

Press Release

Innovation accelerator for rural sanitation launched in India

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Delhi | March 18, 2016 11:02 IST: A new dedicated Innovation Accelerator is reaching out to all the “for-profit” sanitation innovations for Rural India. The Applications open on 22nd March, World Water Day for its inaugural program that will identify, support and mentor existing entrepreneurial innovations across the sanitation value chain.

The Sanitation Innovation Accelerator 2016 is a unique nation-wide search for inclusive and sustainable solutions for rural sanitation in India. The first batch of the accelerator is a step towards a much larger program of providing an organised platform to identify, startup, finance and scale sanitation innovations in India.

The accelerator is a result of collaboration among Ennovent, IRC and TARU Leading Edge. According to Vipul Kumar, Global Director for Ennovent, this is a one-of-a-kind initiative, which brings together international and national technical expertise on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene on one hand and expertise on accelerating innovations for sustainability in low-income markets in developing countries on the other. Through this platform, innovative and effective sanitation solutions will be recognised and rewarded.

Ingeborg Krukkert who is heading the Asia operations for IRC says “the huge scale and the accelerated pace needed to achieve the sustainable development goals on sanitation and drinking water requires innovation, a re-appraisal of approaches. Simply carrying on with “business as usual’ is not good enough.” Ruchika Shiva who is co-leading the program on behalf of IRC also highlighted the market potential for sanitation solutions that is worth US\$ 10-14 billion. According to her, “Entrepreneurs, investors and corporations are increasingly interested in contributing towards improved sanitation. However, interactions with the private sector have highlighted systemic challenges in the ecosystem that impede the growth of for-profit sanitation innovations.”

The Government of India’s renewed sanitation agenda is encouraging innovators to embrace market principles to achieve this objective. “The private sector has demonstrated sustainable for-profit models to tackle issues in the sanitation value chain including capture, transport, storage, treatment and disposal. Through this accelerator, we would like to give a platform to all the innovations that have potential to transform the rural sanitation in India” added Manu Prakash, Director & Practice Head- Policy & Public Services for TARU Leading Edge, one of the Lead Partners for the accelerator.

The cohort of upto 6 innovations will not only receive access to the finance & investor community for funding, but will also get access to networks with industry practitioners and dedicated mentors based on specific entrepreneur needs and development areas, be it implementation, go-to-market strategy, or finance.

Shubho Broto Das, start-up coach for Ennovent, one of the lead partners, stated “The program consists of a stringent curriculum with hands-on 4-Month capacity building assistance & a 4-Day boot camp in addition to National visibility. The winners will also be eligible for next round of extended support to facilitate successful investments from national and international impact investors.”

During the program, the shortlisted finalists will go through our 4-Day boot camp, 15-Week technical mentorship and capacity building program, and will present in the Final Showcase event with 20+ investors and mentors on Demo Day, set to take place on 12th August 2016. They will also get an opportunity to win rewards both in cash and in kind for the most innovative and effective solution.

To ensure the relevant and invaluable support to the shortlisted entrepreneurs, the team is in the process of setting up a formal mentorship board of renowned technical experts, industry veterans, institutional thought leaders and impact investors to guide the innovations.

About Lead Organisers

ENNOVENT: Ennovent is a global innovation company for low-income markets. Ennovent works with its clients, partners and community to develop, fund and implement customized innovation solutions. These solutions discover, start up, finance and scale the best innovations for sustainability in developing countries. Since 2008, Ennovent has accelerated over 250 innovations in 15 countries through around 60 solutions.

IRC: IRC is an international think-and-do tank that works with governments, NGOs, entrepreneurs and people around the world to find long-term solutions to the global crisis in water, sanitation and hygiene services. The key ethos behind the work of IRC is sustainability, in order to create viable, lasting water and sanitation services. With over 45 years of experience, IRC runs large-scale programs in seven focus countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and projects in more than 25 countries. A team of around 80 staff supports its operations across the world.

TARU Leading Edge: TARU has 20+ years of advisory experience in addressing India's development challenges with deep expertise in India's WASH space. It has implemented 200+ projects on institutional, financial, economic, social and technical issues across diverse public systems, cultures and corporate formations. TARU has worked with innovators, corporations, multilateral agencies and government on rural and urban WASH issues including policy analysis, strategy development, action research, program design, project management, assessments and evaluations, campaigns and training.

Learn more about the [Sanitation Innovation Accelerator 2016](#)

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