

Diksha – Asha for Education, Purdue Chapter- Project Proposal

Instructions: Please respond to the following questions. Provide detailed information wherever possible.

	Project Contact	Asha Contact
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Information about your organization:

- 1. Name of the organization** - A consortium of Alok Charitable Trust & Diksha Foundation
- 2. Objectives of the organization/group –**

The Alok Charitable Trust -

Alok Charitable Trust was set up in the memory of Late Lt. Alok Gupta who died in an accident in the Forward Areas of the Northern Sector of Jammu and Kashmir in India. The trust has been set up to provide necessary skill sets to people living in rural India by equipping them to play a significant role in their development process as equal participants. Initiatives have been launched in the most backward areas of the country. The Trust has adopted Gangagarh a village in the Block Pahasu, Buland Shehar in Uttar Pradesh for an innovative rural integration program.

Aims & Objectives of the Organization:

The main objectives of the Trust are socio-cultural and economic progress; as well as providing educational opportunities to communities deprived of them. Our endeavor as a voluntary Agency is to mobilize skills and resources from within and outside to aid rural communities in the process of sustainable development and thereby improving the quality of their lives. While implementing various development programs, the Trust strives to keep its image as a secular, non-profitable and charitable organization.

We feel that the continuing neglect of education, particularly in rural areas is a matter of great social concern. The Alok Trust has, therefore taken up this cause and has established a model educational complex on the lines of urban public schools in a rural area. The center strives to provide quality education to the rural poor at a minimal cost. The School has recently been recognized up to High School Level and has students from Gangagarh and its eight neighboring

villages. The students and the larger community is benefiting from the quality education that the school is offering.

The Diksha Foundation –

The Diksha Foundation was set up by a group of trained professionals who felt the urgent need to provide for the underprivileged section of the society. Over the past two years the organization has worked with the economically marginalized communities in few districts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, India. Diksha focuses on the theme of education and innovates by adding technology to its class rooms. The pioneering project of Diksha is KHEL (Knowledge Hub for Education and Learning). The KHEL Centers are adding modern technologies like Computers, Tablets to existing curriculum and making learning creative and fun.

Aims and Objectives of the Organization –

The organization aims to work with underprivileged communities, making innovative educational technologies accessible to economically vulnerable children. The objectives of our programs are to engage meaningfully with communities and bring to them interventions that will allow them to lead equal and just lives. To achieve this goal we add a lot of thought and creativity to our interventions; molding them to the needs of the communities that we work with. We have striven to create innovative learning ecosystems that allow learners to truly enjoy the process of gaining knowledge. Our Centers in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are a testament to this endeavor of Diksha Foundation.

3. Affiliations. Please give reasons if any of these are religious and/or political.

ALOK Charitable Trust and The Diksha Foundation are both affiliated to the Honey Bee Network. Honey Bee Network collects knowledge and innovations from different knowledge providers across India. Its mandate is to disseminate knowledge and Innovations which are just and fair. The Honey Bee Network has been founded by Dr. Anil Gupta, Faculty, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad.

Diksha Foundation is conducting IGNITE Idea Competition in partnership with Honey Bee Network and National Innovation Foundation (www.nif.org.in).IGNITE is an annual national competition to harness the creative and innovative spirit of school children. Students are invited to send their original creative technological ideas and innovations for the same. The last IGNITE competition- IGNITE 11 saw submission of 4104 entries from 25 States and Union Territories. Diksha is organizing the contest in government schools and other low cost schools of four districts viz. Patna, Nalanda, Bulandshahr & Muzaffarpur. The expected outreach of the program is 30000 children.

*To read more about Dr Gupta and Honey Bee Network please visit <http://www.sristi.org/hbnew/>. Dr Gupta is a Trustee of The Alok Charitable Trust.

The Alok Charitable Trust and The Diksha Foundation are not associated with any religious or political organizations. We are an independent consortium.

4. Community development activities, apart from education

Agriculture & Animal Husbandry:

Agricultural development in the village is being taken up with the assistance of Indian Farmers Fertilizers Corporation. IFFCO has provided to the farmers; seeds of high yielding varieties, fertilizers, micronutrients, insecticides and pesticides continuously for last 3 years. A team of scientists from Pusa Institute also visited the village and introduced the farmers to the latest technological development in the field of agriculture. The Provisional Co-operative Dairy Federation (PCDF) has started milk collection in the village. This has increased the farmers' income considerably. The efforts of the Trust in the economic upliftment of the community have made tremendous difference to the lives of the people.

Dharamshala:

Inspired by the Trust's selfless social service, one farmer has donated the sum of Rs. three lacs. The trust has used that donation to set up a *Dharamshala* in the name of the donor. This space is now being effectively used as a community center and a *Barat Ghar*. The management and maintenance of the *Dharamshala* is handled by the trust.

Vocational Education & Training:

Alarmed by the high dropout rate amongst the students, the Trust took up an initiative of "Earn while you learn". Chalk and candle making were taken up in 1992 on a modest scale. Encouraged with the results, the trust has innovated on this pattern to stem dropping out of school due to the pressure to earn amongst the students.

Yuvak Mangal Dal:

We believe that the youth of the country have a substantial role to play in the development and positive reconstruction of our society. Keeping this in mind we have made youth development and integration a corner stone of all our strategies. The Trust supports a youth organization called *Yuvak Mangal Dal*. The youth organization works to increase participation of the youth in decision making of the village. The organization works with village institutions such as Gram Panchayat and Gramlok Vikas Samiti; adding to these places the voice of the youth of the village. We hope that the work of YMD will be a trendsetter and make youth leaders who will add positively to the transformation of the village community.

Health and Hygiene:

Alok Charitable Trust has designed numerous interventions in collaboration with UNICEF, VHIE, and DAVP towards maintaining exemplary health and hygiene standards in the local communities. Some of these include village sanitation initiative in collaboration with UNICEF and RADHA (Rural Action for Development and Health Avenues). This intervention reaches out to thousands of women in the Bulandshahr district.

5. Brief description of previous funding sources including amounts (student fees if applicable).

1. *Prarabdh* – Village Improvement Project
Location – Gangagarh Village, Uttar Pradesh

Sources of Funding	Amount in INR
1. Cognizant Foundation	Rs. 380,000

2. Sitaram Jindal Trust	Rs. 50,000
3. Individual Donors	Rs. 200,000
4. Student Fees	Rs. 600,000

2. *KHEL (Knowledge Hub for Education and Learning)*
Location – Patna, Bihar

Sources of Funding	Amount in INR
1. Individual Donors	200,000
2. Commutiny – The Youth Collective	150,000
3. Asha For Education	150,000

3. *Neeraj Kumar Memorial Center*
Location – Nalanda, Bihar

Sources of Funding	Amount in INR
1. CSR initiative of Media Guru	Rs 3,00,000 per annum
2. Community Contribution & Computer Training Fee	Rs 25,000 per annum

6. Other pertinent information (annual report and/or budget, newspapers clips etc.)

Annexure_1_Diksha_Annual Report
 Annexure_2_Annual Report – Alok Charitable Trust
 Annexure_3_Audited Report_Alok_Charitable_Trust
 Annexure_4_Audited_Report_Diksha_Foundation

7. Details about your project area: List and location of school(s) operated by your group in the project area. In tabular form please

Sl. No.	Name of School/ Learning Center	Location
1.	KHEL (Knowledge Hub for Education and Learning)	Patna, Bihar
2.	SRB Alok School	Gangagarh Village, Pahasu Block, Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh
3.	Neeraj Kumar Memorial Learning Center	Satyendar Bhawan, Hilsa, Nalanda, Bihar

Through this proposal we are seeking support specifically for the KHEL Patna, Project.

8. Details of children enrolled in your school(s):

The following table has the break up students according to their gender –

Sl. No.	Name of School/ Learning	Number of	Number of
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	Center	Girls	Boys
1.	KHEL, Patna	57	50
2.	Neeraj Kumar Memorial Learning Center, Nalanda	39	67
3.	SRB Alok School	284	507

9. Average distance the children travel to attend your school.

Sl. No.	Name of School/ Learning Center	Average Distance traveled by Students
1.	KHEL, Patna	2 Kilometers
2.	Neeraj Kumar Memorial Learning Center, Nalanda	2 Kilometers
3.	SRB Alok School	4 Kilometers

10. Details of support you receive through governmental education programmes (such as DPEP etc.).

Currently we receive no support from the Government.

11. Details of staff employed at your school(s): Number of teachers, minimum qualifications, etc

Details of staff at each learning center –

KHEL Patna

Sl. No.	Post	Number of Employees	Educational Qualification
1.	Coordinator-cum-Instructor	1	Masters Degree
2.	Instructor	2	Bachelors Degree
3.	Full Time Volunteer	1	Masters Degree

SRB Alok School, Gangagarh, Uttar Pradesh

Sl. No.	Post	Number of Employees	Educational Qualification
1.	Principal	1	Masters Degree
2.	Head Mistress	1	Bachelors Degree
3.	Teachers	22	Bachelors Degree
4.	Support Staff	4	Standard 10 th pass

Neeraj Kumar Memorial Learning Center, Nalanda

Sl. No.	Post	Number of Employees	Educational Qualification
1.	Coordinator-cum-	1	Masters Degree

	Instructor		
2.	Instructor	2	Bachelors Degree

12. Existing infrastructure facilities (own building, toilets, playground, library, teaching aids etc.)

- KHEL Patna
 - Rented building with drinking water facility and toilets
 - Small Play ground
 - Computer Lab with 5 Computers, 2 Tablets and 1 Laptop
 - Mini-Library

- SRB Alok School
 - Own building with 9 bighas campus
 - Library Computer Lab with 12 computers
 - Audio Visual Lab

- Neeraj Kumar Memorial Learning Centre, Nalanda
 - Rented building with toilet and drinking water facilities.
 - Computer Room with 5 computers

13. Expansion plans for the future.

Future plan for expansion:-

- We are currently working with 107 children and youth; we plan to increase our capacity to 150 children and youth.
- A Computer Lab has been established with the support from ASHA for Education – we plan to expand our ICT based offerings –especially tablet based education
- We plan to develop and nurture our relationship with the Government Schools in the locality – so that our center can gradually become a resource hub for children from these schools.

14. Number of other schools in the project area and the range of classes offered by them.

There is a Government aided Primary School 2 km from the centre; it falls under the Lalunagar area. The primary school operates for classes 1 to 5. There is another Government Middle School situated near the center that comes under Khajpura area, which is around 3 km away from the centre. There are also some private schools in the area but they cater to children from economically strong families.

15. Differences in the program provided at your school(s) to other schools in the project area.

The KHEL Model (Knowledge Hub for Education and Learning) envisages establishing open learning spaces for socially and economically disadvantaged children and youth. KHEL does not limit itself to helping the child acquire basic literacy but focuses on holistic learning so that the child grows intellectually and not just mechanically as often happens in the context of schools/institutions serving the underprivileged.

We believe that education is the greatest tool to empower children and to help bring about transformation in the society. Our target community has limited access to educational resources,

our KHEL centre offers them holistic learning. The project is a bottom-up intervention led jointly by the children and the facilities.

The project includes supplementary/remedial education to address the issue of basic literacy and adoption of child friendly methods of learning and context specific education to enhance their intellectual well being. For the children's intellectual growth focus is on use of creative arts - learning through theatre, drama, music, group discussions, movie screenings, and book clubs. The centre also offers skill development training in the area of computers.

Details about the project:

16. Name, experience and education of the Project Director and others involved in the project from your group.

Name and Designation	Experience
Dr. G.P Gupta Chairman Alok Charitable Trust & Project Director	M.Sc. (Ag.) D. Phil Joint Commissioner (Retd.) Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India Dr. Gupta has over twenty years of experience in the area of education for the underprivileged.
Prof. Anil K. Gupta	Faculty at The Indian Institute of Management –Ahmedabad. Recipient of Padamshri Award, one of the highest civilian honors’ by the Government of India. Member, National Innovation Council, Chaired by Adviser to Prime Minister .Prof. Gupta assists organizations to become more creative by learning from grassroots innovations.
Mr. Gautam Gauri	Gautam is an engineering and management professional. He currently heads the activities at Diksha Foundation. He is a fellow of the Learning and Leadership Journey and has been experimenting with setting up innovative learning spaces.
Ms. Mohita Katariyar	Mohita has a strong interest in the holistic development of children. She combines a high degree of enthusiasm and knowledge to facilitate student learning in an innovative and constructive manner. Mohita holds a Bachelors Degree in Education.
Ms. Suchitra Gauri	Ms. Gauri has a Masters in English and Bachelors in Education degree. She has More than 20 years of experience in teaching. She is an intuitive facilitator and understands the psychology and learning needs of children. She focuses on the creative and spiritual development of her students.

17. Brief description of the type of education provided and teaching techniques employed (syllabus, vocational training etc.)

Through KHEL Patna Center we are bringing much needed supplementary education to the children of Jagdeo Path locality. Skill sets such as computers, English, Mathematics are allowing children from underprivileged backgrounds to re-assess their career options with renewed confidence. These simple activities are allowing us to directly tackle big issues such as illiteracy,

lack of quality education, as well as equipping vulnerable communities with skills to find solutions to their own problems.

Our belief is that the otherwise hierarchical roles of learner and teacher are interchangeable. At KHEL we encourage teachers to reduce fear and anxiety amongst the students so that a healthy learning environment can be created. The student to teacher ratio is being maintained at 1:25 so that the teacher is able to provide individual attention to all students. We have introduced various teaching aids like games, role plays, movies, outdoor exposure trips to the science center, etc. to make learning a fun experience. Each child is assigned to a group on the basis of his or her proficiency in the subject. So a child has the option, of say taking Mathematics classes at level three and English lessons at level one and move at his or her pace without feeling burdened.

We believe that the process of education for young learners should be as creative and enriching as possible. We believe that sports, quizzes, group discussions, art, movie shows, and trips beyond text books allow children to build self confidence in ways that just formal education can't. So we strive to add these components to our curriculum as well.

We are trying to bring existing pedagogies of learning, and innovating alongside. The KHEL Patna center is a space where children and young adults are learning to create better futures for themselves and the larger community.

18. Parental involvement in school operations (setting school syllabus etc.)

The parents of the students are involved in the process of their wards education through monthly community visits and active feedback mechanisms that have been built in the structure of the program. Over the years these feedbacks have strengthened our and communities accountability towards the education of the children.

19. Future education/employment possibilities of children in your school(s) and the related involvement of your group.

One of the goals of our Supplementary/Remedial Education Programme is the mainstreaming of children into government schools. We have established a relationship with the Government Primary School in the project area, and most of our students have taken admission there. We continue to support the students through classes before/after school hours. We also encourage students from government schools to come to our centre. Many children who go to government schools and most children who come to our Center are first generation school-ers. This creates a need gap for support beyond the school. The problem is compounded by lack of quality education in most government schools.

We help the students of our Computer Training Programme in applying for jobs. Bihar Government has a high demand for data entry operators well versed in Hindi typing. We have incorporated Hindi typing in our curriculum so that students can be employed. In the future, we plan to set up a dedicated Placement cell for the students of the computer training programme.

20. Source of your motivation to be involved in the project.

Alok Charitable Trust was established in the memory of Late Lt. Alok Gupta. The trust has been serving communities for the last 20 years. Our work derives its primary motivation from the love and commitment shared by Alok towards the society and the country.

The founders of Diksha are all young professionals who believe firmly in the ideal of giving back to communities. The idea of service through love is what motivates the Diksha Team to endeavor

for social change.

We are also motivated by our association with the Honey Bee Network. Professor Anil Gupta, Founder- Honey Bee Network actively supports us in bringing out the creativity and innovation amongst children. His ideas of innovation allow us to do pioneering work in the area of education.

The project has also received immense support from Youth Collective (YC). We would specially like to mention the work being done by Mr. Ravi Gulati, who is a board member of YC and his organization Manzil (www.manzil.in). The KHEL Model is inspired by the work being done at Manzil, and incorporates many of the elements of Manzil's learning programs.

The state of Bihar where the project is being executed has one of the lowest levels of literacy in the country. The sheer need for innovative developmental projects in the state motivate us to add our voice and resources to the cause of social upliftment.

21. Funds requested from Asha. Itemized description of proposed use of funds

S. No	Item Description	Monthly(in INR)	Annual(in INR)
1	Centre Co-ordinator cum Instructor Salary	10000	120000
2	Instructor Salary	5800	69600
3	Part Time Cleaner	1000	12000
4	Computer Instructor Salary #	6000	72000
5	Centre Rent	5000	60000
6	Internet	1000	12000
7	Electricity Charges	1500	18000
8	Books & Stationary	2000	24000
9	Miscellaneous	1500	18000
10	Project Management	5000	60000
	Total	38800	465600

Funds could be disbursed on quarterly basis

We have already received support from ASHA for salary of Computer Trainer till May 2013

22. Other sources of future funds for the project. Please specify any usage restrictions on these funds.

S. No	Name of Agency	Amount
1	Smile Foundation - Restricted Funds towards Nutrition of children	108000
2	Individual Donors	Not fixed

23. Attendance records with the names of children and their parents (you can attach it as a separate sheet).

Please find enclosed
Annexure_5_Student_Profile
Annexure_6_Attendance_Records_NFE
Annexure_7_Attendance_Records_Computer Training
Annexure_8_Photos

24. Do you have any suggestions on how Asha can be a positive influence in changing the education scenario in India?

We would like to congratulate Asha for the great work being done to support education in India. It is great to know that support has been extended to such innovative organizations like Auroville & Rishi Valley Rural School. Our suggestion is that there should be more people to people programmes – children have greatly benefitted from the knowledge shared by ASHA Volunteer – Ms. Laurence Altet. ASHA can also participate in developing creativity and innovation spirit of the children through the Honey Bee Network.