

Press Release- Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award, India- 2024

Empowering Change: Jubilant Bhartia Foundation and Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship honours Social Entrepreneur of the Year - India 2024

New Delhi, India, September 10, 2024 – The Jubilant Bhartia Foundation and the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, the sister organization of the World Economic Forum, today honoured Mr Akshay Saxena of Avanti Fellows with the esteemed Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award - India 2024. The award was presented by Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas in the presence of distinguished personalities from industry, government and civil society at a ceremony held at New Delhi.

Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, congratulated the winner and finalists. He appreciated the innovative challenges undertaken by social entrepreneurs in positively impacting lives and environment. Minister Puri said, “Social enterprises have been part of Indian fabric for a very long time. They typically cater to low income communities, typically agriculture, financial inclusion, health and education, clean energy.” He complemented government, social sector and corporates working together in partnership. He highlighted that Social enterprises have played a crucial role in upward mobility of millions of Indians over the years.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ms. Hilde Schwab, Co-Founder and Chairperson of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship highlighted, “Social entrepreneurs have achieved remarkable milestones by addressing challenges in unconventional ways. Today, when the world is moving from an industrial age to an intelligent age, social entrepreneurs are catalysts for innovation and positive impact, benefiting both people and the planet. Their dedication to delivering impactful solutions for unmet needs has been truly extraordinary.”

Professor Klaus Schwab, Founder & Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum and Co-Founder of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, observed the growing alignment between corporates and social entrepreneurs. He mentioned how India’s social innovation landscape is offering globally relevant models for the sustainable development agenda. “The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship is proud to have partnered with the Jubilant Bhartia Foundation in recognizing the outstanding contributions of Indian social entrepreneurs over the past 15 years”, he said.

Mr. Shyam S Bhartia, Chairman and Founder, Jubilant Bhartia Group and Founder Director of Jubilant Bhartia Foundation, congratulated the winner and all the finalists. In a significant announcement, Mr. Shyam Bhartia stated, “I am happy to announce that Jubilant Bhartia Group has signed the Rise Ahead Pledge, a new initiative of the Schwab Foundation and the Global Alliance for Social Entrepreneurship. The Rise Ahead Pledge is a commitment towards increasing investments into social innovation. Thus, Jubilant Bhartia Group has become the first Indian company to sign this pledge.” In alignment with their commitment and the Global

Alliance, Mr. Bhartia announced the establishment of the “Jubilant Bhartia Centre for Social Impact” supported by the Schwab Foundation. This centre will nurture emerging innovators and entrepreneurs, foster collaboration among past Social Entrepreneur of the Year (SEOY) winners, and support social start-ups. By offering resources, mentorship, networking opportunities, and world-class facilities, they aim to empower social entrepreneurs to achieve significant societal impact. Additionally, there would be a partnership with IIM-Ahmedabad Ventures.

Mr. Hari S Bhartia, Co- Chairman & Founder, Jubilant Bhartia Group, in his vote of thanks commended the enterprising spirit of social entrepreneurs and said that the corporates can learn from the experience of social innovators, their problem solving abilities to address the needs of the society.

Shereen Bhan, Managing Director, CNBC TV18 presented the stories of the three finalists and unfolded their inspiring and innovative journey.

Mr. Akshay Saxena on winning the SEOY Award India 2024 shared, “I am delighted! Thank you Jubilant Bhartia Foundation and the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship for recognising us. The recognition given to our work means so much not only to me but the entire team behind this platform. I hope this serves as an inspiration for others to join us in this journey. “

The other finalists for SEOY Award India 2024 were:

- Madhura Dasgupta Sinha, Aspire For Her, Mumbai
- Hunny Bhagchandani, Torchit, Ahmedabad

Over the past fifteen years, the Social Entrepreneur of the Year (SEOY) Award has become one of the most prestigious accolades for social entrepreneurs in India. Since 2010, the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and the Jubilant Bhartia Foundation have collaborated to promote social innovation in India through this award, recognizing and supporting the expanding field of social innovation in the country.

About the winner

Akshay Saxena

Avanti Fellows

www.avantifellows.org

Year Established: 2010

Sector: Education

Avanti Fellows operates India's largest free program aimed at helping economically disadvantaged students pursue technical careers. They partner with nine major government school systems to provide intensive tutoring for over 30,000 students annually. Their initiatives have also offered free materials, assessments, and test preparation support to more than 1.5 million students. Their NEEV program specifically targets 16 million students currently in Grades 9 and 10 in government schools across India. This program is focused on developing

at-home learning models to enhance Math and Science achievement in these grades, with the goal of increasing the number of government school students who choose Science in Grade 11 and pursue STEM careers. Over the past eight years, Avanti has collaborated with the Haryana government to implement state-run interventions both in-school and at-home, aimed at boosting Math and Science performance among high school students. Additionally, Avanti Fellows stands out as the only organization to have successfully developed high-scale at-home learning programs in partnership with state governments. They are also unique in their commitment to influencing state spending and policy on test preparation. Since its inception, Avanti's intensive after-school programs have reached over 75,000 students, and their curriculum, online content, and assessments have been utilized by more than 5 million students.

About Us

In partnership with the World Economic Forum, **the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship** is the foremost global community of pioneering social innovators driving systemic change. Since 1998, it has served as a platform to advance leading models of social innovation and now encompasses almost 500 change makers active in 190 countries. It was co-founded by Professor Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman, World Economic Forum, and Hilde Schwab, Co-Founder and Chairperson, Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship.

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Jubilant Bhartia Foundation (JBF), established in 2007, is the not-for-profit organisation of the Jubilant Bhartia Group. It focuses on conceptualising and implementing the Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives (CSR) for the Group. The Jubilant Bhartia Foundation's activities include various community development work, healthcare programs, cultural and sports events, environmental preservation initiatives, vocational training, women empowerment, educational activities, and promotion of Social Entrepreneurship.

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