



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY MADRAS
Office of Alumni and Corporate Relations

THE SOCIAL IMPACT CLUB

An IIT Madras Initiative

***Topic: Transforming Healthcare through Technology:
Opportunities, Challenges, and Future Trends***

October 1st, 2024 | Delhi Edition 1

THE SOCIAL IMPACT CLUB

The Social Impact Club is an IIT Madras initiative aimed at creating a forum for CSR professionals where key focus areas and challenges faced by the CSR community are discussed, shared and collaboratively addressed. This Club, a congregation of impact-driven CSR leaders, offers a unique opportunity to share insights, exchange ideas with industry experts, and contribute to shaping the future of CSR in our country.

The Social Impact Club also seeks to provide a platform for like-minded CSR leaders to connect, network, and build relationships that could lead to future collaborations and shared successes in the CSR domain.

OBJECTIVES

During the First Delhi NCR Edition of The Social Impact Club, the CSR leaders joined hands to address these objectives:

- Exploring Opportunities, Challenges, and Future Trends for Transforming Healthcare through Technology.
- Participate in focussed group discussion on how we envision the transformation of Healthcare through Technology.
- Networking with like-minded professionals over Evening High Tea.

MODERATOR

Dr. Himanshu Sinha

Dr. Himanshu Sinha is an Associate Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras in the Department of Biotechnology. Dr. Himanshu Sinha received his Ph.D. in the Department of Plant Science at the [Downing College, Cambridge University]. He carried out his post doctorate at the Center for Microbial Pathogenesis, Department of Molecular Biology and Microbiology, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC USA.

His Research Interests are:

- Quantitative and population genetics - genetic and environmental variation
- Genetic and regulatory networks in yeast
- Systems biology
- Large scale human transcriptome and variation data analysis

PARTICIPANTS

1. Ms. Sheryl Shankar, CSR Head, Sun Life Global Solutions.
2. Mr. Akshansh Akshat, CSR Head, Bata India Ltd.
3. Ms. Avrodita Chakladar, Associate Manager, HCL Foundation.
4. Mr. Dipanjan Bandyopadhyay, Manager – CSR, Petronet LNG LTD.
5. Ms. Chandamita Das, Resource Mobilization & Sponsorship Manager, ASME Foundation India.
6. Ms. Anamika Rajkumari, AGM, SIDBI.
7. Mr. Shantanu Arora, Consultant, EY.
8. Mr. Taarush Kishore Jain, Senior Consultant, EY.
9. Dr. Vijender Jeph, Lead - HealthTech Innovations, IPE Global.
10. Mr. Manu Sinha, Chief Manager – CSR, Power Grid Corporation of India.
11. Ms. Sakshi Bansal, Assistant Manager – CSR, Power Finance Corporation.
12. Mr. Durgesh Rangera, GM – CSR, Power Finance Corporation.

TEAM IIT MADRAS

1. Mr. Kaviraj Nair, CEO, Office of Institutional Advancement.
2. Ms. Vasudha Narasimhan, Vice President - Corporate Relations, Office of Institutional Advancement.
3. Dr. Himanshu Sinha, Associate Professor – Dept. of Biotechnology.
4. Mr. Gurbirender Gill, Vice president – CSR Fundraising, Office of Institutional Advancement.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

The event started with a quick round of introduction of all the CSR professionals followed by an introduction of the team from IIT Madras.

The context was set with opening remarks by Mr. Kaviraj Nair (CEO, Office of Institutional Advancement, IIT Madras), he emphasized the importance of fostering deeper engagements between IIT Madras and CSR professionals to solve societal challenges through research and collaboration.

Dr. Himanshu Sinha set the stage by discussing the current trends in healthcare technology, particularly in the areas of maternal and child health. He stressed the importance of focusing on healthcare delivery using AI and other novel technologies, particularly in underserved communities. The conversation then shifted to insights from the attending CSR professionals.

Mr. Akshansh Akshat shared insights from Bata's CSR work in maternal and child health, highlighting taboos surrounding maternal nutrition, especially in rural areas. He stressed the need for scalable interventions to address these biases. He cited the example of the misconception in rural areas that certain foods determine the gender of the baby, and this impacts the mother's nutrition.

Mr. Manu Sinha of Power Grid Corporation mentioned the existing collaboration of the company with IIT Madras, he felt that defining baseline figures in CSR projects that involve Healthcare and Technology is difficult. There is a challenge of measuring social impact of a project of this nature.

Mr. Taarush Kishore Jain of EY highlighted the risks involved in applying AI to healthcare. He pointed out the concerns around safety, liability, and regulatory issues when scaling healthcare tech. solutions.

Mr. Shantanu Arora of EY advises corporates for their CSR strategy, he stated that their clients are keen on deploying CSR funds to Education, Livelihood and Healthcare Infrastructure (like hospital) as the impact is visible, he agreed that healthcare projects in CSR space should address both preventive and curative aspects.

Ms. Sheryl Shankar of Sun Life Global Solutions mentioned the challenges of aligning the corporate mission with research-based projects like those at IIT Madras. She felt that there is a gap between corporate expectations and the pace of research, especially when it comes to impact measurement.

Ms. Avrodita Chakladar of HCL Foundation stated that while HCL Foundation is committed to healthcare, short-term measurable outcomes are crucial to justify CSR investments in research projects. She emphasized the importance of finding a balance between short-term measurable outcomes and long-term research investments.

Mr. Kaviraj Nair concluded the session by stating more effort will be made to clearly outline the impact of research projects. He also discussed the initiatives IIT Madras has taken to explain to academia on proposal writing and the importance of measurable social impact.

SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Greater alignment of academics with the requirements of CSR mandate, this will lead to Research projects wherein the outcomes are clear and measurable.
- » For Biotechnology and Healthcare CSR projects, developing a proof of concept is important, and if it is evaluated under any of the National Missions, it would gain credibility and acceptance by corporates.
- » In Healthcare projects involving AI greater care to be taken to address issues like hallucination of AI.
- » A mechanism wherein corporates can help get more patient data from their CSR projects, this would enable lesser errors in CSR projects involving healthcare and AI.

CONCLUSION

The Social Impact Club event proved to be a fruitful platform for discussing the pressing challenges in healthcare and how technology can be leveraged to address these. Participants shared valuable insights into the difficulties of aligning CSR initiatives with long-term research goals, particularly when it comes to healthcare interventions. However, there was a shared understanding that with collaboration, patience, and strategic investments in research, these challenges can be overcome.

IIT Madras encourages continuous engagement between the academic and corporate sectors to create scalable, impactful healthcare solutions. Moving forward, the Social Impact Club will serve as a recurring forum for brainstorming and partnership-building, aimed at fostering long-term relationships to drive social impact.