10th Edition of the HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposium 2024

Anchored by HCLFoundation & CSRBOX

HCLTech Grant Edition X Pan India Symposium 2024

Duration: 11th June to 19th July 2024

Contents

Executive Summary

The series of symposiums, celebrating ten years of CSR laws, spanned across Chennai, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Shillong, Hyderabad, Udaipur, Dehradun, and concluded in Delhi. Each event focused on distinct CSR themes, from sustainable development and environmental conservation to community engagement and capacity building. Chennai highlighted the integration of corporate and community efforts for a sustainable future, while Patna and Bhubaneswar addressed grassroots development and regional challenges. Shillong and Hyderabad explored local environmental and social issues, and Udaipur, with the participation of **Ms. Robin Abrams**, HCLTech Board Member and Chairperson HCLTech Grant Jury, showcased a commitment to impactful CSR initiatives. The Dehradun symposium emphasized biodiversity and climate action, and the Delhi symposium centered on "CSR - Creating Ecosystems of Impact," aiming to establish effective CSR frameworks.

A notable highlight of the symposium series was the announcement of updated grant criteria, which included a focus on the **scalability and replicability** of proposed projects. Additionally, the average expenditure requirement for the last three financial years was reduced from ₹1 Crore to ₹50 Lakhs for NGOs applying in the Health and Education categories, making it easier for more organizations to qualify for grants. Each symposium also featured motivational and special sessions to build NGO capacity, offering practical strategies and networking opportunities. The total expected participants across all events were between **1300 and 1700**, with an actual turnout of **2240**, reflecting a **30%** increase in engagement and underscoring the significant impact and interest generated by the series, particularly due to the updated grant criteria and the valuable capacity-building sessions.

Context of the HCLTech Grant Symposium

The HCLTech Grant Symposiums serve as a platform for various stakeholders to convene and discuss Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and their role in nation-building. Organized by HCLTech Grant in collaboration with CSRBOX, these symposiums aim to foster interactions between NGOs, experts, government officials, corporate representatives, and policymakers across India.

HCL Foundation, through the HCLTech Grant, actively supports and empowers the NGO ecosystem in India. With the foundation's vision to strengthen the sector, it has successfully reached even the most remote locations in the country. The primary goal is to motivate and encourage small to mid-size high-calibre initiatives to participate in the HCLTech Grant process, offering rewarding opportunities for NGOs.

By bringing together stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and sectors, the symposiums aim to facilitate regional and sectoral understanding of CSR and its potential for nation-building. This platform allows participants to share their experiences, best practices, and insights, enabling collaboration and knowledge exchange. Through these interactions, the symposiums aim to foster innovation, sustainable development, and positive social impact across India.

As the HCLTech Grant program reaches its 10th consecutive edition, it demonstrates the long-standing commitment of the HCL Foundation and its partners to support and empower NGOs in their efforts to create positive change in society. The symposiums are an effort by HCLTech Grant and CSRBOX to unite NGOs, experts, government officials, corporates, and policymakers across India on one platform. This initiative aims to foster interactions, develop regional and sectoral understandings of CSR, and deliberate on its contributions toward nation-building.

This 10th consecutive edition of the HCLTech Grant represents HCLTech's CSR commitment, executed through the HCL Foundation, with a vision to empower and strengthen the NGO ecosystem. Currently, the focus is on identifying groundbreaking models of rural development. The HCLTech Grant is awarded in three thematic categories: Environment, Health, and Education.

About HCLTech Grant

The HCLTech Grant recognizes organizations for transforming innovative ideas into impactful projects in rural India. Winners in Environment, Health, and Education receive ₹5 Crore (~US$0.65 million) each for four-year projects, while runners-up receive ₹25 lakhs (~US$0.03 million) each for one-year projects. The total funding for Edition X is ₹16.5 Crores (~US$2.2 million) for nine NGOs.

To support small to mid-sized organizations, HCL Foundation has modified the eligibility criteria to focus on project scalability and replicability, reducing the average expenditure requirement from ₹1 Crore to ₹50 Lakhs for Health and Education categories. Additionally, the

top 30 shortlisted NGOs are featured in The Fifth Estate – The HCLTech Grant Compendium, highlighting successful rural development models and best practices.

HCLTech Grant Symposium: Pan India Impact Report | 24-25

Introduction

The 10th edition of the HCLTech Grant Pan-India Symposiums covered 8 locations across India – Chennai, Patna, Bhubaneshwar, Shillong, Hyderabad, Udaipur, Dehradun & Delhi. These symposiums were conducted by HCL Foundation and CSRBOX, with the aim of bringing together NGOs, experts, government officials, corporates, and policymakers to discuss and develop a better understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and its contribution to nation-building. The symposiums also provided a platform for NGOs to learn about the HCLTech India Grant and encourage their participation in addition to increasing their awareness about relevant topics specific to the social impact sector.

Symposiums Journey - 10th Edition

The symposiums, held from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm IST, featured masterclasses, motivational segments, and panel discussions led by sector experts. These events aimed not only to disseminate information about the grant but also to enhance the capacity of nonprofits and development professionals in attendance.

Flow of the Symposiums

Time: 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Registration of Participating NGOs	Panel Discussion	Motivational & Special Session
Welcome note by Academic Partner	Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscapes and Opportunities for Non-Profits	HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing
Context Setting by HCL Foundation	Masterclass: CSR Laws and its New Amendments	
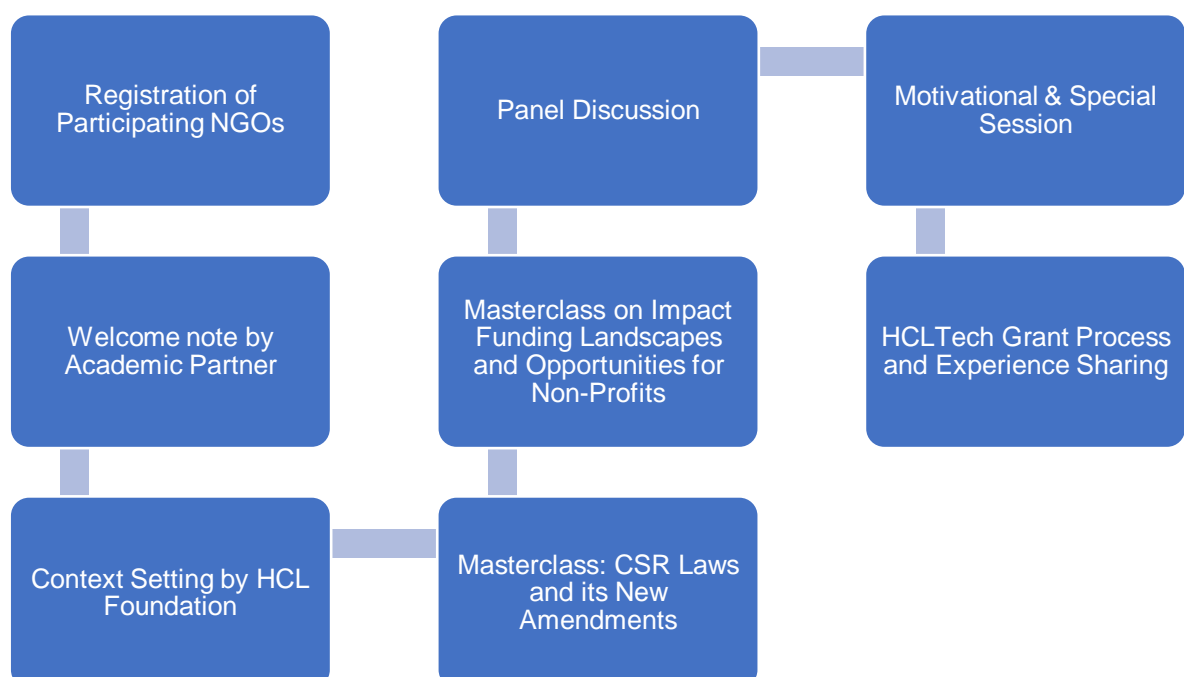
Academic Partners & Symposium Location

Symposium Date	Symposium Location	Symposium Venue/Institute
11th June 2024	Chennai – Tamil Nadu	Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
15th June 2024	Patna – Bihar	Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences (IGIMS)
18th June 2024	Bhubaneshwar -Odisha	Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT)
21st June 2024	Shillong - Meghalaya	North Eastern Hill University (NEHU)
2nd July 2024	Hyderabad – Andhra Pradesh	G Narayanamma Institute of Technology and Science (For Women)
8th July 2024	Udaipur – Rajasthan	Maharana Pratap College of Agriculture
16th July 2024	Dehradun - Uttarakhand	Doon Business School
19th July 2024	Delhi – New Delhi	Chinmaya Mission Auditorium

Summary of Registrations

Location	Total Registrations Received	Symposium Day		
		No. of Registered Participants (At Venue)	On Spot Registration	No. of Participants (At venue)
Chennai – Tamil Nadu	759	278	71	349
Patna - Bihar	765	310	73	383
Bhubaneshwar - Odisha	555	206	61	267
Shillong - Meghalaya	227	63	23	86
Hyderabad - Telangana	723	271	35	306
Udaipur - Rajasthan	447	156	38	194
Dehradun - Uttarakhand	401	116	52	168

Delhi – New Delhi	954	310	177	487
Location	Guaranteed Participants	Total Attendees	% Increase in Participants	
Chennai – Tamil Nadu	200-300	349	16.33%	
Patna - Bihar	200-250	383	53.2%	
Bhubaneshwar - Odisha	200-250	267	6.8%	
Shillong - Meghalaya	60-70	86	22.86%	
Hyderabad - Telangana	150-200	306	53%	
Udaipur - Rajasthan	100-150	194	29.33%	
Dehradun - Uttarakhand	95-110	168	52.73%	
Delhi – New Delhi	300-400	487	21.75%	
Total	**1730**	**2240**	**29.48%**	

Kindly Note: The higher end of the guaranteed participants range is considered for percentage.

The collaborative efforts of the CSRBOX and HCLF Team resulted in attracting over 30% of participation across all eight locations, highlighting the widespread impact and effectiveness of these combined efforts, with the committed number of NGOs being 1730 and actual participation exceeding expectations.

Modes of Outreach

Outreach: Emailer, WhatsApp Messages, Social Media Posts, SMS, Calls

Confirmation: Emailer, WhatsApp Messages, Calls

Reminder: Mails: 1-Day prior to the event & Calls: 3 hours prior to the commencement of the
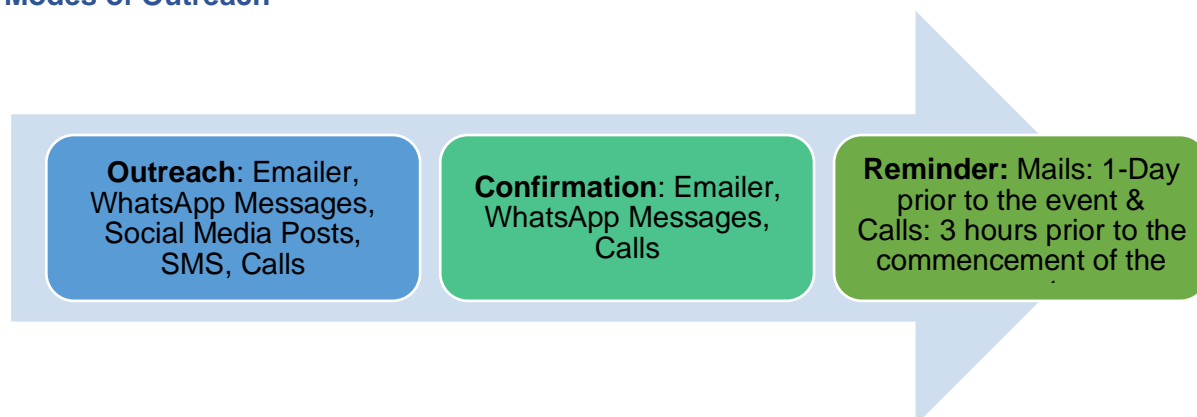
The HCLTech Grant Symposium implemented a comprehensive outreach strategy to ensure broad engagement with NGOs of all sizes. About a month before the symposium, organizers used multiple communication channels—emails, WhatsApp, calls, SMS, and social media—to generate interest and foster participation.

Emails provided detailed event information, while WhatsApp, calls, and SMS allowed for personalized, direct invitations and query resolution. Social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram, were used to create excitement, share updates, and maintain ongoing engagement.

This multi-channel approach aimed to maximize information dissemination, sustain interest, and encourage active dialogue with NGOs, ultimately boosting their participation in the symposium.

HCLTech Grant Symposium - Chennai

Location: Chennai (Tamil Nadu)

Date: 11th June 2024

Venue: Indian Institute of Technology - IIT Madras

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	8:30am -9:30am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Greetings and Introduction**	15 mins	9:30am-9:45am	HCLFoundation Team
3	**Welcome Address By Academic Partner**	10 mins	9:45am-9:55am	**Mr. Kaviraj Nair** CEO of the Office of Institutional Advancement at IIT Madras
4	**Key Note Address & Overview**	15 mins	9:55am-10:10am	**Ms. Ambika Natarajan** Senior Vice President, HCLTech
5	**HCLFoundation Overview**	20 mins	10:10am-10:30am	**Dr. Nidhi Pundhir** Senior Vice President, Global CSR, HCLTech & Director,HCL Foundation
6	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	25 mins	10:30am - 10:55am	**Mr. Nikhil Pant** Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI
7	**Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-profits**	25 mins	10:55am - 11:20am	**Mr. Bhomik Shah** Founder and CEO, CSRBOX
8	**Panel Discussion** **Topic:** "A Decade of CSR Laws in India: Reflecting on Milestones and Future Directions"	60 mins	11:20am - 12:20pm	**Dr. Nidhi Pundhir** Senior Vice President, Global CSR, HCLTech & Director,HCL Foundation **Mr. Arul Jothi Arasan** Additional Director Rural Development and Panchayat Raj **Ms. Vasudha Narasimhan** Vice President, CSR & Corporate Relations, IIT Madras **Ms. Radha Srinivasan** CSR Consultant **Mr. Arvind Subramaniam** Consultant, Ex Associate VP StartupTN **Moderator: Mr. Nikhil Pant**
9	**Motivational Speaker**	30 mins	12:20pm - 12:50pm	**Mr. Nandakumar (IRS) Commissioner of Income Tax Department of Revenue,** Ministry of Finance, Government of India
10	**HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing**	70 mins	12:50pm - 2:00pm	**Grant Process:** **Ms. Shally Kaushal,** Deputy Manager HCLFoundation **Experience Sharing:** **Ms. Ambika Natarajan** Senior Vice President, HCLTech Sub Jury Member, HCLTech Grant

					Mr. Avani Kumar Varma HCLTech Grant Subject Matter Expert **Mr. Rohit Bahadur** Partner Grant Thornton India **Dr. K.S. Ramesh** Deputy Director, Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health (BALM) **Dr. Shiny Mariam Rehel** Senior Programme Coordinator, Biodiversity Conservation, Keystone Foundation **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
11	Networking Lunch	60 mins	2:00 pm - 3:00pm	**Cafeteria**	

Summary of the Registration

759 Registration Received (Total)

278 Registered Participants (At Venue)

71 On Spot Registration

349 Total Participants (At venue)
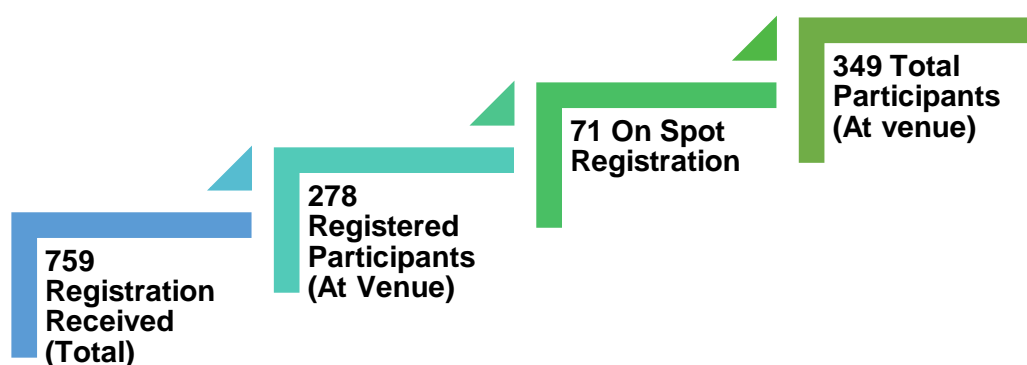
The 10th edition of the HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposiums began in Chennai (Tamil Nadu) on June 11th, 2024. The day started with a welcome note by **Mr. Kaviraj Nair**, CEO of the Office of Institutional Advancement at IIT Madras, who delivered the opening remarks, setting the stage for the symposium with a warm welcome and overview. **Ms. Ambika Natarajan**, Senior Vice President of HCLTech, highlighted HCL's journey and its commitment to philanthropy and nation-building. She emphasized the HCL Foundation's role in driving sustainable social and economic development through the Power of One program, which evolved from employee volunteering into a broader initiative creating sustainable development source codes.

Ambika provided insights into AI's impact, underscoring that AI is a tool to augment human capabilities rather than a threat to jobs. She discussed three layers of AI: generative AI (memory recall), applied AI, and efficiency-enhancing AI. **Dr. Nidhi Pundhir** expressed gratitude to the IIT Madras team and provided an overview of the HCL Foundation's environmental and social initiatives.

She highlighted efforts in water conservation, forest preservation, and mobility support for children, alongside significant contributions to healthcare and education, such as supporting a girl from the slums who became eligible for the Rashtrapati Puraskar.

Dr. Nidhi elaborated on the foundation's comprehensive scope, detailing programs like Samoday, Uday, Power of One, My E-Haat, and Sports for Change. She emphasized the HCL Foundation's holistic approach to creating sustainable and impactful change, improving lives, and fostering positive transformations in society. She also mentioned HCL's global expansion efforts, which have brought their successful initiatives to different countries.

Masterclass On CSR Laws and its New Amendments
(By *Mr. Nikhil Pant*, Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI)

Brief Summary and Relevance of the Masterclass
The masterclass, led by Nikhil Pant, provided an in-depth overview of CSR laws, focusing on Section 135 of the Companies Act, and the critical aspects of compliance and reporting for NGOs. The session also highlighted the evolving landscape of CSR, including green growth and sustainable practices, and emphasized the strategic role of the board of directors and CSR committees in implementing successful CSR policies.

Key Takeaways
- Understanding the mandatory CSR requirements for eligible companies as per Section 135.
- Importance of necessary paperwork for NGOs to ensure compliance and proper reporting.
- Utilizing CSR to drive environmental benefits through green growth, innovation, and collaborations.
- Recognizing the role of the board of directors and CSR committees in effective policy implementation.
- Familiarity with Section 198, relevant income tax forms for NGOs, and the growing relevance of CSR 3.0.
- Aligning program budgets with CSR laws for effective execution.
- Understanding the transformative impact of CSR, strategic budgeting, and stakeholder roles.

Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-profits
(By *Mr. Bhomik Shah*, Founder and CEO, CSRBOX)

Brief Summary and Relevance of the Masterclass
Mr. Bhomik Shah's session at the symposium provided participants with an in-depth understanding of the funding landscape in India, specifically tailored for NGOs. The session detailed the various sources of funding available, estimated between 1,20,000 crore INR to 1,60,000 crore INR annually, including contributions from CSR, ultra-high net worth individuals (UHNI), high net worth individuals (HNI), retail, institutional donors, and FCRA contributions.

This comprehensive overview aimed to empower NGOs to leverage these funding mechanisms effectively, enhancing their capacity to secure additional resources and scale their impact.

Key Takeaways

- **Funding Landscape:** Understanding the broad spectrum of funding sources available in India, including CSR, UHNI, HNI, retail, institutional donors, and FCRA contributions.
- **Diverse Funding Mechanisms:** Insights into UHNI and HNI contributions, crowdfunding platforms, impact finance institutions like social stock exchanges, and CSR compliance.
- **Building Organizational Capacity:** Strategies for using small-scale CSR projects to demonstrate competence and secure further funding opportunities.
- **Trends in CSR Funding:** Awareness of significant growth projections in CSR funding, with a focus on environmental sustainability and net-zero initiatives.
- **Government Partnerships:** The importance of strategic collaborations with government bodies for project scalability and securing additional funding.
- **Technical Requirements:** Emphasis on rigorous technical scrutiny, documentation standards, and addressing capacity gaps in reporting, communication, and technical expertise.
- **Use of Technology:** Advocacy for tools like generative AI to bridge capacity gaps and enhance organizational effectiveness.

Panel Discussion on "A Decade of CSR Law in India: Reflecting on Milestones and Future Directions".

Panellists

- **Dr. Nidhi Pundhir**, Senior Vice President, Global CSR, HCLTech & Director, HCL Foundation
- **Mr. Arul Jothi Arasan**, Additional Director, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj
- **Ms. Vasudha Narasimhan**, Vice President, CSR & Corporate Relations, IIT Madras
- **Ms. Radha Srinivasan**, CSR Consultant
- **Mr. Arvind Subramaniam**, Consultant, Ex Associate VP, StartupTN
- **Moderator: Mr. Nikhil Pant**, Senior CSR Advisor

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion

1. **Evolution of CSR Laws**

✓ CSR laws in India have evolved significantly, enhancing corporate accountability and driving greater community impact.
✓ Amendments have streamlined CSR activities, emphasizing transparency and robust reporting.

2. **Corporate and NGO Collaboration**

- ✓ Effective CSR requires strong partnerships between corporates and NGOs.
- ✓ Such collaborations lead to innovative solutions and enhanced social impact.

3. **Role of Technology**

- ✓ Leveraging technology can amplify CSR initiatives' impact.
- ✓ Digital tools and platforms improve project implementation and monitoring.

4. **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

- ✓ Aligning CSR activities with SDGs ensures a holistic development approach.
- ✓ Corporates and NGOs should focus on long-term sustainability rather than short-term gains.

5. **Future Directions**

- ✓ The future of CSR lies in increased corporate accountability, innovative funding mechanisms, and greater community involvement.
- ✓ Legal frameworks will continue to evolve, promoting ethical and impactful CSR practices.

The panel discussion underscored the evolving landscape of CSR, emphasizing how advancements in CSR laws, technology, and collaborative efforts between corporates and NGOs are shaping the future of corporate social responsibility. By aligning CSR activities with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and focusing on long-term sustainability, both corporates and NGOs can drive meaningful social impact. The future will see a continued emphasis on increased accountability, innovative funding mechanisms, and adaptive legal frameworks that promote ethical and impactful CSR practices. This approach ensures that CSR initiatives remain relevant and effective in addressing pressing societal challenges.

Motivational Speaker: Mr. V. Nandakumar IRS

During his session, Mr. V. Nandakumar IRS passionately conveyed the message of turning deficits into opportunities for social action and improvement. Drawing from his extensive engagement with 200-300 NGOs annually, he emphasized the importance of effective governance and impactful strategies. His personal journey, overcoming dyslexia and educational challenges, inspired his deep involvement in social causes. Highlighting the critical role of discipline in fostering character among slum children, he underscored the transformative power of activities like football. Mr. Nandakumar also shared success stories of empowering children through sports, stressing the need for comprehensive support to enable their participation in global events. His session left a lasting impression, advocating for sustainable actions that resonate positively within communities and beyond.

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing
Grant Process: Ms. Shally Kaushal, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing:
- **Ms. Ambika Natarajan**, Senior Vice President, HCLTech, Sub Jury Member, HCLTech Grant Mr. Avani Kumar Varma, HCLTech Grant Subject Matter Expert
- **Mr. Rohit Bahadur**, Partner, Grant Thornton India,
- **Mr. K S Ramesh**, Deputy Director, Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health (BALM)
- **Dr. Shiny Mariam Rehel**, Senior Programme Coordinator, Biodiversity Conservation, Keystone Foundation
- **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation

Ms. Shally Kaushal introduced the grant program, emphasizing the importance of regulatory compliance and strong governance. **Ms. Ambika Natarajan**, as a Sub Jury Member, highlighted key evaluation criteria such as project relevance, innovation, and alignment with government initiatives. **Mr. Avani Kumar Varma** provided specialized advice on financial modelling and project inclusiveness. Mr. Rohit Bahadur shared best practices in financial reporting and governance. **Mr. K S Ramesh** offered an NGO perspective, discussing successful strategies and the importance of community engagement. **Dr. Shiny Mariam Rehel** highlighted the integration of biodiversity conservation into CSR initiatives, showcasing impactful case studies. As the moderator, **Mr. Robin Thomas** facilitated a detailed and interactive discussion, ensuring a thorough exploration of grant program aspects. This session equipped NGOs with practical guidance and strategic insights necessary for successful grant applications, emphasizing the alignment with regulatory frameworks and effective project design.

Impact of the Symposium

The symposium, originally set for **200-250** attendees, successfully accommodated **349** registrations, leading to the use of 2 additional conference room for live streaming. The high level of engagement was evident through dynamic Q&A sessions and robust networking opportunities. Participants praised the quality and relevance of the sessions, which deepened their understanding of CSR laws and best practices. The event effectively strengthened relationships between corporates, NGOs, and government bodies, paving the way for future collaborations. By promoting strategic and impactful CSR initiatives and highlighting the importance of community involvement and sustainable practices, the symposium provided a valuable platform for sharing knowledge and inspiring future CSR efforts. Overall, the event marked a significant step forward in advancing CSR in India, leaving participants motivated and equipped to drive meaningful change in their respective fields. The collaborative efforts of the CSRBOX and HCLF Team resulted in a **16.33%** increase in participation at the Chennai symposium, highlighting the significant impact and reach of these combined endeavours.

HCLTech Grant Symposium - Patna

Location: Patna (UP)

Date: 15th June 2024

Venue: Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences - **IGIMS Patna**

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	8:30 am - 9:30 am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Welcome Address by Academic Partner**	10 mins	9:30 am - 9:40 am	**Dr. Ravi Kant Singh** Officer in Charge - Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Center, Muzaffarpur
3	**Key Note Address & HCL Foundation Overview**	30 mins	9:40 am - 10:00 am	**Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli,** Technical Lead, Health, HCLFoundation
4	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	40 mins	10:00 am - 10:40 am	**Mr. Nikhil Pant** Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI
8	**Panel Discussion Topic:** " Non - Communicable Diseases and Challenges in Rural India: CSR Strategies for Change"	60 mins	10:40 am - 11:40 am	**Prof. (Dr.) Bindey Kumar** MBBS (Hons.), MS M. Ch (PGI, Chd), FRCS (Edin), DNB, PGDHM, Director – IGIMS Patna. **Dr. Umesh Kumar Bhadani (MBBS, MD)** Professor & Head- Department of Anesthesiology, Dean All India Institute of Medical Sciences. **Dr. Ravi Kant Singh** Officer in Charge - Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Center, Muzaffarpur Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli, Technical Lead, Health, HCLFoundation **Moderator:** Mr. Nikhil Pant
9	**Motivational Speaker** (Sharing my dream and experiments in social service.)	30 mins	11:40 pm - 12:10 pm	**Ms. Pallavi (IRS)** Additional commissioner of income tax (Administration), Bihar and Jharkhand.
10	**HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing**	80 mins	12:10 pm - 1:30 pm	**Grant Process:** **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation **Experience Sharing:** **Dr. Manish Kumar,** Trustee and Chief Functionary, Innovators in Health (India) **M V Narayana,** Subject Matter Expert, HCLTech Grant **Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli,** Technical Lead, Health, HCLFoundation **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
11	**Networking Lunch**	60 mins	1:30 pm - 2:30pm	

Summary of the Registration

765 Registration Received (Total)

310 Registered Participants (At Venue)

73 On Spot Registration

383 Total Participants (At Venue)

The Patna Symposium commenced with **Dr. Smita Ghosh's** welcoming address, highlighting HCL's decade-long commitment to philanthropy and its substantial impact across India. Celebrating 10 years of transformative work, HCL has positively affected over 2.2 million lives in 27,000 villages and 131 districts. Dr. Ghosh outlined the symposium's journey, which began in Chennai and will continue across various cities, culminating in Delhi.

Dr. Ravi Kant Singh, Officer in Charge of the Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital, provided an inspiring keynote address. He praised the increased participation since 2021 and highlighted Manish's grant for his tuberculosis project as a symbol of regional potential. Dr. Singh urged NGOs to enhance their work to make a significant impact, drawing from his own experiences of growing a hospital from four to 800 doctors. He expressed gratitude to IGIMS and CSRBOX for supporting the symposium.

Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli, Technical Lead at HCLFoundation, shared key achievements and ongoing efforts, including empowering communities, environmental initiatives, and impactful programs across urban and rural areas. Her overview of HCL's extensive projects, from greening initiatives to the MyCleanCity program and various special initiatives, underscored the foundation's significant contributions to both local and national development. She concluded with gratitude, emphasizing the foundation's dedication to advancing societal and environmental goals.

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Summary of the **Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**
(By *Mr. Nikhil Pant*, Senior CSR Advisor: *Key Take Aways same as Chennai Symposium)*

Panel Discussion on "Non-Communicable Diseases and Challenges in Rural India: CSR Strategies for Change"

Panellists

- **Prof. (Dr) Bindey Kumar,** MBBS (Hons.), MS M. Ch (PGI, Chd), FRCS (Edin), DNB, PGDHM. Director, IGIMS Patna
- **Dr. Umesh Kumar Bhadani,** (MBBS, MD) Professor & Head, Department of Anesthesiology. Dean, All India Institute of Medical Sciences
- **Dr. Ravi Kant Singh,** Officer in Charge, Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Center, Muzaffarpur
- **Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli,** Technical Lead, Health, HCLFoundation
- Moderator: **Mr. Nikhil Pant**

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion

- **Increased Awareness:** The panel discussion significantly raised participants' awareness about the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in rural India. Attendees gained a deeper understanding of how lifestyle factors, the impact of COVID-19, and limited healthcare infrastructure contribute to the growing burden of NCDs.
- **Enhanced Knowledge:** Participants acquired valuable knowledge on the challenges faced by rural populations regarding health literacy, access to healthcare, and the role of NGOs and CSR initiatives in addressing these issues. The discussion highlighted effective CSR strategies and the importance of community-based interventions, enriching attendees' understanding of practical approaches to tackling NCDs.

- **Empowerment Through Practical Insights:** The session provided practical insights into how CSR initiatives can effectively combat NCDs. Participants learned about successful examples of partnerships between corporates and NGOs, health education campaigns, and support for preventive measures. This knowledge empowered attendees to develop and implement impactful strategies in their own organizations and communities.
- **Encouragement for Data-Driven Approaches:** The emphasis on improving data collection and research inspired participants to advocate for better data-driven approaches in their own work. Attendees recognized the importance of targeted interventions based on comprehensive data and were encouraged to focus on measurable outcomes and impact assessments.
- **Motivation for Collaborative Efforts:** The discussion highlighted the critical role of collaboration between NGOs, corporates, and government entities. Participants were motivated to engage in collaborative efforts, breaking down operational silos and fostering partnerships to achieve sustainable health outcomes in rural areas.

The panel discussion underscored the urgent need for comprehensive, community-driven approaches to tackle the growing burden of NCDs in rural India. It emphasized the pivotal role of both NGOs and corporate entities through CSR initiatives in raising awareness, providing necessary healthcare services, and supporting preventive measures. The insights and strategies shared by the panelists highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts to improve health outcomes and foster sustainable development in rural communities.

Motivational Session: Sharing my dream and experiments in social service by Mrs. Pallavi (IRS)

Mrs. Pallavi's session left a profound impact on participants by highlighting the significant commitment of Nikhil and his husband to social responsibility, demonstrated through their move to Bihar and their Bihari Durga initiative, which symbolizes strength and empowerment. The discussion on healthcare challenges in Bihar, including severe shortages of facilities and professionals, shed light on the critical gaps in healthcare accessibility. The introduction of the Jeevan Rakshak panel, offering free consultations to underprivileged patients, provided an inspiring example of how innovative initiatives can address these gaps effectively. Participants were motivated to adopt similar approaches in their own work, recognizing the immense potential for NGOs to make a significant difference despite existing challenges. Overall, the session emphasized the importance of initiative and collaboration in addressing critical healthcare needs, leaving attendees with a renewed sense of purpose and actionable ideas for enhancing healthcare delivery and community well-being.

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing

Grant Process
- **Mr. Robin Thomas,** Group Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing
- **Dr. Manish Kumar,** Trustee and Chief Functionary, Innovators in Health (India)
- **Mr. M V Narayana,** Subject Matter Expert, HCLTech Grant
- **Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli** Technical Lead, Health, HCLFoundation
- Moderator: **Mr. Robin Thomas** Group Manager, HCLFoundation

The HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing session, led by **Mr. Robin Thomas** and moderated by him, provided a thorough overview of the grant program, including its objectives, application process, and evaluation criteria. Key insights were shared by **Dr. Manish Kumar**, **Mr. M.V. Narayana**, and **Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli**, who highlighted the importance of aligning NGO projects with government initiatives, adhering to regulatory norms, and maintaining strong governance and financial practices. The discussion emphasized the need for transparent documentation and effective internal processes, equipping participants with

crucial knowledge for developing impactful grant proposals and enhancing their chances of success.

Impact of the Symposium

The Patna Symposium, which was initially set with a guaranteed participation of 250, saw an impressive turnout of **383** attendees, reflecting its significant impact and appeal. The presence of notable participant Sudha Varghese, the Padma Shri awardee and **Bihar's "Bicycle Didi**," added an extra layer of inspiration and grace to the event. The symposium effectively addressed critical issues such as CSR strategies, healthcare challenges, and community engagement, offering valuable insights and practical guidance. The high level of engagement and the diverse range of discussions underscored the event's success in fostering meaningful dialogue, encouraging collaborative efforts, and inspiring participants to pursue impactful initiatives. The collaborative efforts of the CSRBOX and HCLF Team drove a significant **53.2%** increase in participation at the Patna symposium, reflecting the effectiveness and strong engagement of their combined initiatives.

HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposium 2024 - Bhubaneshwar

Date: **18th June 2024**
Location: **Bhubaneshwar (Orissa)**
Venue: **KIIT Bhubaneshwar**

HCLTech Grant Symposium - Bhubaneshwar

Location: Bhubaneshwar (Orissa)

Date: 18th June 2024

Venue: Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology - **KIIT Bhubaneshwar**

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	8:30 am - 9:30 am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Welcome Address by Academic Partner**	10 mins	9:30 am - 9:40 am	**Prof. Deepak Kumar Behera** Vice Chancellor, KISS-DU
3	**Key Note Address & HCL Foundation Overview**	20 mins	9:40 am - 10:00 am	**Mr. Gaurav Majumdar** Technical Lead - Skill and livelihood, HCLFoundation
5	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	25 mins	10:00 am - 10:25 am	**Dr. Surbhi Yadav** CSR Advisor & Consultant HCL Tech, Partner (Samvardhan)
6	**Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-profits**	25 mins	10:25 am - 10:50 am	**Mr. Bhomik Shah** Founder and CEO, CSRBOX
7	**Panel Discussion Topic:** "**The Changing Definition of Poverty Line in Rural India - Strategies & Challenges**"	60 mins	10:50 am - 11:50 am	**Dr. Prabodh Kumar Mohanty** Sr. Director (HR & SKILL), KIIT & KISS **Dr. Bijayashree (PHD)** Founder Director - Agzistence **Mr. Sanjit Kumar Behera** Program Director National Institute of Social Work and Social Sciences (NISWASS) **Mr. Gaurav Majumdar** Technical Lead - Skill and livelihood, HCLFoundation Moderator: **Dr. Surbhi Yadav**
8	**Masterclass 2 – Compliance**	30 mins	11:50 am - 12:20 pm	**Mr. Nitesh Sinha** Finance, Senior Manager, HCLFoundation **Mr.Vineet Kumar Mishra** Monitoring & Evaluation Manager,HCLFoundation
9	**HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing**	70 mins	12:20 pm - 1:30 pm	**Grant Process:** **Mr. Robin Thomas,** Group Manager, HCLFoundation **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation **Experience Sharing:** **Ms. Swapnasri Sarangi** General Manager, Head - Gender, Diversity and Integration, FES **Mr. Anuj Srivastava** Manager, HCLFoundation **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
10	**Networking Lunch**	60 mins	1:30 pm - 2:30pm	

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Summary of the Registration

555 Registration Received (Total)

206 Registered Participants(At Venue)

61 On Spot Registration

267 Total Participants (At Venue)

The Bhubaneswar Symposium, hosted by the HCLFoundation in collaboration with CSRBOX, aimed to enhance understanding of CSR and its impact on nation-building. **Mr. Anuj Srivastava**, Manager of HCLFoundation, introduced the HCLTech Grant, which supports NGOs in Environment, Health, and Education, awarding 5 crores for a four-year project to winners and 25 lakhs for a one-year project to finalists. This was accompanied by walking the participants through the revised eligibility criteria.

Prof. Deepak Kumar Behera, Vice Chancellor of KISS-DU, praised the HCLFoundation's contributions to social development. Keynote speaker, **Mr. Gaurav Majumdar**, emphasized and highlighted the importance of collaboration, innovation, and compliance in CSR, inspiring participants to contribute positively to social development.

Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments
(By *Dr. Surabhi Yadav*, CSR Advisor & Consultant, HCL Tech)

Brief Summary and Relevance

Dr. Surabhi Yadav's masterclass on CSR Laws and Amendments provided a thorough overview of India's CSR legal framework and its practical implications for NGOs. She detailed the evolution of CSR regulations, highlighting the significant changes introduced in January 2021, which include stricter compliance, reporting requirements, and a shift towards sustainability and impact assessment. Dr. Yadav emphasized the need for NGOs to align their projects with corporate CSR policies, utilize available resources like csr.gov.in, and adhere to new regulatory frameworks. Her session offered essential insights into the evolving CSR landscape, guiding NGOs on how to strategically navigate these regulations and enhance their capacity to secure funding and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development and social impact.

Key Takeaways

- **Understanding CSR Laws:** The importance of grasping CSR laws and their practical applications for effective NGO management and funding.
- **Amendments and Compliance:** Awareness of recent amendments and their impact on CSR practices, including stricter compliance, reporting requirements, and impact assessments.
- **Strategic Preparation:** Emphasis on aligning NGO projects with corporate CSR policies and leveraging available resources for comprehensive data and compliance.

- **Future Trends:** The shift towards sustainability, ESG elements, and increased enforcement in CSR, highlighting the need for meticulous planning and transparent reporting.

Summary of the Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-Profits
(By *Mr. Bhomik Shah,* CEO and Founder CSRBOX*: (Key Take Aways same as Chennai Symposium)*

Panel Discussion on "The Changing Definition of Poverty Line in Rural India – Strategies & Challenges"

Panellists
- **Mr. Sanjit Kumar Behera**, Programme Director, National Institute of Social Work and Social Sciences (NISWASS)
- **Mr. Gaurav Majumdar**, Technical Lead, Skill and Livelihood, HCLFoundation
- **Dr. Bijayashree**, Founder Director, Agzistence
- **Dr. Prabodh Kumar Mohanty,** Sr. Director (HR & SKILL), KIIT & KISS
- **Moderator: Dr. Surabhi Yadav**, CSR Advisor & Consultant HCLTech, Partner (Samvardhan**)**

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion

The panel discussion began with a historical perspective, noting that initial definitions of poverty were based on per capita calorie consumption. Modern definitions have evolved to include a multi-dimensional approach, considering factors such as education, livelihood, standard of living, sanitation, and access to clean drinking water. The discussion also highlighted the importance of CSR thematic areas, such as education, health, livelihood, and clean drinking water, as critical parameters in defining and addressing poverty.

- **Government Projects and Sustainable Changes:** The panel discussed various government projects, emphasizing the need for sustainable changes. Examples included the implementation of solar-powered systems and river/groundwater lifting technologies. However, a significant challenge is the discrepancy between field realities and statistical data, which underscores the need for continuous evaluation and adaptation of development projects.

- **Challenges and Opportunities in Odisha:** Despite being rich in resources and culture, Odisha faces significant poverty, particularly among its tribal population. The panellists stressed the importance of linking local artisans to markets to improve livelihoods and highlighted the role of public-private partnerships in creating supportive ecosystems for rural economies.

- **Agriculture's Role and Capacity Building:** Agriculture remains a significant contributor to GDP in mineral-rich Odisha. Capacity building was emphasized as essential for students, government officials, and NGOs to effectively communicate and implement projects. The panellists noted that poverty exists not only in rural areas but throughout the agricultural value chain.

- **Behavioural Change and Innovation:** The need for changing youth attitudes towards mobilization and skill development was highlighted. The panellists stressed the importance of tailoring proposals to local needs with unique, innovative solutions. Continuous learning and skill upgrading via online platforms were also emphasized as crucial for development.

- **Personal and Organizational Branding:** Securing funding and support from entities like NALCO requires strong personal and organizational branding. This is critical for NGOs and other organizations working in the development sector.

The panel discussion underscored the evolving definition of poverty and the multifaceted strategies needed to address it in rural India. Continuous capacity building, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and innovative, context-specific approaches are essential to tackle poverty and improve livelihoods. The insights shared by the panellists highlighted the importance of addressing critical gaps in healthcare infrastructure and accessibility, aligning development projects with local needs, and leveraging public-private partnerships to create supportive ecosystems for rural economies. These strategies are crucial for driving sustainable development and improving the quality of life in rural India.

Special Session: Good Governance and Compliance in Civil Society Organizations

- **Mr. Nitesh Sinha**, Finance, Senior Manager, HCLFoundation
- **Mr. Vineet Kumer Mishra**, Monitoring & Evaluation, Manager, HCLFoundation

The session on "Good Governance and Compliance in Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)" emphasized the importance of proper guidance and frameworks for project design and implementation, focusing on good governance practices and CSR reporting frameworks. Key takeaways included the necessity of thorough documentation and monitoring, which are essential for guiding projects, making corrections, and evaluating impacts, as well as for third-party assessments post-project. The session highlighted the importance of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practices, emphasizing the Theory of Change (TOC), Logical Framework Approach (LFA), and the use of smart indicators to robustly monitor activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

Legal and financial compliance were underscored as mandatory, with emphasis on adhering to state laws such as TDS, PF, ESI, and FCRA, timely filing of returns, and maintaining valid certificates (12A, 80G, FCRA). The need for well-documented organizational policies, including those for recruitment, HR, financial management, data protection, conflict of interest, and sexual harassment prevention, was stressed. Financial management practices such as proper booking of expenses, adherence to budgets, maintaining separate cost codes for different donors and projects, limiting cash payments, and proper utilization of interest on donations were also highlighted.

Furthermore, the session discussed the importance of aligning project objectives with donor and organizational goals, ensuring NGOs remain non-political and comply with governance structures, and the necessity of regular, documented governing body meetings for transparency. From a donor perspective, the importance of proper maintenance and verification of fixed assets and compliance with GST was emphasized. Overall, the session underscored that good governance, thorough documentation, regular monitoring, and strict compliance with legal and financial regulations are crucial for the credibility and successful operation of civil society organizations.

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing

Grant Process
- **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
- **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing
- **Ms. Swapnasri Sarangi**, General Manager, Head, Gender, Diversity and Integration, FES
- **Mr. Basanta Kumar Nayak**, Programme Director, Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD)
- **Ms. Saswati Mohapatra**, State Programme Manager, CINI Odisha
- Moderator: **Mr. Anuj Srivastava**, Manager, HCLFoundation

The HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing session provided a comprehensive overview of the HCLTech Grant program, facilitated by Mr. Robin Thomas and Ms. Shally Kaushal from the HCL Foundation. The session highlighted the objectives of the grant and detailed the application process, particularly emphasizing the categories available for new NGOs seeking registration. Insights from past grantees and awardees were shared, offering valuable perspectives and lessons learned. Key elements of the evaluation criteria for the grant selection process were thoroughly examined, focusing on adherence to regulatory norms, strong governance practices, robust financial modelling, demonstrated capacity to deliver, project relevance supported by verified data and alignment with government initiatives, potential for impact, innovation and sustainability, inclusiveness, replicability, and organizational strength.

The session stressed the importance of NGOs having a deep understanding of their monetary funds, internal processes, and maintaining transparency in data sharing and documentation. Additionally, it was emphasized that NGOs should focus on strengthening government initiatives and aligning their efforts with governmental strategies rather than working in isolation. This collaborative approach is essential for achieving sustainable impact and ensuring that projects are relevant and effective in addressing community needs. The key takeaways from the session underscored the critical aspects of good governance, financial integrity, and strategic alignment with government efforts in achieving effective and impactful outcomes in the NGO sector.

Impact of the Symposium

The overall impact of the HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposium in Bhubaneswar was significant, with a guaranteed participant count of 250 and an actual attendance of 267. The event successfully brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including NGOs, experts, government officials, corporates, and policymakers, to foster a deeper understanding of CSR and its role in nation-building. Key sessions provided valuable insights into the HCLTech Grant process, good governance practices, and the changing definition of poverty in rural India. Participants benefited from the extensive experience sharing and discussions on strategic alignment with government initiatives, robust financial management, and the importance of compliance and transparency. The symposium reinforced the importance of collaboration and innovative approaches in tackling social issues, ultimately contributing to the strengthening of civil society organizations and enhancing their impact on community development. The collaborative efforts of the CSRBOX and HCLF Team led to a 6.8% increase in participation at the Bhubaneswar symposium. While this increase is relatively modest compared to other locations, it still underscores the effectiveness of the combined initiatives.

HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposium 2024 – Shillong

Date: **21st June 2024**
Location: **Shillong (Meghalaya)**
Venue: **NEHU (North Eastern Hill University)**

HCLTech Grant Symposium - Shillong

Location: Shillong (Meghalaya)

Date: 21st June 2024

Venue: NEHU (North Eastern Hill University)

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	9:30 am - 10:30 am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Welcome Address by Academic Partner**	10 mins	10:30 am – 10:40 am	**Prof. Santosh Kumar,** Coordinator, Industry & Academia, NEHU
3	**Key Note Address & HCL Foundation Overview**	20 mins	10:40 am - 11:00 am	**Mr. Anuj Srivastava** Manager, HCL foundation
4	**Welcome Speech**	15 mins	11:00 am – 11:15am	**Prof. Prabha Shankar Shukla,** Honorable Vice Chancellor, NEHU
5	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	25 mins	11:15 am - 11:40 am	**Dr. Surabhi Yadav** CSR Advisor & Consultant HCL Tech, Partner (Samvardhan)
6	**Panel Discussion Topic:** Role of CSR in development of rural parts of NE India"	60 mins	11:40 am - 12:40 pm	**Ms. Santala Ronglo.** Consultant Institution building and management. Certified RSETI Domain trainer on Entrepreneurship management. Former Project Manager of NERCoRMP. **Dr. Keshav Sharma** State Expert - Development & Health UNICEF NHM, Directorate of Health Services. **Prof. Santosh Kumar,** Coordinator, Industry & Academia, NEHU **Prof. S.S. Ray,** HoD, Biomedical Engineering Department, SoT, NEHU Moderator: **Dr Surabhi Yadav**
7	**Good Governance, Transparency and Measuring Impact in CSR**	30 mins	12:40 pm – 1:10pm	**Mr. Nitesh Sinha** Finance, Senior Manager, HCL Foundation **Mr. Vineet Kumar Mishra** Monitoring & Evaluation, Manager, HCL Foundation
8	**HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing**	80 mins	1:10 pm - 2:30 pm	**Grant Process:** **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation **Experience Sharing:** **Mohd Dilshad** Subject Matter Expert. HCLTech Grant **Ms. Priya Karl,** Associate Manager, Grant Thornton **Moderator: Mr. Anuj Srivastava**, Manager, HCLFoundation
9	**Networking Lunch**	60 mins	2:10 pm - 3:10pm	

Summary of the Registration

227 Registration Received (Total)

63 Registered Participants (At Venue)

23 On Spot Registration

86 Total Participants (At venue)

The fourth HCLTech Grant Symposium in Shillong continued the series of impactful events, focusing on advancing regional development and CSR practices. Hosted by the HCL Foundation, the symposium emphasized the role of CSR in northeastern India and offered a platform for sharing insights and best practices among NGOs, corporates, and policymakers.

Ms. Shally Kaushal expressed gratitude to the local university for hosting the event and highlighted the HCL Foundation's significant achievements, including reaching 6.5 million people and harvesting 76 billion litres of water. **Mr. Anuj Srivastava** provided an overview of key programs such as Samuday and Uday, and discussed special initiatives like MyCleanCity and My E-Haat, showcasing the foundation's extensive impact on rural and urban communities. **Prof. Prabha Shankar Shukla** emphasized the importance of CSR in addressing social and environmental issues, praised HCL's contributions, and called for continued collaboration to address the unique challenges of the northeastern region.

The symposium reinforced the foundation's commitment to sustainable development and collaborative efforts to tackle regional challenges.

Summary of the Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments (By *Dr. Surabhi Yadav,* CSR Advisor & Consultant HCL Tech: Key Take Aways same as Bhubaneshwar Symposium)

Panel Discussion on "Role of CSR in Development of Rural Parts of Northeast India".

Panellists

- **Ms. Santala Ronglo** Consultant Institution Building and Management, Certified RSETI Domain trainer er on Entrepreneurship Management, Former Project Manager of NERCORMP
- **Dr. Keshav Sharma** State Expert, Development & Health UNICEF NHM, Directorate of Health Services
- **Prof. Santosh Kumar** Coordinator, Industry & Academia, NEHU
- **Prof. S.S. Ray** HoD, Biomedical Engineering Department, SoT, NEHU
- Moderator: **Dr. Surabhi Yadav**

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion

1. **Regional Potential and Challenges**: The Northeast of India, with its rich natural resources and cultural diversity, faces significant challenges, including infrastructural deficits, limited access to education and healthcare, and economic disparities. These hurdles present both obstacles and opportunities for targeted CSR interventions.

2. **Role of CSR in Development**: CSR initiatives are crucial in addressing these regional challenges. The discussion emphasized how CSR can drive infrastructure development, enhance educational facilities, and improve healthcare services. Panelists highlighted the need for building roads, schools, and medical centres to uplift rural communities effectively.

3. **Government Policies and CSR Collaboration**: The panel underscored the importance of aligning CSR efforts with government policies and leveraging public-private partnerships. Effective CSR implementation requires synergy with national and regional development goals, maximizing the impact of corporate initiatives.

4. **Sustainable Development and Environmental Conservation**: Sustainable practices were identified as key priorities. The panel advocated for CSR investments in sustainable agriculture, renewable energy projects, and eco-friendly practices, aiming to reduce environmental impact and promote long-term sustainability.

5. **Community Engagement and Cultural Sensitivity**: The discussion stressed the need for community involvement and cultural sensitivity in CSR projects. Engaging with local communities, understanding their needs, and integrating cultural considerations are essential for the relevance and effectiveness of CSR initiatives.

6. **Future Directions and Recommendations**: The panel concluded by recommending the scaling up of successful CSR models, fostering innovation in development projects, and promoting inclusive growth. These strategies are vital for enhancing CSR impact and ensuring that all segments of society benefit from development efforts.

The discussion reinforced the crucial role of CSR in addressing the unique challenges of Northeast India. It highlighted the need for thoughtful, collaborative, and sustainable approaches to drive meaningful development and improve the quality of life in rural areas.

Summary of the **Good Governance, Transparency and Measuring Impact in CSR (By** *Mr. Nitesh Sinha,* Finance, Senior Manager HCL Foundation & *Mr. Vineet Kumar Mishra, Monitoring & Evaluation Manager HCL Foundation*: *Key Take Aways same as Bhubaneshwar Symposium)*

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing

Grant Process

- **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
- **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing

- **Mohd Dilshad**, Subject Matter Expert. HCLTech Grant
- **Ms. Priya Karl**, Assistant Manager, Grant Thornton
- **Moderator: Mr. Anuj Srivastava**, Manager, HCLFoundation

The HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing session, moderated by **Mr. Anuj Srivastava**, provided a comprehensive overview of the HCLTech Grant program. **Mr. Robin Thomas** and **Ms. Shally Kaushal** introduced the grant's objectives and categories, emphasizing its role in supporting NGOs. The session detailed the grant application process and highlighted new registration opportunities for NGOs. Key insights were shared from past grantees, illustrating valuable lessons learned. The evaluation criteria were thoroughly examined, focusing on regulatory adherence, strong governance practices, robust financial modelling, and demonstrated project delivery capacity. The criteria also emphasized project relevance, alignment with government initiatives, potential impact, innovation, sustainability, inclusiveness, replicability, and organizational strength.

Experience sharing by **Mohd Dilshad** and **Ms. Priya Karl** underscored the importance of NGOs having a thorough understanding of their financials, transparent data sharing, and meticulous documentation. The session stressed that NGOs should aim to strengthen government initiatives and align their efforts with national goals rather than working in isolation. The overall impact of the session highlighted the critical role of structured CSR initiatives in fostering sustainable development and enhancing the effectiveness of NGO projects through rigorous evaluation and strategic alignment with government policies.

Impact of the Symposium

The Shillong symposium surpassed expectations with 86 participants, despite challenges like floods and rain. This demonstrated strong engagement and commitment to the HCLTech Grant Symposium. The event highlighted HCL Foundation's impactful initiatives, including significant contributions to water conservation, waste management, and community development. Keynote addresses emphasized the importance of CSR in nation-building and regional development, while sessions provided valuable insights into the grant process and evaluation criteria. The symposium underscored the vital role of collaboration and sustainable practices in driving positive change in the northeastern region of India. The partnership between CSRBOX and the HCLF Team led to a 22.86% increase in participation at the Shillong symposium, showcasing a high level of engagement and interest in the event.

HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposium 2024 - Hyderabad

Date: **2nd July 2024**

Location: **Hyderabad (Telangana)**

Venue: **G Narayanamma Institute of Technology & Science (For Women)**

HCLTech Grant Symposium- Hyderabad
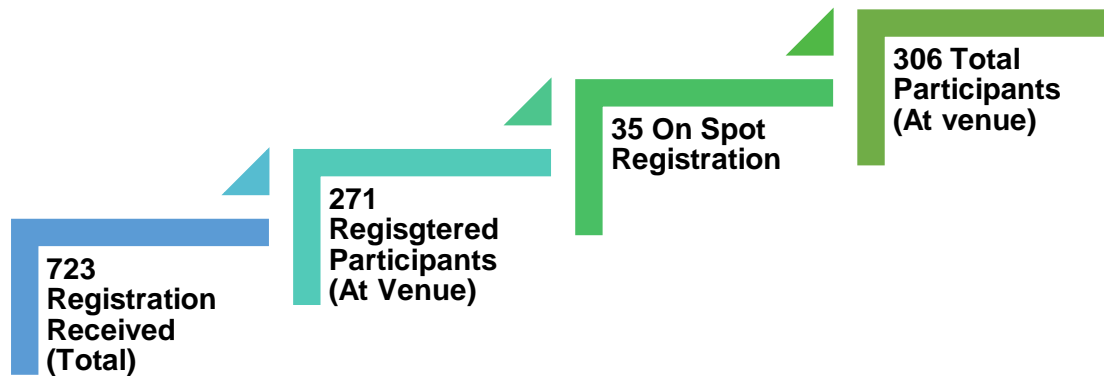
Location: Hyderabad (Telangana)

Date: 2nd July 2024

Venue: G Narayanamma Institute of Technology and Science (For Women)

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	9:00 am - 10:00 am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Welcome Address by Academic Partner**	10 mins	10:00 a –10:10am	**Mrs. G Srividya Reddy** Vice Chairperson, G Pulla Reddy Charities Trust and G Narayanamma Institute of Technology and Science (For Women) and Chairperson of School of Innovation and Management (SoIM)
3	**Key Note Address**	15 mins	10:10am-10:25 am	**Mr. Vigneshwer Kodavalla** Senior Vice President, HCL Technologies
4	**HCL Foundation Overview**	20 mins	10:25am-10:45am	**Mr. Mahendra Kasula** Deputy Manager, HCL Foundation
5	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	25 mins	10:45a -11:10 am	**Dr. Surabhi Yadav** CSR Advisor & Consultant HCL Tech, Partner (Samvardhan)
6	**Panel Discussion Topic:** Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions through CSR	60 mins	11:10am -12:10 pm	**Dr. Jai Prakash Narayana,** retd IAS officer (Ex Collector and Secretary AP) **Ms. Annavajhala Sarada** National Resource Person, NIRDPR-National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj **Ms. Archana Suresh** TED X Speaker, Director-Telangana Social Impact Group (T-SIG) [Representing the State Govt.] **Mr. Vikas Katragadda** Social Impact Consultant **Moderator:** Dr. Surabhi Yadav
7	**Motivational Session** Critical Role of NGOs towards Developed India - Vision, Values & Velocity	20 mins	12:10pm–12:30 pm	**Mr. Vikas Katragadda** Social Impact Consultant
8	**HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing**	70 mins	12:30pm -1:40 pm	**Grant Process:** **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation **Experience Sharing:** **Dr. Dhruv Mankad** Senior Subject Matter Expert HCL Foundation **Mr. Sooraj Abraham** Project Incharge, Plan@Earth **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
9	**Networking Lunch**	60 mins	1:40 pm - 2:40pm	

Summary of the Registration

723 Registration Received (Total)

271 Regisgtered Participants (At Venue)

35 On Spot Registration

306 Total Participants (At venue)

The Hyderabad Symposium began with **Mrs. G. Srividya Reddy** welcoming attendees and highlighting the G. Narayanamma Institute's 26-year legacy of empowering women's education. She stressed the crucial role of NGOs and CSOs in nation-building and achieving India's goal of a seven trillion-dollar economy by 2030 through inclusive growth, especially in rural areas. She praised the HCL Foundation, CSRBOX, and academic partners for organizing the symposium to discuss CSR's role in sustainable development and lauded their efforts in recognizing impactful projects in education, environment, and technology.

In his keynote address, **Mr. Vigneshwar Kodavalla** shared HCL's humble beginnings in a garage in 1976 and its growth into a global enterprise with over $13 billion in revenue. He attributed HCL's success to its entrepreneurial spirit and open leadership. Highlighting HCL's commitment to CSR, he encouraged participants to pursue impactful projects with confidence and dedication, emphasizing that small beginnings can lead to significant achievements. He concluded by expressing pride in HCL's societal contributions and wishing attendees success.

Mr. Mahendra Kasola, Deputy Manager, HCL Foundation, provided an overview of the foundation's mission aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. He highlighted the foundation's reach across 22 states and 3 union territories, focusing on holistic development. Key programs include:

- **Rural and Urban Programs**: Community improvement in places like Haridwar and Tuticorin, and slum development.
- **Samudaya**: Rural development in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- **MyCleanCity**: Solid waste management in Noida, benefiting over 96,000 families.

Special Initiatives

- ✓ **Sports for Change**: Supporting children in sports.
- ✓ **Uday**: Breaking urban poverty cycles.
- ✓ **Power of One**: Tech employee volunteering.
- ✓ **My e-Haat**: Supporting Indian textiles.
- ✓ **HCL Academy**: Offering online courses, including CSR.

Mr. Kasola's sessions highlighted the foundation's commitment to holistic development and community engagement, demonstrating how CSR can drive meaningful change. The symposium emphasized the importance of collaboration among corporates, NGOs, and government bodies to achieve sustainable development goals, inspiring participants to create positive societal impacts.

Summary of the Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments
(By *Dr. Surabhi Yadav,* CSR Advisor & Consultant HCL Tech: Key Take Aways same as Bhubaneshwar Symposium)

Panel Discussion on "Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions through CSR

Panellists

- **Dr. Jaya Prakash Narayan**, IAS (Rtd), CSR Advisor & Consultant HCLTech, Partner (Samvardhan), Founder, Loksatta, Foundation for Democratic Reforms
- **Ms. Annavajhala Sarada**, National Resource Person, NIRDPR-National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj
- **Ms. Archana Suresh**, TED X Speaker, Director-Telangana Social Impact Group (T-SIG) [Representing the State Govt.]
- **Mr. Vikas Katragadda** Social Impact Consultant
- Moderator**: Dr. Surabhi Yadav**

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion

1. **Decentralized Governance**

   ✓ The need to decentralize India's highly centralized governance structure was emphasized, advocating for empowering local governments, particularly PRIs, to enhance accountability and improve grassroots governance.

2. **Community Ownership in CSR Initiatives**

   ✓ Effective CSR projects should foster community ownership, involving communities as active participants to ensure financial and emotional investment, enhancing project sustainability and local decision-making.

3. **Role of TSIG in Connecting Corporates and NGOs**

   ✓ TSIG plays a pivotal role in bridging the gap between corporates and NGOs, facilitating partnerships that leverage corporate resources for social development.

4. **Breaking Silos for Effective Impact**

   ✓ Encouraging synergies and partnerships among corporates, NGOs, and government bodies is crucial for achieving scalable and sustainable development outcomes.

5. **Practical Guidance for CSR Implementation**

   ✓ Thorough planning, monitoring, and evaluation are essential for the success and sustainability of CSR projects. Aligning projects with community needs and ensuring strategic preparation are crucial.

6. **Focus on Compliance and Reporting**

   ✓ Post-2021 amendments to CSR laws have led to more stringent compliance, utilization, and reporting requirements. Enhanced regulatory frameworks and mandatory impact assessments ensure greater transparency and accountability in CSR spending.

7. **Future Trends in CSR (2024-2030)**

✓ The regulatory environment for CSR is expected to become stricter, with increased enforcement measures and penalties. There is a growing emphasis on the timely and impactful utilization of CSR funds, reflecting broader societal and environmental goals.

8. **Empowerment through Knowledge and Strategy**

✓ Understanding CSR laws, corporate policies, and strategic preparation is vital for NGOs seeking CSR funding. Keeping abreast of legal frameworks and evolving trends helps NGOs align their projects with corporate expectations.

The panel discussion equipped participants with a deeper understanding of governance reforms, community engagement, and collaborative efforts in CSR. Practical guidance and strategic insights provided a roadmap for NGOs and corporates to enhance their CSR initiatives, ensuring alignment with legal requirements and community needs. The emphasis on decentralization, community ownership, and breaking silos inspired participants to adopt more integrated

and sustainable approaches to their CSR projects, fostering positive societal impacts.

Motivational Session: Critical Role of NGOs towards Developed India - Vision, Values & Velocity by Mr. Vikas Katragadda Social Impact Consultant

Mr. Vikas Katragadda, a Social Impact Consultant, emphasized the critical role of NGOs in achieving a developed India during his motivational session. He called for transformative leadership in the social sector, akin to leaders like Satish Dhawan and Abdul Kalam, highlighting the disparity between urban and rural development. Mr. Katragadda stressed the importance of NGOs in fostering inclusive and sustainable growth, advocating for innovative approaches leveraging technology and design thinking. He cited successful models such as Teach for India and Pratham, underscoring the significance of capacity building and documentation in NGOs. Additionally, he urged NGOs and stakeholders to collaborate effectively, referencing the success of initiatives like CSR Box and NGO Box, and encouraged a collective effort towards nation-building and societal transformation. The session provided NGO participants with a clear vision of their role in India's development and the importance of collaboration, innovation, and effective leadership in driving social impact. This inspired the attendees to enhance their strategic approaches and collaborative efforts, aligning their initiatives with broader developmental goals.

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing

Grant Process
- **Mr. Robin Thomas,** Group Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing
- **Dr. Dhruv Mankad**, Senior Subject Matter Expert, HCLFoundation
- **Mr. Soorai Abraham**, Project Incharge, Plan@Earth
- Moderator: **Mr. Robin Thomas** Group Manager, HCLFoundation

Mr. Robin Thomas, Group Manager at HCLFoundation, provided a detailed overview of the HCLTech Grant Program, particularly focusing on the NCIL grant for rural development. He elaborated on the grant's structure, including its 16.5 crore budget distributed across Environment, Health, and Education categories, and outlined the eligibility criteria, application process, and evaluation parameters. **Dr. Dhruv Mankad**, Senior Subject Matter Expert, emphasized the importance of aligning project proposals with the grant's objectives and showcasing measurable impact to enhance proposal effectiveness. **Mr. Soorai Abraham**, Project Incharge at Plan@Earth, shared practical examples and case studies, offering insights into successful project execution, compliance, and sustainability. Together, their sessions provided NGOs with crucial knowledge and practical strategies for effectively navigating the grant application process and contributing to India's development goals.

Impact of the Symposium

The symposium experienced a notable **53%** increase in participants, reflecting its growing influence. Dr. Jaya Prakash Narayan emphasized the need for **decentralized governance** to boost local accountability and efficiency. Ms. Annavajhala Sarada underscored the importance of **community ownership** in CSR projects for enhanced sustainability and decision-making. Ms. Archana Suresh discussed the role of TSIG in **bridging the gap** between corporates and NGOs, fostering collaborative partnerships, and breaking down operational silos for more effective impact. Mr. Vikas Katragadda provided **practical insights** into the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of CSR projects, ensuring their success and sustainability. Overall, the event emphasized the need for structural reforms, collaboration, and innovative approaches in CSR, inspiring participants to pursue impactful projects aligned with legal requirements and broader societal goals.

HCLTech Grant Symposium - Udaipur

Location: Udaipur (Rajasthan)

Date: 8th July 2024

Venue: Maharana Pratap College of Agriculture

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	8:30 am - 9:30 am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Welcome Address & Lamp Lighting**	10 mins	10:00 am – 10:10 am	**Mr. Anuj Srivastava** Manager, HCLFoundation
3	**Context Setting & Foundation Overview**	10 mins	10:10 am – 10:20 am	**Ms. Simi Suri**, General Manager, HCL Foundation
4	**Key Note Address**	10 mins	10:20 am - 10:30 am	**Ms. Robin Abrams** HCLTech Board Member and Chairperson HCLTech Grant Jury
5	**Felicitation**	5 mins	10:30am – 10:35 am	Felicitation of **Ms. Robin Abrams**
6	**Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-profits**	25 mins	10:35 am - 11:00 am	**Mr. Bhomik Shah** Founder and CEO, CSRBOX
7	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	25 mins	11:00 pm - 11:25 pm	**Mr. Nikhil Pant** Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI
8	**Panel Discussion Topic:** CSR Strategies for Water Conservation and Management for Sustainable Development in Arid Region	50 mins	11:25 am - 12:15 pm	**Smt. Kirti Rathore (R.A.S.)** Chief Executive Officer Zila Parishad, Udaipur **Dr. Anil Mehta** Principal, Vidya Bhawan Polytechnic College **Mr. Sanjay Gupta** Founder Director, Childhood enhancement for Training & Action (CHETNA NGO) **Dr. Manjeet Singh** Assistant Professor Soil and Water Engineering **Moderated By:** Mr. Nikhil Pant
9	**An overview of Good Governance practices for NGO's**	15 mins	12:15pm – 12:30 pm	**Ms. Ruchi Sadhana,** Vice President, HCLTech
10	**Experience Sharing Panel Discussion**	30 mins	12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	**Experience Sharing:** **Dr. Nutan Prabha Jain** Professor, SDG SPH, Director, Center for Gendre Studies IIHMR University, Jaipur, India Associate, Department of International Health Bloomberg School of Public Health, **Mr. Prasannakumar Narayanan** Senior Director, Programmes Sightsavers India **Ms. Simi Suri**, General Manager, HCL Foundation **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation

11	HCLTech Grant Process	15 mins	1:00 pm – 1:15 pm	**Grant Process:** **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation
12	**Motivational Session & Vote of Thanks** The Journey of Persistence: Never Give Up and Do Good in a Better Way	15 mins	1:15 pm – 1:30 pm	**Dr Smita Ghosh** Senior Manager CSR Programs, CSRBOX
13	**Networking Lunch**	60 mins	1:30 pm - 2:30pm	

Summary of the Registration

447 Registration Received (Total)

156 Registered Participants (At Venue)

38 On Spot Registration

194 Total Participants (At venue)
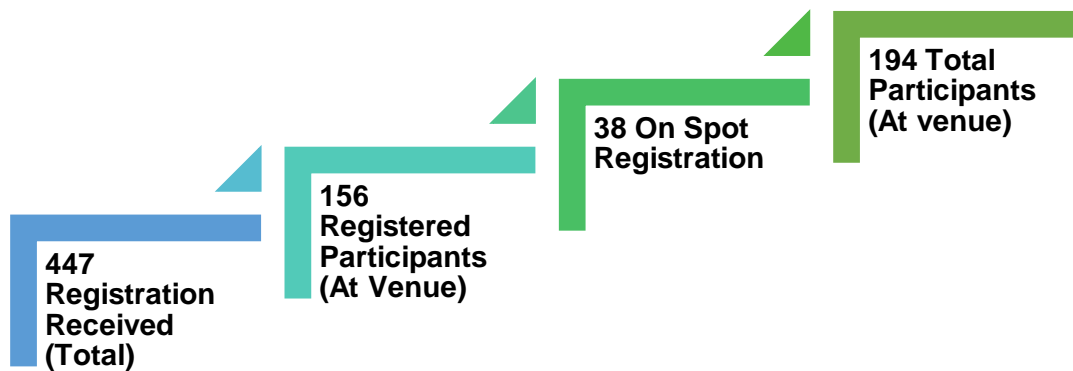
The 6th symposium in Udaipur continued the tradition of the HCLTech Grant Pan-India Symposiums, now in their 10th edition, which unite NGOs, experts, government officials, corporates, and policymakers to discuss corporate social responsibility (CSR). Initiated in 2015, these symposiums have travelled across multiple cities since their start in Chennai, with upcoming events in Dehradun and New Delhi. Special recognition was given to the Rajasthan College of Agriculture and its Dean for hosting the current symposium, highlighting their crucial role in these collaborative discussions. **Mr. Anuj Srivastava**, Manager at HCL Foundation, delivered the welcome address, while **Ms. Simi Suri**, General Manager at HCL Foundation, outlined the foundation's mission and coverage. This year, the eligibility criteria for the grant have been updated, reducing the average expenditure requirement for the last three financial years from 1 crore to 50 lakhs for NGOs applying in the Health and Education categories, while it remains at 50 lakhs for the Environment category. Over the past nine years, the HCLTech Grant has impacted over 2.2 million lives, reaching more than 27,000 villages, 131 districts, 22 states, and 2 union territories in India. Since 2017, the grant has hosted 45 in-person symposiums and 22 e-symposiums during the pandemic, engaging over 25,000 NGOs. HCL Foundation's mission encompasses all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on health and education, skills development, environmental conservation, and several flagship programs like Direct Implementation in Lucknow and the Clean Noida Initiative. Additional initiatives such as the Uday Program, Power of One, Sports for Change, and Support for Artisans further highlight HCL Foundation's commitment to sustainable development, social responsibility, and transformative impact across diverse sectors and communities.

Keynote Address by Ms. Robin Abrams, HCLTech Board Member and Chairperson, HCLTech Grant Jury

Ms. Robin Abrams shared her personal journey, emphasizing her long tenure at HCL Tech and her significant involvement in NGO management, infusing humour by recounting her experience of being called the "boldest" board member instead of the "oldest." She discussed her transition from primarily corporate work to a focus on NGO management, including her current roles in funding public education, providing affordable workforce housing, and an NGO under the CHIPS Act for the semiconductor industry. Abrams admitted to failures due to the misapplication of corporate strategies in NGO initiatives, underscoring the importance of adapting strategies to fit NGO environments and learning from programs like Harvard's Kennedy School under Marshall Gans. She stressed the importance of succession planning and capacity building within NGOs, advocating for transparency and strategic planning to adapt to changes, and highlighted the concept of reverse mentoring, where younger individuals mentor older ones to leverage new skills and perspectives. Abrams emphasized the need to tap into broader ecosystems, including partners, vendors, and government organizations, sharing the example of HCL Foundation's global expansion and the "power of one" initiative. She concluded with an inspirational note, quoting Ezra Pound on

the capacity to see multiple perspectives, encouraging NGO leaders to find and unleash hidden capacities within their organizations.

Masterclass On CSR Laws and its New Amendments
(By *Mr. Nikhil Pant,* Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI)
And
Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-profits
(By *Mr. Bhomik Shah,* Founder & CEO CSRBOX)
(Key Take Aways same as Chennai Symposium)

Panel Discussion on " CSR Strategies for Water Conservation and Management for Sustainable Development in Arid Region ".

Panellists

- **Smt. Kiti Rathore (R.A.S),** Chief Executive Officer, Zila Parishad, Udaipur
- **Dr. Anil Mehta,** Principal, Vidya Bhawan Polytechnic College
- **Mr. Sanjay Gupta,** Founder Director, Childhood Enhancement for Training & Action (CHETNA NGO)
- **Dr. Manjeet Singh,** Soil and Water Engineering
- **Shantanu Sinha Roy,** General Manager and State Head, Rajasthan, Foundation for Ecological Security
- Moderato**r: Mr. Nikhil Pant,** Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion
The panel discussion, moderated by **Mr. Nikhil Pant**, set the context by focusing on the critical need for water conservation in arid regions through effective watershed management. The panellists shared their insights and experiences, highlighting several key themes:

- **Shared Experiences:** The panellists discussed successful projects like Bhujal Jankar, emphasizing collaborations with academic institutions and NGOs for sustainable groundwater management.

- **Local Community Knowledge:** There was a strong emphasis on integrating local community knowledge and institutionalizing water management practices to ensure sustainability beyond the project duration.
- **Challenges and Integrated Approaches:** The challenges in watershed development were addressed, with a call for more integrated approaches in CSR-funded projects to tackle these issues effectively.
- **Project Duration and Funding:** The panellists advocated for longer project durations and continued funding to ensure the sustained impact of water conservation efforts.

The panel underscored the importance of public participation, leveraging local knowledge, and ensuring long-term sustainability in CSR initiatives focused on water conservation. These sessions offered deep insights into the evolving landscape of CSR laws, practical strategies for water management in arid regions, and the crucial role of partnerships between NGOs, academia, and corporate entities. The discussion concluded with a consensus on the necessity of collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptive strategies to effectively manage water resources and promote sustainable development in arid regions.

Masterclass on "An overview of Good Governance practices for NGO's (By *Ms. Ruchi Sadhana*, Vice President, HCL Tech".

Ms. Ruchi Sadhana emphasized the importance of strong governance mechanisms within NGOs supported by HCL Foundation, which annually sponsors over 200 NGOs. Key elements of good governance include abiding by legal requirements, implementing effective policies and procedures, fostering a participatory culture, ensuring accountability and transparency, and promoting equitable and inclusive practices. The grant disbursement process involves a one-time submission of required documents with quarterly updates, submission of auditable financial and program reports, third-party audits, and maintaining separate cost centres for different grants.

Financial management practices include timely reporting and compliance with statutory requirements, prohibition of sub-granting, and maintaining proper internal controls. Challenges include the need for proper documentation and timely submission of reports to ensure grant renewal and maintain good governance.

Key takeaways
- Adherence to legal requirements, effective policies, and procedures, alongside a commitment to accountability, transparency, and equitable practices.
- A participatory culture within NGOs and the submission of auditable reports with third-party audits.

- Implementation of separate cost centres for grants, prohibition of sub-granting, and maintaining proper internal controls.
- Timely reporting, compliance with statutory requirements, and quarterly updates following a one-time document submission.

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing

Grant Process
- **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
- **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing
- **Dr, Nutan Prabha Jain** Professor, SDG SPH, Director, Center for Gendre Studies IIHMR University, Jaipur, India Associate, Department of International Health Bloomberg School of Public Health
- **Mr. Prasannakumar** Narayanan Senior Director, Programmes Sightsavers India
- **Mr, Shantanu Sinha Roy** General Manager and State head, Rajasthan, Foundation for Ecological Security
- **Ms. Simi Suri,** General Manager HCL Foundation
- Moderator**: Mr. Anuj Srivastava,** Manager, HCLFoundation

The session on the HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing provided valuable insights into the multi-stage selection process for the grant, including updated eligibility criteria and adjustments post-COVID. Key aspects of the grant process were outlined by **Mr. Robin Thomas** and **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, emphasizing the importance of a minimum of five years of functional existence, rural focus, and adherence to relevant bylaws. The application process involves several stages, from online submission to final evaluation, with key considerations including no sub-granting, proper budgeting, and regulatory compliance. The takeaways stressed the significance of good governance, detailed compliance, and clear processes in securing and maintaining HCL Foundation grants. Experience sharing by **Dr. Nutan Prabha Jain**, **Mr. Prasannakumar Narayanan**, and **Mr. Shantanu Sinha Roy** highlighted practical insights and successful practices in managing and utilizing grants effectively, with Ms. Simi Suri moderating the discussion and **Mr. Anuj Srivastava** providing additional context.

Impact of the Symposium

The symposium made a significant impact, with attendance reaching 194, well above the guaranteed 150, despite the Rathyatra festival the previous day. This high turnout highlights the growing interest and commitment to the HCLTech Grant process. The presence of Robin Abrams, a distinguished HCLTech Board member, further elevated the event's prestige and impact.

The sessions provided valuable insights and actionable takeaways. Discussions on CSR strategies for water conservation in arid regions emphasized the importance of integrating local knowledge and securing sustained funding. The detailed overview of the HCLTech Grant process underscored the necessity of rigorous compliance, good governance, and structured evaluation to obtain and maintain grants.

The symposium facilitated meaningful interactions among diverse stakeholders and reinforced the essential role of structured processes, effective governance, and continuous community engagement in advancing impactful CSR initiatives. The participation increase was 29.33%.

HCLTech Grant Symposium- Dehradun

Location: Dehradun

Date: 16th July 2024

Venue: **DBS Global University (DGU)**

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	9:00 am - 10:00 am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Welcome Address by Academic Partner**	10 mins	10:00 am – 10:10 am	**Prof. (Dr.) Rajeev Bhardwaj, Pro Vice-Chancellor,** DBS Global University, Dehradun
3	**Key Note Address & Context Setting & Foundation Overview**	30 mins	10:10 am - 10:40 am	**Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
5	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	30 mins	10:40 am - 11:10 am	**Mr. Nikhil Pant** Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI
6	**Panel Discussion Topic:** CSR Making a Difference: Enhancing Biodiversity through Climate Action	60 mins	11:10 am - 12:10 pm	**Prof. (Dr.) Pradip P Chatterjee** Director, DBS Global University, Dehradun **Dr.V.P. Uniyal, PhD**. Sr, Professor & Scientist – G(Former) Wildlife Institute of India **Dr. Roshni Arora, PhD**, Applied Freshwater Scientist, The Nature Conservancy **Dr. Ramesh Krishnamurthy, PhD** Scientist-F/Professor & Head, Department of Landscape Ecology and Management, Wildlife Institute of India. Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia. **Moderated By: Dr Vinod Bhatt,** Chairman of Ingenious Research Development
7	**Special Session Engaging with Government Systems**	20 mins	12:10 pm - 12:30 pm	**Mr. Sobins Kuriakose** **C**onsultant & Expert Skills/Livelihood and Public Policy
8	**HCL Tech Grant Process & Experience Sharing Panel Discussion**	75 mins	12:30 pm – 1:45 pm	**Grant Process: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation **Experience Sharing: Dr. Shafia Yaseen Wani,** Subject Matter Expert, HCL Foundation and Assistant Professor (Rural Development), (IMPARD) **Mr. Pranjal Saxena,** Manager Grant Thornton **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation
9	**Networking Lunch**	60 mins	1:45 pm - 2:45pm	

Summary of the Registration

401 Registration Received (Total)

116 Registered Participants (At Venue)

52 On Spot Registration

168 Total Participants (At venue)

The Dehradun symposium was the 7th in the series of symposiums this year and began with a warm welcome from **Prof. (Dr.) Rajeev Bhardwaj**, Pro Vice-Chancellor of DBS Global University. Prof. Bhardwaj praised the HCL Foundation's CSR efforts in health, environment, and education, drawing on historical and cultural references to underline their significance. He highlighted DBS's commitment to sustainability and its enhanced curriculum under the new National Education Policy, emphasizing the importance of education, health, and environmental stewardship for a sustainable future.

In his keynote address, **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager at HCL Foundation, expressed gratitude to the attendees and acknowledged the support of key figures in organizing the symposium. He provided a comprehensive overview of the HCL Foundation's journey, tracing its origins back to HCL's founding by Shiv Nadar in 1976 and the establishment of the Foundation in 2011. He outlined the Foundation's

major programs, including HCL Harit, HCL Samudaya, and Uday, as well as the HCL Tech Grant, which supports NGOs in the sectors of environment, health, and education with an annual commitment of 16.5 crore INR.

Summary of the **Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**
(By *Mr. Nikhil Pant,* Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI: *Key Take Aways same as Chennai Symposium*)

Panel Discussion on "CSR Making a Difference: Enhancing Biodiversity through Climate Action "

Panellists

- **Prof. (Dr.) Pradip P Chatterjee**, Director, DBS Global University Dehradun
- **Dr. V.P. Uniyal, PhD**. Sr, Professor & Scientist – G(Former) Wildlife Institute of India
- **Ms. Roshni Arora**, Applied Freshwater Scientist, The Nature Conservancy
- **Dr. Ramesh Krishnamurthy**, Ph.D., Scientist-F/Professor & Head, Department of Landscape Ecology and Management, Wildlife Institute of India Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia
- Moderator: **Dr Vinod Bhatt**, Chairman of Ingenious Research and Development Foundation

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion

- The urgent need for conservation efforts due to the alarming impact of climate change on biodiversity was emphasized, noting the reduction in species variety and the increasing number of endangered species.
- The rapid migration from villages despite government schemes was discussed, along with the challenges in using medicinal plant cultivation to prevent migration. Concerns were raised about road construction, forest fires, agricultural produce availability, and the decline of pollinators. Local committees and small NGO projects for sustainable development were suggested.
- The economic benefits of sustainable beekeeping in Uttarakhand were highlighted, emphasizing its role in pollinating apple orchards and supporting local ecosystems and livelihoods.
- Insights into Mumbai's biodiversity conservation efforts were provided, focusing on

flamingo protection and municipal initiatives to preserve their habitat amidst corporate development, stressing the importance of urban biodiversity conservation.

- The role of citizen science in wildlife conservation was discussed, highlighting its impact in engaging communities, generating valuable data, and promoting environmental stewardship and sustainable practices.

In conclusion, the panel discussion underscored the importance of integrating local community knowledge, sustainable practices, and collaborative efforts in biodiversity conservation and climate action. The diverse perspectives shared by the panellists demonstrated the multifaceted approaches needed to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable development. The symposium highlighted the transformative potential of CSR initiatives in fostering biodiversity conservation and climate resilience, encouraging continued collaboration and community engagement for a sustainable future.

Special Session: Engaging with Government Systems
(By *Mr. Sobins Kuriakose*, Consultant & Expert Skills/Livelihood and Public Policy)

The special session on engaging with government systems by **Mr. Sobins Kuriakose** highlighted the importance of effective utilization of government-allocated funds, emphasizing that NGOs must demonstrate their capability to utilize these funds efficiently and in line with government regulations. Alignment of NGO goals with broader government objectives is crucial for fostering collaboration and increasing the likelihood of receiving support and funding. Understanding and navigating complex bureaucratic processes, legal frameworks, and administrative requirements is essential for accessing government resources. Building and maintaining relationships with government officials, respecting formal communication channels, and engaging with key stakeholders are vital. Preparation for meetings and presentations enhances credibility, and informal networking provides valuable insights into government priorities. Finally, prompt follow-up, meeting deadlines, and maintaining transparency in financial and operational matters are essential for building trust and demonstrating reliability to government partners and stakeholders.

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing

Grant Process
- **Mr. Robin Thomas,** Group Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing

- **Dr. Shafia Yaseen Wani,** Subject Matter Expert, HCLTech and Assistant Professor (Rural Development), (IMPARD)
- **Mr. Pranjal Saxena**, Manager Grant Thornton
- **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas,** Group Manager, HCLFoundation

In the session on the HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing, **Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager at HCL Foundation, outlined the multi-stage selection process for the HCLTech grant, emphasizing the importance of transparency and thorough evaluation in selecting impactful projects.

Dr. Shafia Yaseen Wani, with over 19 years of experience in the development sector, highlighted her expertise in evaluating proposals that promise substantial community impact. She emphasized the importance of aligning projects with government initiatives such as MNREGA and SBM, focusing on sustainable outcomes through meticulous planning and strategic implementation. Dr. Shafia advocated for the effective utilization of government support mechanisms to champion transformative projects that address critical societal needs.

Mr. Pranjal Saxena, a seasoned consultant with over a decade of experience, stressed the importance of clarity, innovation, and maximizing societal impact in project proposals. His approach involves driving transformative change by aligning projects closely with established criteria and strategic objectives. Mr. Pranjal also emphasized the strategic importance of leveraging government support to bolster project advocacy, ensuring that initiatives exceed expectations in fostering positive community change.

Impact of the Symposium

The Dehradun symposium, the 7th in the series, made a remarkable impact with 194 attendees, exceeding the guaranteed participation of 100. This high turnout underscores significant interest and engagement from various stakeholders. Discussions highlighted key topics such as biodiversity conservation, the economic benefits of sustainable practices, and the role of citizen science.

A special session offered valuable insights into engaging with government systems, including effective fund utilization, aligning NGO goals with government priorities, and navigating bureaucratic processes. The grant process and experience-sharing session emphasized the importance of aligning projects with government initiatives and leveraging support mechanisms for transformative change.

The event's high level of participation and diverse topics covered demonstrate its success in fostering collaboration, sharing valuable insights, and promoting sustainable development. The symposium concluded on a positive note, reinforcing the commitment of all stakeholders to advancing impactful community and environmental initiatives. The participation increase was 52.73%.

HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposium 2024 – Delhi

Date: **19th July 2024**

Location: **Delhi**

Venue: **Chinmaya Mission Auditorium**

HCLTech Grant Symposium - Delhi

Location: Delhi

Date: 19th July 2024

Venue: Chinmaya Mission Auditorium

Agenda:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Duration	Time	Speakers
1	**Breakfast and Registration**	60 mins	9:00 am - 10:00 am	Help/Registration Desk
2	**Welcome and Lamp Lightning**	10 mins	10:00 am - 10:10 am	HCLF Team
3	**Welcome Address by Swamiji**	10 mins	10:10 am - 10:20 am	**Swami Avyayananda** Ji. Chinmaya Mission, Delhi
4	**Key Note Address**	10 mins	10:20 am - 10:30 am	**Mr. Abhinav Ghosh** Senior Vice President -Strategy, HCLTech
5	**HCLFoundation Overview**	20 mins	10:30 am - 10:50 am	**Dr. Nidhi Pundhir** Senior Vice President-Global CSR, HCLTech & Director, HCLFoundation
6	**Masterclass on CSR Laws and its New Amendments**	25 mins	10:50 am - 11:15 am	**Mr. Nikhil Pant** Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI
7	**Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-profits**	25 mins	11:15 am - 11:40 am	**Mr. Bhomik Shah** Founder and CEO, CSRBOX
8	**Panel Discussion Topic:** "CSR- Creating Ecosystems of Impact"	60 mins	11:40 am - 12:40 pm	**Dr. Nidhi Pundhir** Senior Vice President-Global CSR, HCLTech & Director, HCLFoundation **Mr. Gaurav Kapoor**, Head of Capital, British High Commission, New Delhi **Mr. Mukesh Mohan Gupta** President Chamber of Indian Micro Small and Medium Enterprises **Dr Prachi Jain** Founder Climate Corporate Solutions Advisor Environment & Climate Change-WHRF Moderator: **Mr. Nikhil Pant**
10	**Interactive Session Harnessing the Power of social media: NGOs Driving Change**	20 mins	12:40 pm - 1:00 pm	**Ms. Payal Randhawa** Founder Director Bworks Communication and Advisory Services
11	**HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing**	75 mins	1:00 pm - 2:15 pm	**Grant Process:** **Ms. Shally Kaushal,** Deputy Manager HCLFoundation **Experience Sharing:** **Mr. Shashank Shekhar** Subject Matter HCLTech Grant **Mr. Robin Sarkar** Founding Project Director Shiv Nadar Foundation Project Director-Shiksha, Sub-Jury, HCLTech Grant

12	Networking Lunch	60 mins	2:15 pm - 3:15 pm	Mr. Narender Paul Chief Operating Officer, CORD Training Centre Sidhbari, Himachal Pradesh **Mr. Rohit Bahadur** Partner Grant Thornton India **Dr. Simmi Mahajan** CHRO and Head Project Inclusion, Sri Aurobindo Society Director, Sri Aurobindo Society, Delhi Branch **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation

Summary of the Registration

954 Registration Received (Total)

310 Registered Participants (At Venue)

177 On Spot Registration

487 Total Participants (At venue)

The culmination of the 10th edition of the HCLTech Grant Pan India Symposium was in Delhi. **Swami Avyayananda Ji** from Chinmaya Mission, Delhi, welcomed attendees with enthusiasm, emphasizing personal responsibility and collective action for societal improvement. He stressed the importance of personal hygiene and disciplined routines for individual well-being and the greater good of society. Swamiji highlighted the transformative power of spiritual growth and encouraged active participation in initiatives aimed at improving the world, drawing inspiration from Swami Chinmayananda's teachings and his own experiences to underscore the need for proactive engagement and continuous personal growth.

Mr. Abhinav Ghosh, Senior Vice President of Strategy at HCLTech, delivered a keynote address expressing gratitude for the opportunity to share insights on the transformative impact of technology. He reflected on HCL Technologies' journey and its contributions across various sectors globally, emphasizing their commitment to innovation and social responsibility through the HCL Foundation. Ghosh highlighted HCL's role in driving sustainable development and empowering underprivileged communities worldwide, thanking everyone for their support and partnership in achieving these goals.

Dr. Nidhi Pundhir, Senior Vice President of Global CSR at HCLTech and Director of HCL Foundation, addressed the audience with enthusiasm, celebrating the successful completion of symposiums across India. She expressed gratitude to Swamiji for his inspiring presence and emphasized the importance of understanding the history of technological advancements. Dr. Pundhir highlighted the transformative impact of technology on various sectors, emotionally acknowledging the journey of the HCL Foundation team and volunteers. She called for a standing ovation for the energy box team and Grant Thornton, recognizing the incredible teamwork that made the 10th edition symposiums a significant success. Reflecting on the 18,624 kilometres travelled in 24 days, Dr. Pundhir praised the logistical efforts and noted the symposium's success in accommodating a large audience, including livestreaming events in Dehradun and Hyderabad. She concluded by expressing sincere appreciation for all participants and presented a video showcasing the symposiums held in Chennai, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Shillong, Hyderabad, Udaipur, and Dehradun.

Masterclass On CSR Laws and its New Amendments
(By *Mr. Nikhil Pant*, Senior CSR Advisor and Former CPO, National Foundation for CSR, IICA, MCA, GOI)
and
Masterclass on Impact Funding Landscape and Opportunities for Non-profits
(By *Mr. Bhomik Shah*, Founder and CEO CSRBOX)
(Key Take Aways same as Chennai Symposium)

Panel Discussion on " CSR- Creating Ecosystems of Impact "

Panellists

- **Dr. Nidhi Pundhi**r, Senior Vice President-Global CSR, HCLTech & Director, HCLFoundation
- **Mr. Gaurav Kapoor,** Head of Capital, British High Commission, New Delhi
- **Mr. Mukesh Mohan Gupta,** President, Chamber of Indian Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
- **Dr. Prachi Jain,** Founder Climate Corporate Solutions, Advisor Environment & Climate Change-WHRF
- Moderator: **Mr. Nikhil Pant**

Key Takeaways from the Panel Discussion

The panel discussion on "CSR- Creating Ecosystems of Impact," moderated by **Mr. Nikhil Pant**, aimed at guiding NGOs in crafting robust proposals for the HCL Tech Grant. The focus was on aligning proposals with impact parameters to maximize community engagement and funding utilization.

- Emphasizing the importance of evaluating impact investments through strong planning and theory of change, input and output generation, and systemic changes, **Mr. Gaurav Kapoor** stressed the sustainability of impact beyond funding cycles.

- The significance of MSMEs in India was highlighted, focusing on their challenges in skill development, technology upgradation, and funding constraints. **Mr. Mukesh Mohan Gupta** called for greater awareness of government schemes and collaboration between NGOs and MSMEs.

- **Dr. Prachi Jain** emphasized the need for mindset change across various sectors to ensure the success of sustainability and climate change projects, highlighting the importance of integrating environmental awareness into boardroom discussions.

- Sharing experiences with the HCL Foundation, **Dr. Nidhi Pundhir** reflected on the organization's journey in the NGO sector. She emphasized the value of participation and learning, noting changes in India's NGO landscape and the importance of collaborative efforts for measurable impact.

The panel discussion concluded with a consensus on the importance of aligning CSR initiatives with sustainable development goals, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and ensuring long-term impact through strategic planning and mindset change. The insights provided by the panellists underscored the need for a holistic approach to CSR that integrates economic, social, and environmental considerations for creating ecosystems of impact.

Interactive Session Harnessing the Power of social media: NGOs Driving Change
(By *Ms. Payal Randhawa*, Founder Director Bworks Communication and Advisory Services)

In the interactive session "Harnessing the Power of Social Media: NGOs Driving Change," Ms. Payal Randhawa emphasized the critical role of communication in driving strategy and brand

building. Drawing from her background in development studies, she highlighted how communication is not merely a support function but a vital element that requires serious energy and strategic work. Ms. Payal discussed the importance of incorporating communication deeply into organizational strategies, encouraging the creation of impactful content like posters and short films. She underscored the need for NGOs to prioritize communication, noting a positive shift in how deeply people now engage with communication strategies. Sharing her experiences, she emphasized the importance of collaboration between communication and program teams. Ms. Payal concluded by stressing the significance of teaching communication skills to children, supported by her organization and the Ministry of Social Justice, highlighting its critical role in overall development.

HCLTech Grant Process and Experience Sharing
Grant Process
- **Ms. Shally Kaushal**, Deputy Manager, HCLFoundation

Experience Sharing
- **Mr. Shashank Shekhar**, Subject Matter HCLTech Grant
- **Mr. Robin Sarkar**, Project Director-Shiksha, Sub-Jury, HCLTech Grant
- **Mr. Narender Paul**, Chief Operating Officer, CORD Training Centre Sidhbari, Himachal PradeshMr. Rohit Bahadur, Partners, Grant Thornton India
- **Dr. Simmi Mahajan**, CHRO and Head Project Inclusion, Sri Aurobindo Society Director, SriAurobindo Society, Delhi Branch
- **Moderator: Mr. Robin Thomas**, Group Manager, HCLFoundation

The HCLTech Grant Process & Experience Sharing panel discussion provided valuable insights from various speakers. **Ms. Shally Kaushal** detailed the HCLFoundation's grant process, emphasizing its rigorous and thorough nature. **Dr. Simmi Mahajan** shared her excitement as a grant finalist, highlighting the intense application process and the project's significant impact. She emphasized the importance of organizational credibility and expressed gratitude for the learning opportunities provided by the HCL Grant.

Mr. Shashank Shekhar stressed the need for balanced evaluations, advising against site visits to avoid biases and encouraging thorough preparation. He highlighted the importance of choosing projects aligned with organizational strengths and ensuring sustainability through analytical examination of exit policies. He expressed concerns over financial flows, emphasizing personal responsibility in ensuring proper fund allocation.

Mr. Narender Paul discussed the challenges faced by project-based NGOs, emphasizing the need for sustainable community-led designs and active community participation. He shared his experience in setting up advocacy forums across multiple panchayats to ensure continuous community connection.

Mr. Robin Sarkar reflected on the enriching experience of being a jury member, highlighting the intense discussions during project selection and the significance of scalability and replicability in ensuring effective delivery and impact assessment. He appreciated consultants' efforts in aligning projects with community needs.

Mr. Rohit Bahadur observed the mixed quality of NGO applications and stressed the need for improved compliance and documentation. He discussed the impartial stages of project evaluation, emphasizing the importance of presenting facts and examples impartially.

The discussion underscored the diversity of challenges and opportunities faced by NGOs in achieving meaningful community impact through grants. Key points included the importance of organizational credibility, balanced evaluations, sustainability, community-led designs, and the need for improved compliance and documentation in grant applications.

Impact of the Symposium

The Delhi symposium, which initially aimed for 400 attendees but welcomed 487, marked a significant success with a **21.75%** increase in participants. A key highlight was the announcement of new grant criteria that emphasize the scalability and replicability of proposed projects. Additionally, the average expenditure requirement for the last three financial years was reduced from ₹1 Crore to ₹50 Lakhs for NGOs in the Health and Education categories, aiming to broaden eligibility and enhance the impact of initiatives.

Key takeaways included the importance of **personal responsibility and collective action** for societal improvement, the transformative power of spiritual growth, and the crucial role of technology in sustainable development. Discussions emphasized proactive engagement, continuous personal growth, and the need for strong communication strategies in brand building.

The symposium also stressed the importance of balanced evaluations, community involvement, and ensuring that projects are **scalable and replicable**. Overall, the event highlighted a commitment to driving **meaningful community impact** through inclusive and thoughtful grant processes.

The Delhi symposium not only celebrated past achievements but also charted a clear course for future initiatives. The revised grant criteria and focus on scalability and replicability reflect a dedication to expanding NGO eligibility and amplifying project impact. The high turnout and strong engagement underscored the collective effort required to drive significant community impact through grants.

Looking Forward: Conclusion of the 10th HCLTech Symposium

The 10th edition of the HCLTech Pan India Symposium 2024 has reaffirmed the critical role of strategic collaboration between NGOs, corporates, and government bodies in advancing sustainable social impact on a national scale. By aligning efforts with government priorities, emphasizing scalability, and embracing technological innovation, participants have effectively addressed some of the most pressing societal challenges.

This symposium has brought to the forefront the necessity of public-private partnerships, streamlined processes for increased accessibility, and a commitment to continuous learning and innovation. As we conclude this landmark edition, the outcomes demonstrate a significant amplification of impact, setting a strong precedent for future initiatives.

The collective commitment to fostering compliance, promoting sustainable practices, and engaging citizens has created a robust framework for enduring social change. The insights and outcomes of this symposium will serve as a guiding force, reinforcing the collaborative momentum needed to build a more equitable and sustainable India.

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