Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Inside This Issue

Message from the Dean

International and Alumni Relations (I&AR)

Dear Readers,

This issue of the CSIE Newsletter gives a full flavor of the various activities of the Centre. The intent to broaden the scope of CSIE's engagement with various stakeholders is also clearly evident. Strong partnerships are being pursued with like-minded organizations. For example, the Technology Business Incubator at VIT Vellore is working with CSIE to instill the entrepreneurial spirit in polytechnics. CSIE is assisting IIT Tirupathi with one module in its course on "Concepts in Engineering & Design". Tagore Engineering College has associated with CSIE in conducting a Student Development program, and in launching the ideas competition "Idea Spark 2015". An MoU is now in place between CSIE and Vikasa International Centre, Hyderabad to facilitate a joint certificate course. Student interns are being hosted from TISS, and discussions are ongoing to evolve a joint M.A. in Social Entrepreneurship. Visits to CSIE during this period by many other individuals and organizations is another indicator that CSIE's outreach efforts have proved very successful.

From its inception, CSIE has benefited from the stewardship of a Governance Committee composed of faculty who are practitioners of and/ or experts in social enterprise. The new members, Profs. Mahesh Panchagnula and Kalyanaraman (retd.), as well as Dr. Tamaswati Ghosh (CEO, IITM Incubation Cell), and Joseph Thomas (VP, Development Office) bring varied perspectives that will prove invaluable in the optimal leveraging of CSIE as a service entity in the campus ecosystem. It is to be noted that Joe was, until recently, a part of CSIE, and has recently taken up a full-time position in the Development Office with a focus on raising CSR funding from corporates to support campus incubators & faculty R&D in socially-relevant thrust areas.

Read on to learn more about CSIE....

Prof. R. Nagarajan

Dean, International and Alumni Relations

Consultation Workshop for Polytechnics & ITI's

Principals/Senior faculty from various institutions sharing their needs to promote Entrepreneurship

CSIE & Vellore Institute of Technology-TBI plan to organize Capacity Building programs for faculty members/teachers of Polytechnics and ITI's to foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem in their institution and thereby, promote a culture of entrepreneurship among their students.

In this regard, CSIE conducted a Consultation Workshop on 'Need Assessment to Promote Entrepreneurship' for the Principal / Senior faculty from polytechnics and ITI's in Chennai region on 3rd September, 2015 at IIT Madras.

The objective of the workshop was to get inputs from participants to understand their requirements, analyse the gap and structure the programme for entrepreneurship promotion in their respective institutions.

Ms. S. Madumathi, I.A.S, Director of Technical Education, Chennai and Prof. R. Nagarajan, Dean – I&AR, IIT-Madras were invited as Chief guests. 23 members from various institutions participated, and identified their needs and requirements to promote entrepreneurship.

Joint Course Module with IIT Tirupathi

In collaboration with IIT Tirupathi, CSIE will offer some modules of the summer camp on "Social Innovation through Technology" for the first year students as part of their course on 'Concepts in Engineering & Design'. CSIE will facilitate the lectures on the following topics during Sep – Oct 2015.

The modules are 1) Social Entrepreneurship, 2) Definition of Innovation, 3) Engineering in everyday life, 4) Science & Tech applications around us, and 5) Life skills & Creativity.

As part of this module, Prof. L S Ganesh from Department of Management Studies, IIT-M delivered a lecture on Social Entrepreneurship on 27thAugust, 2015 at IIT Tirupathi.

Capacity Development Program for Student

Session in progress

CSIE, in association with Tagore Engineering College, conducted a one-day Student Development Program on "Developing Life skills for the Winning Edges" on 22nd August, 2015 at IIT-Madras. 101 students from various colleges participated.

Prof. V. Vijayalakshmi, Department of Management Studies, IIT-Madras gave a talk on 'Learning & Unlearning: Growth Mindsets' and Shri Shiva Subramaniam, Founder, Paperclip co-ordinated a session on 'Creativity'.

Launch of Idea Spark 2015 and Gandhi Hazare Award

CSIE launched 'Idea Spark 2015' on 27th August, 2015 at IIT Madras. The objective of this competition is to create awareness among engineering students to bring out their ideas and help them to develop these into business plans. CSIE will support the three best ideas with cash awards and mentoring.

Launched by Prof. R. Nagarajan & Shri Joseph Thomas, Development office, IIT-M

Also in association with Centre for Innovation, CSIE launched the 'Gandhi Hazare Award' on 27th August, 2015 at IIT Madras. The competition is open to all IIT-M students. Student teams can propose technical solutions to fight corruption in the country. The best ideas will be awarded and support provided to develop these into prototype offerings.

CSIE Governance Committee Meeting

CSIE organized its Governance Committee meeting on 11th August, 2015. The Governance Committee has added Prof. Mahesh Panchagnula, Rd. Prof. Kalyanaraman, Dr. Tamaswati Ghosh and Mr. Joseph Thomas as new members.

The GC reviewed the progress of last three months' activities of CSIE, and future course of actions was deliberated.

MoU between CSIE & Vikasa International Centre

MoU Exchanged by Shri Shoury Reddy (Left) and Prof. R. Nagarajan (Right)

CSIE signed an agreement with Vikasa International Centre, Hyderabad on 9th July, 2015 at IIT Madras for promoting Social Entrepreneurship. The objective is to provide a joint certificate course, awareness programs, seminars, work-shops & conferences for students and entrepreneurs.

The MoU was signed by Prof. R. Nagarajan, on behalf of CSIE, and Shri Shoury Reddy, Executive Director, on behalf of Vikasa.

Internship with CSIE

Five students from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Tuljapur are doing their internship with CSIE from July to September 2015. Their work is to prepare mini case—studies of companies incubated at RTBI (Rural Technology & Business Incubator), IIT-Madras.

Students from TISS with CSIE staff

During the internship, they visited Kuthambakkam village and Villgro at IIT Madras Research Park, and also attended a few talks by Shri Saravanan Sundaramoorthy, Founder of EdSix Brain Lab; Prof. Muhammed Yunus, Founder of Grameen Bank, and Mrs. Rema Subramaniam, Co-founder of Ankur Capital.

Introductory Session on Idea Spark 2015

CSIE took part in an Introductory session to "Idea Spark 2015" at Tagore Engineering College, Chennai and at AMET University, Chennai.

Shri James Rajanayagam spoke about the concept of "Idea Spark 2015" and presented guidelines on how to participate in the competition. He also conducted an awareness session on 'Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation' .

Session by Shri James at AMET University

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South Asia Network for Impact Masters Meeting

CSIE hosted the second meeting of South Asia Network for Impact Masters (SANIM) on 10th September, 2015. Members from CSIE, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), and Sri Aurobindo Foundation for Integral Management (SAFIM) participated in the meeting.

Prof. R. Nagarajan spoke about the need to streamline the social entrepreneurship curriculum in other educational institutions and briefed about the initiatives taken by CSIE towards this. Members discussed the agenda of the meeting, and agreed on common points of action to strengthen and expand the network.

NABARD – RAG Meeting

CSIE attended the 1st Regional Advisory Group meeting of NABARD on 25th August, 2015 at their regional office, Chennai. The objective of the meeting was to deliberate on issues of farms, farmers and the rural economy.

Visitors to CSIE

- Mr. Sri Ram, Founder of Land to Kitchen – 22nd June, 2015

- Mr. Ramesh Subramaniam from SriCity Foundation – 21st July, 2015

- Mr. Srinivas Krishnaswamy, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Hand in Hand – 20th August, 2015

- 3 Faculty from B S AbdurRahman University, Chennai – 10th August, 2015

- B V Raju Institute of Technology, Telangana

5 Faculty from BVRIT visited CSIE on 14th August, 2015. The objectives of this visit was (1) to understand the various efforts by CSIE and IITM faculty to integrate societal concerns into the mainstream engineering curriculum at IIT Madras, (2) to familiarize the BVRIT faculty with the process by which CSIE's curriculum has been developed and delivered to the students, and (3) to explore the mechanisms by which such initiatives can be taken forward in BVRIT and other colleges of the Sri Vishnu Educational Society (SVES).

- Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development

18 students and 3 faculty visited CSIE on 11th September, 2015. The objective of the visit was to get brief understanding of the course curriculum at IIT-M on 'Innovation & Social Entrepreneurship'. They visited Centre for Innovation and also interacted with Prof. R. Nagarajan, Mr. Joseph Thomas & a few students. Mr. James Rajanayagam briefly explained the activities of CSIE.

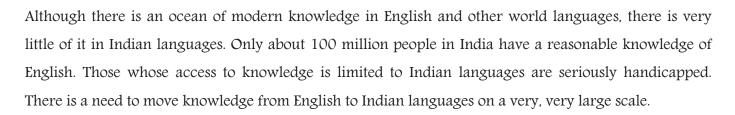# Social Facets of IITM – Faculty Profile

V. SRINIVASA CHAKRAVARTHY

DESIGNATION:

Professor, Department of Biotechnology, IIT Madras.

CORE RESEARCH AREA:

Computational Neuroscience

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION:

Although there is an ocean of modern knowledge in English and other world languages, there is very little of it in Indian languages. Only about 100 million people in India have a reasonable knowledge of English. Those whose access to knowledge is limited to Indian languages are seriously handicapped. There is a need to move knowledge from English to Indian languages on a very, very large scale.

With the above motivation, Prof. Chakravarthy has been involved in popularizing science in Indian languages, particularly Telugu, for the past 10 years.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Prof. Chakravarthy has been running a science blog in Telugu [http://scienceintelugu.blogspot.in/] for about 6 year. The blog has over 900 posts, over 3 lakh views, and nearly 600 readers/followers.

He has written or translated about 60 books on popular science in Telugu. He has been sending copies of these books to rural schools in Andhra Pradesh for many years on a small scale at personal expense. The same work has been continued on a larger scale over the last two years, thanks to "Socially Relevant Project (SRP)" funds granted by IITM alumni.

The SRP project involves writing/translating science books in Telugu and sending copies of those books in Telugu to more than 300 rural schools in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

As a part of the same project, a set of 16 Tamil science books have also been translated by a team of Tamil translators. 300 sets of those 16 Tamil books have been donated to an NGO called AID India. These books are being used by AID India as part of their educational activities in rural schools of Tamil Nadu.

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Social Facets of IITM – Student Profile

AVISEK BARLA

SOCIAL PROJECT:

Avisek Barla, who is pursing his bachelor's degree in Bio-Technology at IIT-Madras, is currently working on a project called "Micro Life Innovations".

The idea of this project was conceived during the Minor course on "Innovation & Social Entrepreneurship", last year at IIT-M. Currently, he has a team of five members. They use a nascent technology called Microfluidics, which essentially promises to replicate a whole lab on a single chip which is portable and economical.

They are using it to make a Milk Adulteration Detection kit (MAD kit). They are developing 2 devices to detect the presence of Detergent, Urea, Glucose, Starch, Formalin, etc. which are slow poisons and have detrimental effects in the long term. These are:

1) A paper chip which works like a litmus strip. User has to put 2 drops of milk and a total of 6 adulterants can be found out. A mobile app is used to quantify the amount of adulterants. Available for a few rupees, this can be used by anyone and is portable. They are at the prototype stage with this.

2) A polymer chip which will truly do the job of an industrial grade device at a fraction of its cost and with equal precision. They are about to start the work on their first prototype.

From the work done in the past 3 months, they have applied for 2 patents and more applications are expected. They are also working on a pathogen detection system for milk, which happens to be one of the biggest pain points in the dairy industry. Prototypes will be completed by early September.

FUTURE PLANS:

- Development of affordable and easy-to-use products.
- Minimum usage of electricity for deployment in any part of India.
- Automated processes for minimum user interference
- Expanding into blood diagnostics

They believe in disrupting the future with technology in the hands of people, and their work is more about saving lives. It is a culmination of Biotechnology, Microfluidics, Image Processing, Electronics, Mobile applications, Liberal arts and Business Models.

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Upcoming Events

- Launch of "Social Entrepreneurship Club" at IIT Madras – September 2015

- Grand Finale of "Gandhi Hazare Award" – November 2015

- Winter camp for school students on "Social Innovation through Technology" – December 2015

- Grand Finale of "Idea Spark 2015" – December / January 2015

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