

Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship

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Message from the Dean

International and Alumni Relations (I&AR)

Dear Readers,

As you will observe from the contents of this edition of the CSIE Newsletter, the scope of the Centre's activities is constantly expanding. While sustaining the outreach programs to schools and colleges for capacity building, there is also a sharper focus now on building mutually-beneficial partnerships with allied Centres at other institutions, such as VIT Vellore. The Governance Committee of CSIE plays a key role in defining the strategic directions for CSIE, and many IITM faculty provide valuable inputs through this mechanism.

Faculty and students of IITM are the key stakeholders in the success of CSIE. In this issue, we have featured one faculty member (Arunn Narasimhan) and one student group (Sahaay) who have undertaken outstanding work with high social impact. We will continue this exercise in future issues as well.

"Corporate social responsibility" is the catch phrase these days, and CSIE needs to leverage this upsurge in interest fully, by attracting funding and undertaking relevant activities. A recent prospectus containing potential CSR-related R&D initiatives has been prepared for this purpose, and may be accessed via this link: <http://alumni.iitm.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IIT-CSR-2015-eBook.pdf>. GoI-approved incubators on academic campuses (http://alumni.iitm.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IITM-Incubators_IITMIC_RTBI_CSR-eProspectus-2015.compressed.pdf) are also eligible to receive CSR funding. The recently-launched "Development Office" under the IITM Alumni Charitable Trust is coordinating activities related to approaching corporates for funding to sustain such socially-relevant initiatives on campus. Your help and support are keenly solicited for this purpose.



Prof. R. Nagarajan

Dean, International and Alumni Relations

Summer Camp for School Students



During one of the sessions on “Engineering is Fun” workshop

CSIE conducted its 3rd edition of a 3-day Summer Camp on '**Social Innovation through Technology**' for school students of grade 11 and 12 from 6 to 8th, May 2015 at IIT Madras. The focus of the program is to create awareness about the role of technology and entrepreneurship to solve socially relevant issues. 77 students (52 private and 25 rural government school students) attended the camp.

Prof. R. Nagarajan, Dean I&AR, IIT Madras and Shri Joseph Thomas, VP, Development Office, IIT Madras inaugurated the programme. During the Chief Guest address, Prof. R. Nagarajan said that he hoped this 3-day programme would ignite a passion amongst the students in their future endeavours.

Various faculty from IIT-M gave talks on Innovation, Social Issues, challenges & opportunities, Science & Technology Apps around us, Entrepreneurship and Nurturing Creativity. Prof. T.S.Natarajan, demonstrated scientific facts through experiments. The students were given hands on training in the central workshop. Finally, Certificates of Participation were distributed to students by Shri Joseph Thomas.

MoU between CSIE and VIT-TBI

CSIE signed an agreement with TBI, VIT University, Vellore on 28th, April 2015 for promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship activities with focus on innovation capacity development, skill development and mentoring start-ups.

The objective is to provide faculty development programs & workshops for Engineering, Science, Polytechnic and ITI faculty, consulting & mentoring for establishing innovation cells and business incubators in academic institutes.

The MoU was signed by Prof. R. Nagarajan, Dean I&AR, represented CSIE and Shri TS Thiagarajan, Secretary, on behalf of VIT-TBI.

CSIE Governance Committee Meeting

CSIE organised the Governance Committee meeting on 23th April, 2015. Prof. R. Nagarajan, Prof. LS Ganesh, Prof. Ashwin Mahalingam, Prof. Devendra Jalihal, Prof. K N Sathyanarayanan, Prof. L. Prakash Sai and CSIE team attended the meeting. The GC reviewed the progress of last 3 months' activities of CSIE and future course of actions were discussed.

The committee decided to launch an Online course on "Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship" through NPTEL.

South Asia level Global Impact Masters Initiatives



CSIE participated in the meeting organized by Tata Institute of Social Sciences to discuss the role of South Asia level Global Impact Masters initiative.

GIM is an initiative of UNCTAD to create a worldwide network of academics and impact investment practitioners, help students gain professional experience in low-income countries, and develop teaching material for business schools, including a Global Impact Masters focused on economically effective and socially productive forms of corporate behaviour.

The meeting was hosted by EDI (Entrepreneurship Development Institute) of India at Ahmedabad from 26-27 May 2015. As an outcome of the meeting, it was agreed to create a forum called South Asia Network for Impact Master – a part of Global Impact Master and all the participants are invited to become members.

DBS - NUS SVC Asia 2015

CSIE was invited as a community partner to the National University of Singapore's DBS - NUS 'Social Venture Challenge Asia 2015' competition. This challenge aims to identify and support new social ventures that have the potential to generate positive, scalable and sustainable social impact. More than 680 submissions were received from 30 countries.

Shri Joseph Thomas and Shri James Rajanayagam from CSIE participated as the Judges for the primary round of evaluation to shortlist the semi-finalists.



Water Co - Lab

Centre for Technology and Policy (C-TaP) invited Shri Joseph Thomas from CSIE for lunch discussion on the "Water CoLab", an experiment running at IIM-Ahmedabad and CIIE (The Centre for Innovation, Incubation, and Entrepreneurship). The discussion was held at Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras on 18th May, 2015.

Shri Nishesh Mehta, the founder, presented the model and his experience. The participants shared their experience and discussed about the model.

Social facets of IITM - Faculty

Dr. ARUNN NARASIMHAN

DESIGNATION:

Professor, Mechanical Engineering Department, IIT Madras

CORE RESEARCH AREA:

Heat and Fluid Flow in Porous Media and Biological Systems

Dr. Narasimhan's pioneering bio-heat transfer research on the human eye undergoing retinal laser was performed in collaboration with Shankar Nethralaya Research Foundation.



SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION:

Dr. Narasimhan is actively serving the cause of science and engineering outreach within interior India. He is the founder of two prolific blogs, one in English, the other in Tamil, in which he discourses to the Indian student community at large, on a wide range of topics which includes but is not at all limited by those of his research.

He believes that even though English is the preferred language of science, it is important to communicate science to the general people in the local vernacular language for its farther and deeper penetration and appreciation in the society. He has been blogging in Tamil for past 7 years to bridge the growing gap between society and world of science.

One of the major obstacle to science writing is difficulty in translating in local languages. Unlike English, spoken versions of Tamil differs significantly from the written version. He strongly believes in Albert Einstein's quote "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler. If you can't explain it to your grandmother, you don't understand it well enough". With 3G leading to 4G technology in hand-held devices, he suggests the potential of the internet be tapped by Indian academia for science communication to the younger generation.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Dr. Narasimhan is the author of three popular science books written in Tamil. The book titles are:

1. ஏலியன்கள் இருக்கிறார்களா? (Do Aliens Exist?)
2. நேனோ: ஓர் அறிமுகம் (Nano – an Introduction)
3. உலகே உன் உருவம் என்ன? (Earth, What's Thy Shape - Science Essays)

He has also been described by Asian Scientist as "*one of India's most energetic professors -- both in person and in cyberspace*".

ONGOING PROJECTS:

Planning to publish his books in Kindle Single, Book on Chaos theory - English and Tamil Edition and Story of physics in Twitter sentence.

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Social facets of IITM - Student Group

SAHAAY

Sahaay at Centre for Innovation, as the name suggests, aims to develop technological products and to provide technical solutions to assist specially-abled people in their daily lives.

VISION:

The pleasure one experiences by helping someone in need is invaluable and the level of contentment of such achievements is extremely high.

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION:

Firstly, Sahaay has collaborated with an NGO named Vidyasagar, which works for the welfare of a set of children with cerebral palsy. After performing detailed case studies on every child, with higher priority for outgoing children, their need for specific devices which can assist as a source of income has been identified.

The vision is to establish a team of enthusiastic students which would collaborate with various NGOs and work towards development of technologies as solutions that greatly impact the society.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Presently, *Sahaay* has successfully developed four products (including two software products) and served a requirement of additional equipment for a wheelchair. The details are as follows:

Block Printing device

This consists of a series of block printers capable of printing a paper of predefined size. A roll of paper would be fed into the machine and the printing action can be achieved through slightest mechanical action affordable by the children. This can be perceived as a good source of income for specially-abled children.

Bill generator software

Most of these children are able to lift or press objects to little extent. A device that converts these actions into mouse-clicks has been developed by a group in team *Sahaay*. The requirements of the NGO were to design and develop a software by just using these mouse-clicks to generate bills based on inputs given from a device.

Leap Motion games

The teachers at the NGO wish to use a Leap motion Controller developed by Leap Motion Inc. to allow these kids to play games. The problem being faced with the existing games is the need of very intricate gestures which are difficult for these students to perform. The aim of this project is to develop games or interfaces which can be part of their recreational activities.

Paper punching machine

The project aims at designing a device that can be used to punch various designs on paper. A roll of paper is fed into the machine which would be capable of continuously punching out designs on paper.



Upcoming Events

1. **Launch of Idea Spark 2015**

Idea Spark 2015 is a contest for students to recognize and nurture the technological ideas that will solve the problems of society. The objective is to create awareness among students, bring out their ideas, and help their ideas to develop into a business plan. CSIE will support the selected ideas with mentoring to develop into business plans. The finalists will be provided with cash award and mentoring support.

2. **Launch of Gandhi Hazare Award**

A program where students form teams and propose technical solutions to fight corruption in the country. The program provides funding and infrastructure to shortlisted team(s) to work on the idea and deliver a product.

3. **Launch of Social Entrepreneurship club at IIT Madras**

The Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CSIE) will launch a Social Entrepreneurship club at IIT Madras. Its mission, in alignment with CSIE, is to build an environment conducive to students to learn about social issues and social enterprises and assist them to become social entrepreneurs.



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