village in North Karnataka's Gangavati taluk faced the problems that any graduate from an Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) course would face. Poor hold on the subject, lack of industry exposure and communication skills had made it difficult for him to get a job. When he heard about the Deshpande Susandhi Electrician Program (DSEP) from a friend, Anil thought of giving it a try. The four-month rigorous program that centers around professional and personal development and learning through practical application gave him hands-on experience in handling the tools. The DSEP curriculum equips fellows to work on nearly 200 electrical equipment. After completing the course, Anil was hired as a network engineer by an education company called 'Edutel' in Bengaluru.

"I am earning reasonably well in my job. Learning English and computer skills at DSEP besides enhancing my capabilities in the core subject helped me a lot," Anil says.

## DET programs

Currently, DET accommodates more than a thousand students in 11 intensive residential short-term fellowship courses that run simultaneously in one hub. Following are among the most popular fellowship programs:

### Deshpande Fellowship Program (DFP)



An eight-month program that creates dynamic leaders competent to be on-ground managers to lead in social development sector, especially in tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

### Deshpande Koutilya Fellowship (DKF)



A niche program that equips non-urban commerce graduates for demanding work environments with hands-on training in accounting, banking and finance.

### Deshpande Susandhi Electrician Program (DSEP)



Provides ITI graduates real industry exposure. The four-month program helps participants acquire proficiency to work on nearly 200 electrical equipments.

### Akanksha Fellowship Program



A skilling program that makes teachers efficient at their craft. They acquire soft skills and best teaching methodologies, so that they can secure jobs at national levels.

## An impact story

### Akshatha, a teacher prepared for smart education era



After completing her Bachelors in Science (BSc) followed by Bachelors in Education (BEEd) Akshatha R Malali from Ranebennur (North Karnataka) wanted to take

up a teacher's job just like her peers. But an impressive presentation by an Akanksha Fellowship Program executive from Hubli Sandbox changed her mind. She joined the program and it made all the difference.

The program equips teachers for the smart education era. They need to come up with presentations after every class, and many exercises are aimed at instilling in them confidence, work ethics and values, crucial for becoming good teachers.

She secured a job at Chinmaya Public School in Challakere, Chitradurga district, through campus selection for a monthly salary of INR 15,000, which is much higher than what her peers get in a tier 3 city.

"The rigorous learning that kept us always on our toes made me a different person. Not just teaching skills, I acquired life skills too. It made me punctual, dedicated and adaptable to any situation," says Akshatha.

## Placement Partners

The DET has more than 300 employment partners including corporate giants and reputed social enterprises, and it provides better placement opportunities for the fellows. Prominent placement partners include the following:



## Partners Speak

Staff hired from the Deshpande Foundation's Akanksha program exemplify great work ethics and also inspire other teachers with their work. Teachers who have graduated from this program come with good communication skills, team spirit, cordial conduct, and values such as punctuality. These qualities bear testimony to the quality of Akanksha training.

Pragati Kiram Tavare

Headmistress, BR English Medium School, Motebennur

We have several recruits from the Deshpande Susandhi Electrical Program (DSEP) for some positions that require hands-on working with tools. Candidates from this program are adept at using the tools, and are evidently well trained in the basics as well as modern tools of electrical works. Notably, they are also trained on basic electrical safety precautions, first aid, basic wiring, electrical tools handling, motor winding, motor control panels, and industrial hands-on learning.

Vijayalaxmi Industries

We hired candidates from the Deshpande Susandhi Fellowship (DSF) for various positions. We find that the modules taught and competencies developed during the fellowship program match our job requirements. For instance, modules such as effective communication, basic English, IT, operations management, sales skills, basics of accounting and banking, as well as leadership training, are highly valuable and job-oriented.

Abhilash Nair

Sr HR Recruiter, HGS

At Sankalpa Rural Development Society, we hire from the Deshpande Koutilya Fellowship program (DKF) for the Accounts Department. The course works as a bridge between industry expectations and employee readiness for jobs in accounting. Professionals are work-ready and equipped with practical know-how through industry visits and hands-on-learning.

Sikandar Meeranayak, CEO,  
Sankalpa Rural Development Society



# Agriculture Program

## **Bringing entrepreneurial rigor to farming**

The Agriculture program engages with farmers by educating and supporting them to adopt sustainable ways of cultivation. It is bringing about a perceptible change in the mindset of Indian farmers by instilling a spirit of entrepreneurship in them. Over the years, it has helped over 15,000 farmers in the Sandbox region with the best farming practices.

# Agriculture

Farming, the prime livelihood for most people in the Sandbox, is of special interest to the Deshpande Foundation. The program introduces a series of innovations that bring farmers higher income as well as safe and sustainable practices.



Three years ago, Praveen, a 40-year-old farmer from Bellarwad village in Navalgund, one of the most drought-prone taluks in North Karnataka, was finding it hard to reap any profit from his 8-acre farmland. Successive spells of drought, lack of irrigation infrastructure, and a fluctuating market for the cereal crops he used to grow had made farming unsustainable for him. But a farm pond he constructed with the support of the Hubli Sandbox opened up many possibilities. It enabled him to harvest occasional rainfall, store water and feed the standing crops throughout the year. He explored more commercially rewarding, water-intensive crops like papaya, besides the traditional cereal crops.

Now, Praveen grows papayas in four acres of his land. On an average, papaya yields a yearly revenue of INR 1 lakh per acre with a good profit margin. Encouraged by this success, he planted bamboo

in another four acres of land. The bamboo crop takes three years to start giving yield and promises a profit of INR 50,000 to 60,000 per annum for the next 40-50 years. A healthy mix of diverse crops and an ability to reap multiple crops means Praveen is insulated from the fluctuations of market prices for individual crops.

The Agriculture program actively engages more than 15,000 farmers like Praveen and provides them end-to-end support to make agriculture a sustainable and scalable economic activity. With an integrated approach and constant handholding, it helps traditional farmers with initiatives that lead to cost-saving and efficient farming techniques. The increase in farm income through these initiatives is positively impacting the rural community.

Overall

15,000<sup>+</sup>  
FARMERS HELPED

3x

AVERAGE REVENUE INCREASE  
FROM FARMING

50,000<sup>+</sup>  
LIVES IMPACTED



## Core principles

### Scalability

Making farming scalable – ability to do more at less cost and resources

### Sustainability

Helping farmers with best practices to make agriculture a sustainable activity

### Cost-Saving

Curbing costly inorganic farming practices with innovative methods to bring down cost

### Prosperity

Making farming a profitable venture to help farmers rise above subsistence

## Types of intervention

### Skill and education

Creating a future generation of agriculturists or agripreneurs with short-term training programs like Susandhi Krishi Chetana (SKC) that equips youths with scientific and innovative farming techniques.

### Infrastructure and assistance

Empowering farmers with basic infrastructure like farm ponds, providing timely assistance in soil quality management, procuring best quality seeds/seedlings, and providing market linkage for the farm produce.

### Active interventions

Introducing new, commercially viable, less disease-prone crops to the farmers and helping them adopt innovations to make agriculture sustainable. The Sandbox team engages farmers regularly to bring about a change in their mindset.

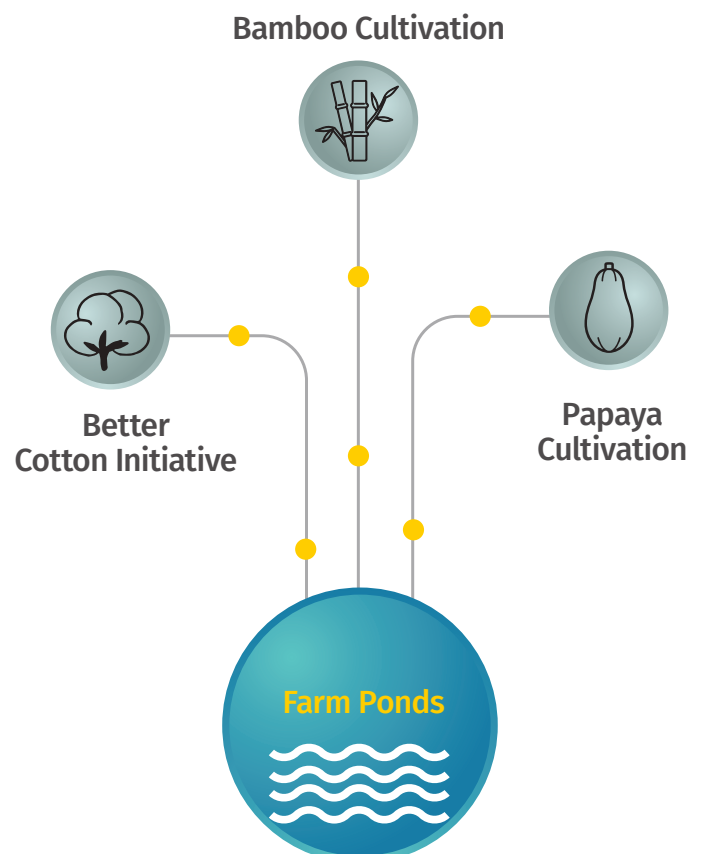
## Multipronged approach for end-to-end support

A number of initiatives under the Agriculture program work in tandem with each other to assist farmers in a number of areas such as better water management techniques, procurement of quality seeds and market linkage, besides carrying out continuous education programs backed by rigorous progress monitoring.

The integrated approach makes interventions at various levels to connect, educate, support and empower farmers, especially those with low profitability in drought-prone regions. Many interventions are inter-dependent and create a complete ecosystem for the farmers to take up farming with an entrepreneurial mindset.

For instance, the construction of farm ponds supported by the Sandbox by farmers in rain-deficient areas enables them to manage water better, grow multiple crops, and explore new crops that are viable.

Since it requires a close engagement at the grassroots level, the Sandbox teams that work with farmers also live among them. The foremost critical factor is to gain the trust of farmers and to see agriculture from their point of view. Once the credibility is established with their work, it becomes easier for the teams to introduce a series of innovations not just as products, but also as processes or delivery of services.



# Farm Pond Program



As a flagship initiative, the Farm Pond program is helping farmers build a reliable means of irrigation and transform their rain-fed agriculture.

With direct engagement and by supporting organizations that are promoting the initiative, the Sandbox team has facilitated the construction of over 1,700 ponds, impacting a similar number of farmer families and irrigating about 6,384 acres of land.

The program has increased the income of farmers by up to three times, enabling multi-crop cultivation even in regions reeling under successive droughts.

The ponds insulate farmers from unpredictable weather. The Sandbox provides needy farmers with operational support including machinery, trained operators and expert guidance on constructing ponds as per specific dimensions.

The success of individual farmers is inspiring others to follow the same path, making it a grassroots movement.

## Direct engagement in drought-prone Navalgund

The Sandbox is directly engaged with the farmers in the Navalgund taluk in North Karnataka's Dharwad district. The idea is to saturate a limited area with farm ponds and to demonstrate the critical impact of the initiative.

The program has a streamlined process to engage farmers through local panchayats and self-help groups. The program managers and field executives visit farmers, make them understand the utility of ponds and their potential impact.

Mallappa Shivalli, a 40-year old farmer in Aratti village in Navalgund taluk, had a tough challenge of feeding his family of six with his 6-acre rain-deficient farmland. One pond constructed in Mallappa's farmland made all the difference as his yearly income increased from INR 2 lakh to INR 6 lakh. It became possible for him to harvest occasional rainfall to feed standing crops. It reduced his dependency on unpredictable monsoons.

## Partnership with Tata Trusts

Tata Trusts support the Hubli Sandbox in driving the Farm Pond program. The Trusts are supporting the initiative by providing more than 25 earth-movers to dig farm ponds. The officials from the Trusts regularly come on field visits to review the progress achieved in the Sandbox region.

## Program highlights

### Speed and scale to construction

The Sandbox's operational support allows multiple simultaneous locations to excavate ponds in less than 48 hours.

### Cost saving for farmers

Machines and trained operators provided by the Sandbox reduce the cost of construction by an assured 30% to 50%, making it affordable for farmers.

### Long-term sustainability

As farmers share the cost of construction, the program has moved away from the traditional grant based model to become a self-sustainable model.

Farmers in Navalgund, which has witnessed droughts for more than 5 consecutive years, are able to brave the calamity with farm ponds. They are experimenting with commercially viable crops like papaya and bamboo, going beyond traditional ones such as cotton, maize, onion, chilly and pulses.

He can now grow multiple crops for up to three times in a year, maximizing his farm productivity. He is one of the many such examples of how the initiative is transforming lives in the Sandbox region.

As a result of construction of farm ponds, Navalgund taluk has emerged as a model to showcase the success of farmers. It has also demonstrated that the farmers are willing to share the cost if they see real value.

Geographic  
Coverage

Navalgund

650

Farm ponds

3,218

Acres of land irrigated

## An impact story

### One farm pond transformed debt-ridden Eshwarappa into a profitable farmer



Despite owning 25 acres of land in three different plots, Eshwarappa Shekharappa Kumbhar, a 65-year-old farmer in Kadadalli, struggled to make money from farming. Despite efforts, the crops failed due to successive droughts and he suffered

losses for years. A father of five children, Kumbhar found it hard to support his family and fell into a debt trap. He was forced to work as a laborer to make a living.

Thanks to his decision to construct a pond in one of his plots, he earned INR 3 lakh profit as he could harvest up to four crops in a year. And it was for the first time that he made a profit in lakhs, growing cotton, onion, wheat, maize and pulses. Encouraged by

the initial success, he got one more pond constructed in another plot to achieve complete sustainability in farming with better water management technique.

"There was little I could do to save my land and I felt I could give the farm pond a try. Moreover, I saw how a farm pond had helped another farmer achieve good results," he said.

Much to the joy of Kumbhar, the pond replenished his farmland, enabling him to harvest occasional rains, store water and use it for regular, planned irrigation activities. "Water is everything for a farmer and we suffered for years due to its scarcity. But for the farm ponds, I would not have been able to resurrect myself after bouts of successive drought years," Kumbhar says.

## How it works



### Working at the grassroots

- Creating awareness and convincing farmers about the advantages of constructing farm ponds.
- Working with village panchayats and self-help groups that liaise between the Sandbox and farmers for selecting farmers and processing applications.

### Operational support



- Providing operational support such as machineries and trained personnel for constructing farm ponds. The Sandbox team also guides farmers about the best location for constructing ponds in their lands and the optimum dimensions.

In times of drought, poor farmers find it difficult to spend even a penny. But, they are willing to invest on farm ponds by taking bank loans etc. It shows how people are positively influenced by each other and their growing awareness about sustainable farming.



**Naveen Jha**, CEO, Deshpande Foundation

# Papaya and Bamboo Cultivation

The objective is to encourage farmers to achieve the right mix of commercially rewarding crops as well as the traditional crops in order to safeguard them from the fluctuating market for their farm produce.



The 40-year-old farmer Shankargouda Police Patil was preoccupied with growing chilly, onion, groundnut, wheat, jowar and maize in his 12-acre land in Alagwadi village in Navalgund taluk (Dharwad District). He was barely able to make profit with his traditional approach to farming. Encouraged by the Sandbox team, he planted 2,000 papaya saplings in 2.5 acres of land. In one year, the new crop yielded INR 1.23 lakh profit, much higher than any other crop in his land. This one-time investment nurtured

Papaya cultivation is a pilot project implemented by Hubli Sandbox with the support of Tata Trusts. In the initial phase, more than 30 farmers in Shiggaon taluk (Haveri district) and Navalgund taluk (Dharwad district) are supported under the project, covering about 50 acres of farmland. With an average per-acre profit of INR 1 lakh per annum, papaya cultivation has provided a viable and alternative means of income for the farmers.

with drip irrigation by drawing water from the farm pond has put him in a position to earn good money from papaya every year.

## Bamboo cultivation

The Sandbox is promoting bamboo cultivation in Navalgund, Belagavi and Shiggaon taluks in North Karnataka. About 50 farmers have taken up bamboo cultivation covering more than 120 acres. Similar to papaya, bamboo requires water. After a 3-year initial growth phase, the crop produces yield for 40-50 years, providing a steady per-acre income of above INR 50,000 every year.

## MIT collaboration for soil testing device

A team of researchers from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA, working with Hubli Sandbox, have developed a dipstick-like prototype device that can be used to perform a quick soil testing. It will help farmers gauge critical chemicals, nutrients and other components in their soil, much like a blood sugar test is done for diabetes.

Soil testing is a cumbersome process in India currently. Less than 0.1% of the farmers go for soil testing. The analysis happens only in government labs and takes about 2 months to get the results out. The new device which is expected to be made available in a few months from now makes soil testing quick, easy and economical. Soil testing with this device costs about 25% of what the farmers have to pay now.

This innovation is an outcome of a study conducted by the MIT researchers to figure out the critical needs of the Indian farmers and ways to address them.

## Support for new crops

### Land preparation

Providing help in preparing land and managing water for growing newly introduced crops such as papaya and bamboo about which farmers lack adequate knowledge.

### Guidance & follow-up

Regular guidance and follow-up with farmers on the condition of crops builds confidence among the farmers. The Sandbox team intervenes to help farmers whenever they need help.

### Seedlings and market linkages

Providing quality seedlings processed at the Sandbox's agricultural innovation center to farmers, and connecting them with buyers for their papaya and bamboo crops.

# Better Cotton Initiative

In partnership with IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative, the Sandbox works with cotton farmers to improve productivity by exposing them to scientific practices.

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is a not-for-profit organization stewarding the global standards for Better Cotton and bringing together cotton's complex supply chain, from the farmers to the retailers. It works to make Better Cotton as a sustainable mainstream commodity in an environment-friendly way.

The Sandbox is supporting 15,000 farmers in Karimnagar and Medak districts in Telangana with direct market

linkages, seed procurement, and training on scientific and sustainable methods of crop cultivation.

Though cotton is not an irrigation dependent crop, its yield can be substantially better if water is provided at crucial stages of the crop like blooming. Water availability from farm ponds puts cotton farmers in a better position.

15,000

FARMERS

34,000

acres farming area

60%

avg. income increase

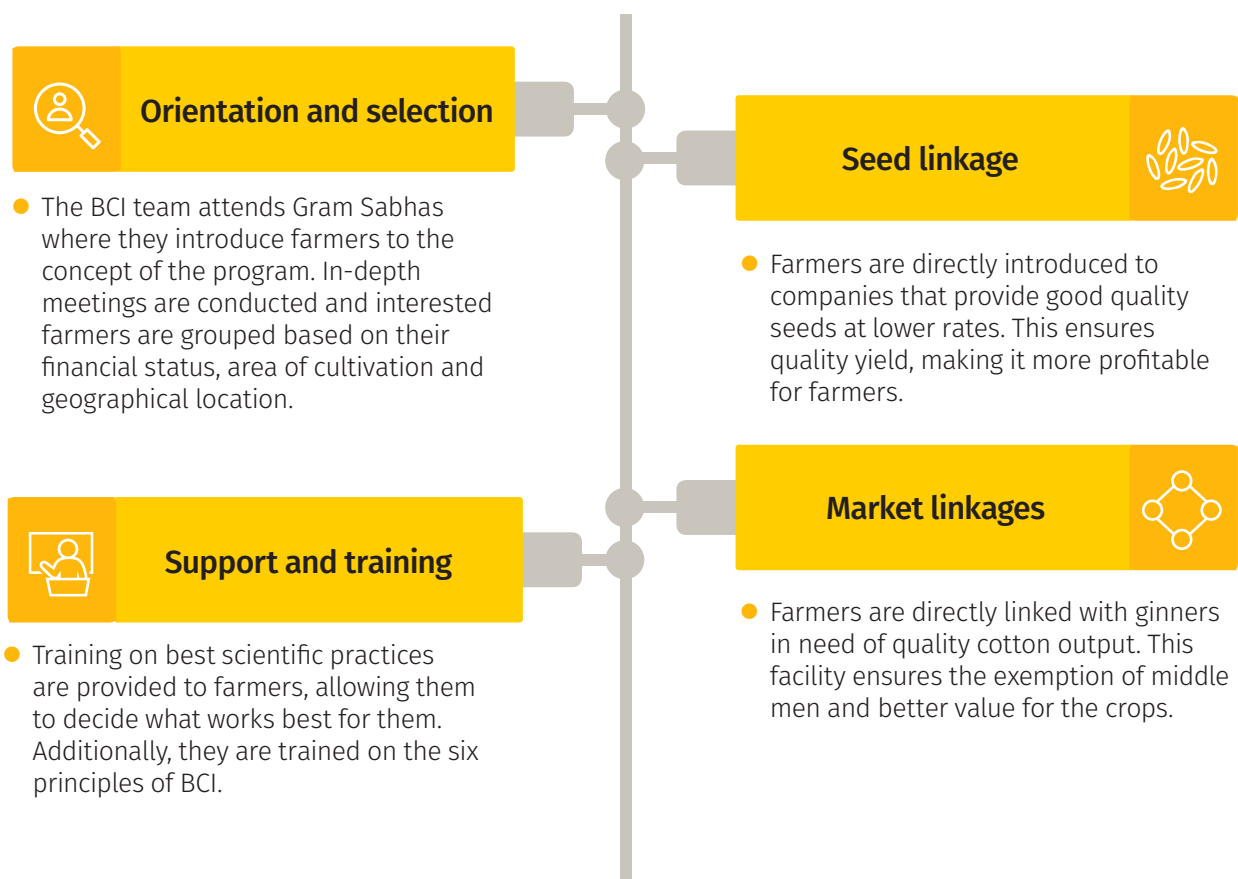
40-50%

less cost of production

Earlier, I was prone to using a lot of pesticides for my crops. Over time, it increased the cost of production and I incurred losses. It was going nowhere and I found cotton cultivation completely unsustainable. Then I was introduced to BCI and today I am applying the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods. I have saved more than 30% on investment. Like me, there are many more farmers who are benefited from the BCI initiative.

Basavaraj, Cotton farmer

## How it works



# LEADers Accelerating Development

## Engaging a generation of young leaders

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LEADers Accelerating Development (LEAD) program aims at unleashing problem solving and leadership skills through experiential learning among college going students. The overarching impact is that the students turn into grown-up adults with an aptitude to take charge of the ideas they are passionate about. It makes considerable impact on students by letting them choose entrepreneurship as a career. LEAD has so far created 26,037 LEADers and has encouraged students to execute over 9,000 projects, each addressing a pain point of the community they live in or of an industry that interests them.



# LEADers Accelerating Development

Students enabled as leaders through the LEAD program are making a visible difference in the Sandbox region by applying their leadership skills and becoming problem solvers with their ideas. The program instills leadership qualities in college going students and jump-starts their youthful energy.



LEAD is built on a premise that education should not only impart technical skills for employability but also instill young individuals with a 'can do' attitude to put ideas into action. LEAD has pioneered a methodology that engages students with their concerns for society to unleash leadership, collaboration, and problem solving skills, most importantly, a renewed self confidence.

The different legs of the LEAD program include: meeting and visiting industry leaders through Prayana, an annual leadership journey; engaging students in LEAD projects that brings together groups of two to four students to come up with innovative ideas to solve a problem; constant mentorship and peer support throughout the project; organizing LEADership camps and events; and allowing LEADers to leverage the Sandbox ecosystem.

Being part of the ecosystem, LEADers get an opportunity to meet well-known industry leaders and icons from different walks of life who encourage them to innovate their approach to solving problems they observe. The program also includes continual interactions, projects, and events that groom non-urban youth to shed their inhibitions, gain confidence and bring their ideas to life.

LEAD is one of the most visible programs of the Sandbox, important primarily due to its growing appeal among the college youth. Today, LEAD has emerged as a significant youth movement, spread across 100 colleges around Hubballi, and drawing participation from nearly 50,000 students in various programs.

2015-2016

4,722  
LEADers

64  
LEADERSHIP CAMPS/WORKSHOPS

3,998  
PROJECTS EXECUTED

# Some of our recent Student Projects



## Brake System for Bullock Cart

Santosh Kaveri

Santosh Kaveri is a BBA student in Belgavi and comes from Shedbal village.

Having a close understanding of challenges people usually face in villages, Santosh has undertaken various projects to make their lives easy.

Farmers face many problems while carrying heavy loads in bullock carts due to lack of a proper braking system.

Simple and affordable brake system for bullock cart by Santosh to reduce the manual labor while carrying heavy goods in bullock cart.

Santosh's bullock cart brake system is a simple, effective, and affordable mechanism. It reduces the manual labor required and prevents accidents. The brake system is also environment friendly as does not require fuel.



## Pedal Powered Metal Cutter

Amogh Desai

Amogh Desai is a first-semester mechanical engineering student at AITM College, Belgavi. He is one of the few engineers who dedicated his knowledge and time towards improving lives of the people through low-cost technology. Understanding the challenge that laborers face due to expensive metal cutting tools, Amogh initiated a project of designing an inexpensive and portable metal cutter. To keep it economical, it is made from discarded parts of bicycles and other pieces of

Pedal powdered metal cutter by Amogh to provide laborers with inexpensive and portable metal cutting tool.

scrap metal that are easy to find. It runs on a 12-volt power battery, which is then recharged by a dynamo that produces the current from pedaling. Amogh has even mounted a light to the machine so that it can be used at night.



## Smokeless Chulha

Yuvraj Patil

Yuvraj Patil is a LEADer who designed a smokeless chulha to solve the smoke problem troubling women in rural areas including his mother. Traditional chulhas produce a huge amount of smoke that causes health issues to all the family members. As a solution, he added a blower to the chulhas to reduce the smoke. The blower blows oxygen to fuel and causes complete combustion of the

Smokeless chulha designed by Yuvraj to reduce the smoke by adding a blower to the traditional chulha.

fuel thereby reducing the smoke. To keep it economical for rural people, the blower is designed in a way that it can work on a mobile charger and battery.



## Mobile Planetarium

Prajwal M

Prajwal M is a B.Sc. student from Mysore who believes that science is not a subject but an approach towards life. In line with his passion for science, Prajwal along with Gagan designed "COSMIC EGG: Low-Cost Inflatable Mobile Planetarium". Cosmic Egg is a portable mobile planetarium where 20 students together can see the wonders of universe. It helps students understand and

COSMIC EGG designed by science passionate Prajwal where 20 students together can see the wonders of universe, helping them develop interest in astronomy.

develop an interest in astronomy in a better way. This mobile planetarium has been given to many schools to give children a taste of astronomy.



## An impact story

### This LEADer invented an affordable water filter for rural communities



Niranjan Karagi, an engineering student from Belgaum, came up with a cost-effective and portable water filter called NIRNAL to make lives in rural areas better by providing them an affordable access to potable water.

Niranjan learnt that drinking contaminated water is the main reason for the health problems of impoverished communities. He designed a water filter that fits into any water bottle and is made up of plastic, activated carbon, cotton, and mesh. Each unit of NIRNAL filter costs as less as INR 20.

With the help of LEAD's network building initiative, he visited schools and colleges to bring about awareness

Niranjan is a born innovator and LEAD became the catalyst for his problem-solving skills.

about the health hazards of drinking impure water. He also engaged rural communities to spread the message. So far, he has sold about 5,000 units of the water filter.

Being a prominent LEADer, Niranjan's project received incubation support from Sandbox Startups. He has plans to scale the idea over the next one year with new versions of the product suitable for households, schoolchildren and travellers.

"LEAD has taught me to look at all directions for the solution when faced with a challenge. There will surely be a solution for all problems," says a proud Niranjan.



Vijay Matti  
Founder, Campus Connect

LEAD program was a major transformation in my life. I was part of the first LEAD Prayana. Listening to successful and role model entrepreneurs gave us the spark and enthusiasm to take up entrepreneurship later in our lives.

## Overview

### Leadership projects

Leadership activities include **LEAD Prayana**, **Leadership camps** and **Yuva Summit**. During the Development Dialogue, 5 top student projects will be awarded.

**Leadership camps** include visits to Sandbox programs, series of leadership activities and interactions with leaders – all aimed at enabling introspection and 'mindset' change to take charge of one's life.

### Industry exposure

Flagship programs that offer a platform for LEADers to network / engage with industry stalwarts for mentorship and guidance.

### Continuous interventions

Seamless, consistent interventions with the LEAD-student population.

### Mentorship and networking

Students interactions are organized with legends through various events. Over 400 LEADers have spoken to inspiring personalities like Nobel laureates Kailash Satyarthi, Muhammad Yunus and others.

### Unmatched scale

LEAD has scaled significantly. It engages with students in a network of 250+ colleges across 6 states.



Students engaged in a group activity in Lead Leadership Program (LLP)

## LEADers Speak

In LEAD Prayana, we get to interact with co-participants of different locations, culture and backgrounds. Our interactions with role models give us a new perspective about life. LEAD Prayana has ignited a spark within us to do something productive in our life.

Manish Noola

On LEAD Prayana

The LEAD Leadership Program (LLP), the ten-day leadership camp, taught us how to face difficulties not only now but also in the future. My life has changed after being part of leadership program.

Shanti Basme

On leadership program

I attended the leadership camp at Kalkeri Sangita Vidyalaya (KSV). The camp helped me improve my public speaking and communication; as well as to acquire many more skills. It gave a big boost to my confidence.

Rakesh Totakar

On leadership camp

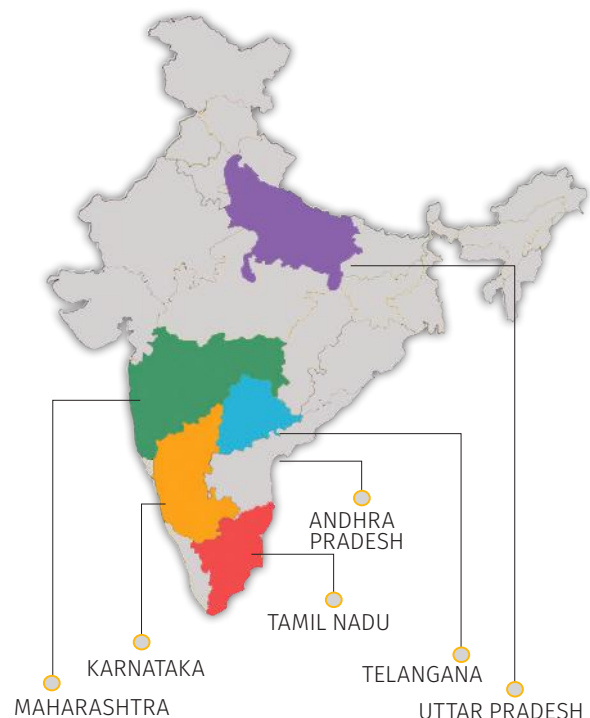
## Feedback from a college

LEAD at our college offers students an opportunity to make a change in their world. The LEAD cell at GIT works with the active involvement of students from different semesters having big ideas for a better society and better India, and want them to see that their vision transforms into reality.

By exposing students to social issues, encouraging them to volunteer their time and effort into the community, and igniting their latent talent to initiate creative solutions, LEAD teaches our youths to consider themselves as an active part of their environment and society, all while raising civil awareness, instilling a spirit of service, and creating community engagement.

KLS Gogte Institute of Technology, Belgaum

## LEAD presence

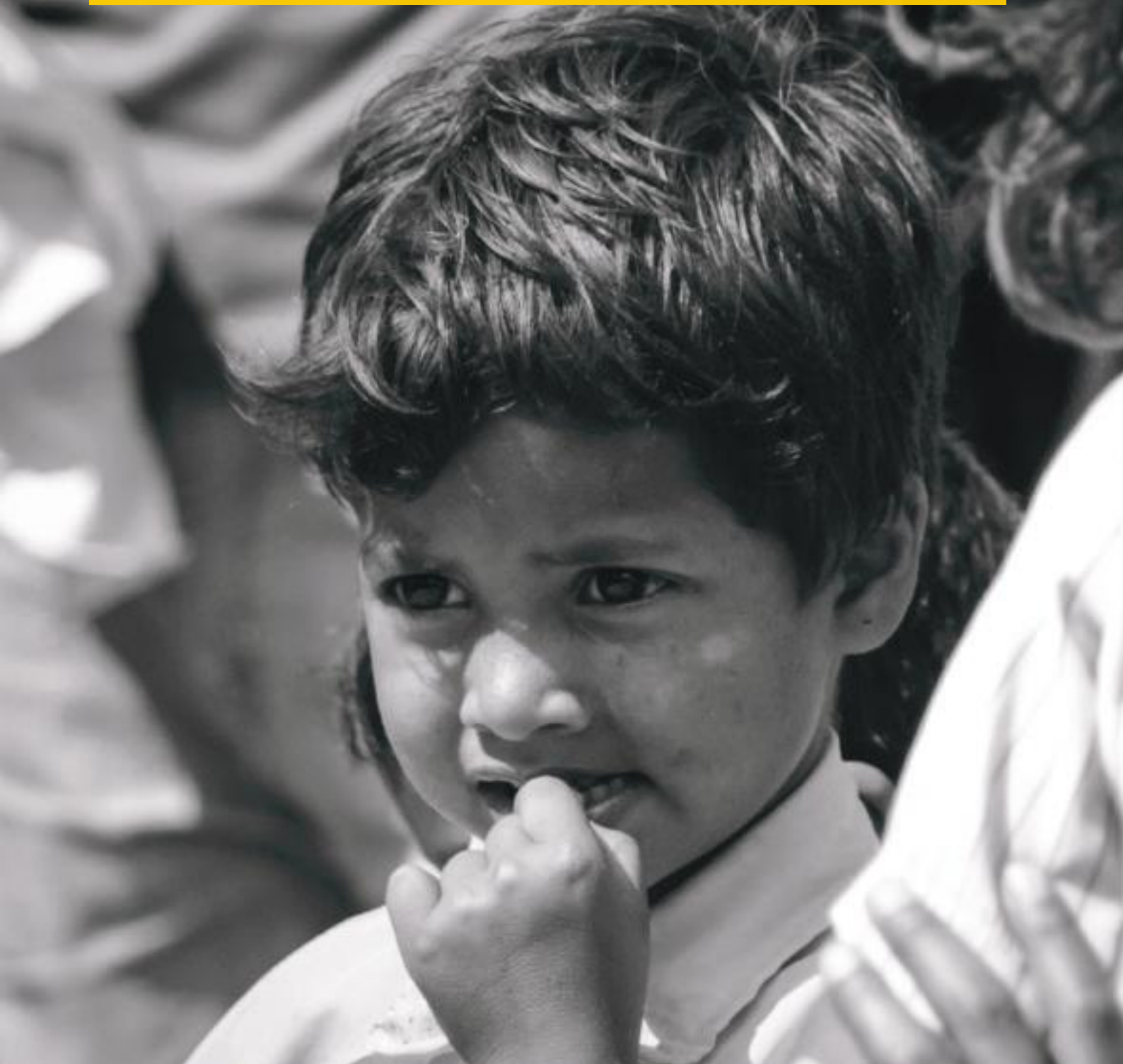


# Malnutrition-free program

## Bringing smiles on the face of malnourished children

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Malnutrition has been one of the enduring enigmas of contemporary India. Despite years of rapid economic growth, child malnutrition rates remained unchanged for years. 'Magu Nee Nagu', a chronic malnutrition-free program of the Hubli Sandbox, implemented as a pilot in Dharwad district in North Karnataka, is an attempt to come up with a demonstrated model to improve the health of over 1,500 severely malnourished children in the project area.



# Malnutrition-free Program

With concerted efforts including medical, nutritional, educational interventions and tech-enabled follow-up methods, the program has improved the health of more than 70% of malnourished children and made 50% of parents aware of the effects of malnutrition.



The World Bank estimates that India is one of the highest ranking countries in the world for the number of children suffering from malnutrition. The prevalence of underweight children in India is among the highest in the world, and is nearly double that of Sub-Saharan Africa with dire consequences for mobility, mortality, productivity and economic growth.

Recognizing the severity of the problem of malnutrition which is caused largely by poverty, poor sanitation, lack of awareness, inadequate healthcare delivery and monitoring mechanisms, the Hubli Sandbox implemented Dharwad Chronic Malnutrition-Free Project called 'Magu Nee Nagu', targeting 1,550 severely acute malnourished (SAM) children aged up to 6 years in 3 taluks of Dharwad district.

The project Supported by Tata Marcopolo Motors and Women and Child Development Department, and the Government of Karnataka observes malnourished children in the given area and records weight, height and nutrition levels of the children once in every 10 days. A dedicated technology-enabled team from the Sandbox carry out regular monitoring of the progress.

The idea behind the pilot project is to focus on a small geographic area to show the impact of multiple interventions and rigorous follow-up measures. Since the process involves taking data-driven decisions, the Sandbox's technology team has developed mobile apps to enable program managers to organize and analyze data about the children dynamically.

# Results

1,550 Severe Acute Malnourished (SAM) children in the project

**1,550**



**660**  
Male



**890**  
Female

**287** children graduated to Normal grade

**500** children graduated to Moderate Acute Malnourished (MAM) grade

- 787 children showed improvement in nutritional levels
- 70% children gained weight, showed behavioral changes
- Over 50% of the parents became aware on the ill-effects of malnutrition

**110** children migrated from the project area

## The workflow



### Data Collection

Identified SAM children of the area by collating the socio-economic data, examining water and sanitation conditions as well as dietary information of the families. Data was collected through house-to-house survey using technology tools.



### Nutritional Intervention

SAM children were provided RUTF (Ready to Use Therapeutic Food) such as Spirulina, and eeZeepaste, dry banana, ragi, peanut paste with daily home-based food. Created awareness among parents on the importance of balanced, home-based food and practices through counseling and meetings.



### Training

Organized training through meetings on food practices, breast feeding, balanced food theory, importance of nutrition and effect of malnutrition on children's growth. Over 700 meetings were held in the project area as part of the training routine.

### Medical Intervention



Organized health check-up camps to identify the status of the malnourished children. This included holding two separate health camps in different hospitals for testing blood, urine and other parameters to cross-verify status of malnutrition in children.

### Sanitation Intervention



Organized training and workshops on hygiene importance and sanitation to parents, pregnant women, and caretakers of children. Interventions include nail-cutting and hand-washing activities.

### Follow-ups



Kept a track of weight, height and MUAC (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference) of the children and the interventions once in every 10 days, using app ZOHO, ODK & KPI apps. The aim is to record the status of nutritional and sanitation interventions.

## An impact story

### From frequent hospitalization to being a playful kid



Dyammavva Pawar was visibly malnourished when the Magu Nee Nagu team visited her house in a slum in Haranshikari Veedi, Gangadharnagar, Hubballi. She was nearly a year old, yet her body would not move much, except her eyes. Her stomach appeared bulged for her age and she suffered continually from diarrhea for more than a year. Though hospitalized quite often, her health didn't improve.

Dyammavva was assessed to be under severe acute malnutrition (SAM) category by the Magu Nee Nagu team, with a weight of 6.7 kg, and based on the parameters such as height and MUAC. The family's socio-economic conditions, ignorance about hygiene, and poor nutrition led to the baby's malnutrition. Suresh Pawar, her laborer-father could not earn enough to provide his family nutritious food.

With the Magu Nee Nagu intervention, Dyammavva's weight improved to 10.74 kg. She was fed Spirulina, eeZeepaste and dry banana, which her body began to accept slowly after bouts of diarrhea. The diarrhea eventually stopped, and her health improved drastically.

Says her mother Lakshmi Pawar, "Thanks to the care of the team from the Deshpande Foundation, my daughter's health has improved significantly and she is as lively as other healthy children of her age. She is able to utter a few words now."

## An impact story

### Sangeetha was an anemic girl with a heart surgery



Sangeetha Kale is the second child of Nagamma and Balaraj Kale. Extremely anemic, she barely moved and was unable to crawl. After a few months, she was diagnosed with a congenital heart problem. The baby was to undergo a surgery to correct the condition.

Her family lived on meager income, and Sangeetha's parents struggled to muster INR 2 lakh to for her

heart surgery. However, their financial constraints and ignorance about balanced food and hygiene did not allow them to provide adequate care for the baby.

The Sandbox team intervened to educate the parents about malnutrition and the 'dos' and 'don'ts' in caring for the child. Sangeetha was given nutritional supplements and the Sandbox team regularly visited her to assess her health. The efforts yielded results and now, Sangeetha is a playful child and her weight has gone up from 6.30 kg to 8.80 kg.

Says an elated Nagamma, "I am happy to see my daughter as a healthy bubbly child in our locality. I had lost hope when she used to frequently fall ill and we had to admit her in the hospital for weeks. I am a relieved mother now."

# Global Exchange Program

## **An intensive and immersive experience**

The Global Exchange Program (GEP) offers a gateway to young international talent aspiring to be social entrepreneurs and aiming to support grassroots level enterprises in India. Through this program, people of different nationalities get an opportunity to share and exchange their ideas, and a first-hand experience in social entrepreneurship and beneficiaries in India.

This program is spanning multiple continents, enabling professionals from different countries to work in India.



# Global Exchange Program

The Global Exchange Program gives young professionals all over the world an opportunity to share and exchange ideas and practices towards the creation of local grassroots entrepreneurs. This unique program comes with several benefits including free accommodation, a stipend and much more.



# 10

10 Countries

USA | Latvia | Canada | UK  
Lithuania | Vietnam | Spain  
Mexico | France | Nepal

# 41

Global Interns

**Like to apply for GEP?**

Send your resume to  
[talent@dfmail.org](mailto:talent@dfmail.org)

## Impact

### Dara's journey to Hubballi



Dara K Hill, communication intern, Canada, found her calling to India

when she heard about Deshpande Foundation's Global Exchange Program.

Dara shares "Here, I learned about work and life in a context I never could have perceived sitting in my bedroom, studying my textbooks, back in Vancouver, Canada. It's been the perfect complement to the formal or traditional side of my degree." She spent 7 months in Hubli Sandbox.

## Program highlights

The program provides an intensive and immersive experience to individuals from abroad by providing an opportunity to interact with different stakeholders in the Sandbox. They can intern in any of these areas:

- Event management
- Communications
- Media
- Teaching



# Development Dialogue

**A confluence of global thought leaders**

The Development Dialogue is the Sandbox's flagship international conference on social entrepreneurship. It is a platform to showcase various programs and milestones of the Sandbox to the outside world. About 450 delegates from across the country and the world participated in the 2016 annual Development Dialogue conference which centered on the theme "Execute Locally, Innovate Globally".



Development  
Dialogue

2 0 1 6

*Execute locally, Innovate globally*



# Development Dialogue

The annual mega event, which is called the ‘Kumbh Mela of social entrepreneurs’, is known for its ‘solution-driven’ approach and ‘proof-of-concept-driven’ deliberations.



Development Dialogue (DD) hosted by Hubli Sandbox every year is a conclave of like-minded people who believe in the entrepreneurial ecosystem as a way of nurturing scalable solutions. The event has been an integral part of the Sandbox since its beginning, reflecting its growth and milestones over the years.

In the words of ‘Desh’ Deshpande, the event “helps talkers to do and doers to talk”. Over the last eight years, the Dialogue has witnessed participation from renowned personalities like Mr. Stewart Beck, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada; Padma Shri Deep Joshi, PRADAN; Madhu Pandit Dasa, Akshaya Patra; N.R. Narayana Murthy, Infosys; Ratan Tata, Tata Sons; Dilip Chenoy, NSDC, and Nobel laureates Kailash Satyarthi and Prof. Muhammad Yunus among others.

The theme of the Development Dialogue 2016 was “Execute Locally, Innovate Globally” and it had Nobel laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus as the key speaker.

We live in a connected world where ‘innovation’ is the buzzword. Innovators are compassionate and would like to help impoverished communities. However, very few innovations impact the world in meaningful ways. Four things need to come together to have an impact: innovations that are relevant and co-created with the people who need it; execution capacity – ability to absorb innovation and having the human resources to roll out the solution; right infrastructure; government’s involvement, right policies and support. The conference touched upon different dimensions of these aspects.

## Development Dialogue 2016

70 SPEAKERS

450 PARTICIPANTS

25 INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS

17 PANELS DISCUSSIONS

## Objectives

### Network

The summit gathers nearly 200 organizations and 500 delegates from 5 countries, offering networking opportunities for practitioners of social entrepreneurship.

### Get Inspired

Over 70 exemplary achievers, thought leaders and inspiring personalities speak at sessions and share personal success stories as well as deliberate on themes related to social entrepreneurship.

### Build Brands

The participants get to showcase and build their brand, as well as raise the profile of their organization on a large, single platform.

### Forge Partnerships

Being a conclave of entrepreneurs, thought leaders, innovators and investors with common interests, the Dialogue is an ideal place to forge results-driven partnerships.

### Experience Sandbox Impact

Field visits to the Sandbox region are opportunities to witness and study the impact and execution of Sandbox partnerships first-hand.

We need technology to enable innovation. Entrepreneurs use these innovations and deliver solutions. We need entrepreneurs in every village to bring solutions and change the way villagers live and work. The Sandbox is about building this capability to innovate in villages. The Development Dialogue effectively brings together all the elements necessary to not only solve problems but solve them on a bigger scale.

**Dr. 'Desh' Deshpande**

The scale of the Dialogue gives a good platform for corporates, NGOs, social enterprises and like-minded individuals to connect.

**Winnie Dholakia**  
HelpYourNGO

## Some of the key participants



**Prof. Muhammad Yunus**  
Grameen Bank



**N.R. Narayana Murthy**  
Infosys Technologies



**Dr. Anousheh Ansari**  
Prodea Systems



**Zenia Tata**  
XPRIZE Foundation Inc.



**Ramji Raghavan**  
Agastya International Foundation



**Shekhar Gupta**  
Mediascape



**Vishnu Swaminathan**  
Ashoka South Asia



**Prof. Rohit Dhankar**  
Azim Premji University

# Scaling by proving

## Replicating the Hubli Sandbox model elsewhere in India

The 'Sandbox' ecosystem is an enablement platform for allowing problem solvers to test, launch and scale their ideas. Every idea must prove its feasibility and the potential to impact with a proof of concept in a limited geographical area or a problem space. The same principle holds good for the Sandbox model as well. The successful adoption and scaling up of the Sandbox idea in Hubballi, delivering impacts in multiple ways, has inspired the replication of this proof of concept in other parts of India like Nizamabad in Telangana state and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh.



# Scaling by proving

Deshpande Foundation's social innovation Sandbox has evolved over the years with constant experimentation and innovation. Kakatiya Sandbox in Nizamabad, and Ek Soch Sandbox in Varanasi, both modelled after the Hubli Sandbox, are a proof that the model can be successfully adopted in different geographies.

When the founders of the Deshpande Foundation – 'Desh' Deshpande and Jaishree Deshpande – decided to set up the Sandbox model of social innovation in Hubballi years ago, they thought it should focus on bringing entrepreneurial ideas that address the pressing needs of a community or an industry to life. The core principal of the Sandbox is not to solve any problem by itself, but to allow entrepreneurs, students, innovators, non-profit organizations among others to leverage the ecosystem to find solutions to problems.

For any idea to receive long-term support from the Sandbox to launch and scale, it must first prove its feasibility, sustainability and the potential to impact lives with a proof-of-concept. Replicating a proven idea in as many different places as possible is another objective of the Sandbox as it would create the maximum impact. Working in multiple areas such as startup incubation, skill education, micro-entrepreneurship, fight against malnutrition and many more, the Hubli Sandbox has proved that hands-on efforts at the grassroots level can make an impact on the local community. The Sandbox itself has become a model for implementation by many individuals or organizations in other places.

Inspired by the success of the Hubli Sandbox, two entrepreneurs-turned-philanthropists – Raju Reddy, founder and former CEO of Sierra Atlantic, and Phanindra Sama, founder of redBus, cofounded Kakatiya Sandbox in Nizamabad, Telangana. Kakatiya Sandbox is working to empower the districts of Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Medak.

The aim is to inject new ideas, innovation and entrepreneurship in the Kakatiya Sandbox region, broadly covering a population of about 1 crore.

Similarly, the pioneering telecom entrepreneur of India, Dilip Modi founded Ek Soch Sandbox in Varanasi to create an entrepreneurial culture in the eastern Uttar Pradesh region. It is enabling socio-economic development in the seven districts of Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Mirzapur, Chandauli, Ghazipur and Varanasi.

The Hubli Sandbox provides expert guidance and operational support to the new sandboxes.



When I first went to Hubballi with Phanindra Sama, the energy and excitement I saw there was truly infectious. I was infected by that bug so I came back and thought about that

idea, and it seemed as the most compelling way to address the social challenges in India.

**Raju Reddy**

*Co-founder, Kakatiya Sandbox*



It was my meeting with 'Desh' Deshpande a couple of years back that gave me a realization that the people who work at the grassroots level can really impact people's

lives. That inspired me to contribute to this great purpose with Ek Soch Sandbox.

**Dilip Modi**

*Founder, Ek Soch Sandbox*

## Initiatives of Kakatiya Sandbox

### LEAD

**1,050**  
LEADers

**12**  
colleges

**850**  
projects

### Deshpande Educational Trust

**45**  
current students

**68**  
graduate students

### Navodyami

40 applications in first call for micro-entrepreneurs

#### Sectors

Food processing, jute products, stitching and embroidery, paper plates, wooden momentos, wood carving work.

### Partnerships

#### Agastya International Foundation

Impacted 1 lakh students through one Mobile science lab, one Science Center, 5 Operation Vasantha centers and Young Instructor Leader Program

#### Nirmaan, Vidya Helpline

- Focuses on providing education and livelihood opportunities for underprivileged people
- School Adoption Program benefitted 4,560 students from 12 schools across 4 states
- Nirmaan Scholarship Program helped 180+ meritorious students

#### Sankalpa Rural Development Society (SRDS)

- Water conservation by recharging underground water tables with naturally purified rainwater.
- 54 borewells recharged
- 265 acres of land irrigated
- 12 villages covered

#### Aasadeep Projects

- Manufactures high quality customized eco-friendly disposable consumer products
- Provides employment opportunities for the differently abled
- 20 current clients
- INR 4 lakh to INR 5 lakh transaction per month

#### Better Cotton Initiative (BCI)

- Helps farmers become more productive and fetch better prices for cotton products in the market.
- Sponsored by IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative
- 10,068 farmers
- 11,000 acres farming area

#### Save A Mother

- Working with mothers from 100 villages in Banaswada Mandal
- Health practices – regular meetings in the community, personal hygiene, pregnancy best practices, infant care, child immunization, nutrition and adolescence health education

## ● Initiatives of Ek Soch Sandbox

### LEAD

**400**  
Leaders

**120**  
Leadership projects

### Navodyami

**300**  
Micro-entrepreneurs  
trained

**20**  
Entrepreneurs supported

**4**  
Navodyamis  
funded

### Partnerships

#### Agastya Foundation

- Operates two mobile labs and one lab-on-a-bike in the Sandbox region
- Works with 252 schools, impacting 38,867 students and training 922 teachers in Sandbox region

#### Save A Mother

- Runs seven health programs in the Sandbox region
- Have impacted 100 villages, educating 1,725 pregnant women and training 300 health workers

#### Friends Union for Energizing Lives (FUEL)

- Offers career planning and guidance services and networking for students
- Have trained and networked nearly 5,760 students in the region

#### MILAAN

- Training and empowerment to students in rural areas
- Offers ongoing training for 300 adolescent girls in seven districts of Sandbox region

#### Swatantra Talim

- Works with children in rural communities to foster innovation and broad-based learning
- Aims to impact 1 million children across Uttar Pradesh through projects such as Tinker Labs and Innovations Clubs

# Transforming vision into reality

**Building world-class infrastructure to support Sandbox goals**

The soon-to-be launched facilities will enhance the operational capabilities of Sandbox Startups and Deshpande Educational Trust.





## State-of-the-art facility for Sandbox Startups

When the Sandbox Startups Center becomes operational in 2017, it will be able to nurture about a hundred startups under one roof at any given point in time.



Deshpande Foundation's Sandbox Startups will soon be housed in a state-of-the-art facility built in a sprawling 6.09 acres of land situated on Gokul Road near the Hubballi Airport. The new facility, expected to be operational in mid-2017, is being built with a futuristic architecture.

With a total built-up area of nearly one lakh square feet, the upcoming startup infrastructure will be one of the biggest incubation facilities in the country. The main facility, Sandbox Startups Center, is a 4-floor building that can accommodate about 100 startups at any given point in time. It will have all amenities that are needed for a robust startup ecosystem – well-equipped office space, conference halls, auditorium, bank and cafeteria among others.

An industrial shed, another complex alongside the main facility, will serve as a living laboratory for the incubated startups.

The startup infrastructure is being developed using green technologies. The buildings are naturally air-conditioned and energy efficient.

Built in  
**6.09 acres**

with a built-up area  
of nearly

**1 lakh sq ft**

Can accommodate

**100<sup>+</sup> startups**  
at a time

# Skill development center in a sprawling campus

The Skill Development Training Center coming up in a sprawling area is aimed at providing the best-in-class infrastructure for imparting high quality education.



**Total built-up area of  
DET's Development  
Training Center**

**2 lakh sq ft**

**Capacity to  
train 5,000  
students  
per year**

Deshpande Educational Trust's (DET) ambitious Skill Development Training Center, aimed at providing complete infrastructure for multiple fellowship programs, is coming up in a 6.12 acres campus on Gokul Road in Hubballi. It will adequately cater to the fast-growing student strength for multiple skill education fellowships offered by DET.

The campus is designed to house a massive academic block, hostels for young men and women, a guest house and other necessary amenities. It will also have student labs and modern training facilities, providing everything in one place.

The new campus can accommodate the simultaneous training of about 5,000 students in a year, making it one of the largest skill education hubs having the best infrastructure in India.

Constructed using green technologies, the facility, is also being designed to provide a seamless learning experience to the students of different fellowship programs. It will enable DET to significantly scale up its fellowship programs to accommodate the learning of more students from rural and semi-urban areas.

# Thank you Partners for your support!





## **Deshpande Foundation**

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