



**Everybody
has the ability
to change disability.**

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The report is thoughtfully crafted to ensure inclusivity for all readers, prioritizing screen reader compatibility and detailed picture descriptions. It employs clear language, an intuitive design, and accessible formats to make the information easily understandable and enjoyable, accommodating diverse abilities.



“I wholeheartedly endorse the AssisTech Foundation and their pioneering work in the field of assistive technologies. AssisTech foundation took a great initiative to launch India’s first assistive technology awards in 2021 and this initiative recognizes innovators, ecosystem enablers, and their transformative contributions in the disability space. By leveraging emerging technologies and government support, they are creating an empowering world for people with disabilities. I fully support their mission and believe in the transformative impact of assistive technologies.”

- Professor K. Vijay Ragahavan (Former Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India)



“Looking back at India’s first Assist Tech Foundation Awards fills me with immense pride. It was a momentous occasion that showcased the power of technology in transforming lives. Witnessing the community of innovators and enablers who dedicated themselves to bridging the gaps was truly inspiring. Their groundbreaking solutions not only improved access but empowered individuals with disabilities to live more independent lives. The awards symbolized the beauty in imperfections, reminding us of the remarkable journey we embarked upon. As we reflect, let us continue to be the heroes that make a difference, leveraging technology to create an inclusive world of equal opportunities for all.”

- Rahul Dravid (Brand Ambassador, AssisTech Foundation & Cricket Champion)



“AssisTech Foundation, a beacon of change and inclusivity, has set the stage for a transformative journey in the assistive technology sector. Through their unwavering commitment, they have illuminated the path towards a more accessible world. The recognition bestowed upon the AssisTech Foundation Award Winners is a testament to their remarkable contributions and relentless pursuit of innovative solutions. Their dedication, passion, and groundbreaking work have left an indelible mark on the lives of individuals with disabilities. As we reflect on their achievements, we acknowledge the profound impact they have made and express gratitude for their invaluable role in shaping a more inclusive future.”

- Chapal Khasnabis (Former Head (a.i) of the Access to Assistive Technology and Medical Devices Unit, WHO)





“AssisTech Foundation has been a catalyst for change, driving innovation and progress in the field of assistive technology. Through their prestigious ATF Awards, they have recognized and honored the exceptional work of individuals dedicated to improving the lives of millions of Indians with disabilities. The Foundation’s commitment to fostering affordable and context-specific assistive technologies has yielded remarkable outcomes, addressing the specific needs of the community.”

- Som Mittal (Former President and Chairman NASSCOM)



“The program’s focused approach and tailored support were invaluable in helping us navigate the unique challenges of the Assistive Technology industry. The mentorship provided by industry experts was exceptional, offering deep insights and guidance specific to our niche. The program’s well-structured curriculum, combined with access to a network of mentors and potential partners, opened doors to new opportunities.”

- Pravin, Founder, Dextroware (ATF Cohort 5 Startup)



“I am extremely grateful to ATF’s AT accelerator program. Being part of their second cohort, Tactopus experienced tremendous support. Prateek and our mentors became like family, guiding us through challenging moments. Their unwavering assistance has been instrumental in our company’s growth as well as in our personal journey as co founders. We hold them dear and cherish the bond we share. Heartfelt thanks and love to ATF for being such an incredible ally.”

- Saloni Mehta, Co-Founder Tactopus, (ATF Cohort 2 Startup)



“Here’s one word to describe ATF - ‘admirable’! Though we were in the MVP phase, we were given guidance to ‘accelerate’ with their clearly planned sessions from influencers experienced in the startup ecosystem...their support with market connections, VC connections and tech aspects were hugely helpful. Overall we are delighted to have been part of the ATF family and wish them All The Best to support the global AT ecosystem!”

- Jayasudan, Founder Deep Vision Tech (ATF Cohort 3 Startup)

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Redefining Possibilities: Empowering Lives Through Assistive Technology

Dear stakeholders and supporters of the AssisTech Foundation,

I am pleased to present our annual report, which highlights our achievements, challenges, thought leadership and future plans. At the AssisTech Foundation, we are committed to promoting the use of Assistive Technology (AT) to empower people with disabilities in India and globally.

As we look ahead, we are excited about the future of AT and the potential for innovation to transform the lives of people with disabilities. Being an ecosystem enabler, we have been working with startups and other stakeholders to facilitate the growth of the innovative AT ecosystem. We collaborate with various entities like Government, Corporates, Education Institutions, Startups & Innovators, Investors and NGOs to maximize outreach and impact.

The startup ecosystem in India is flourishing, and we see a great opportunity for entrepreneurs to develop new solutions that can improve accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities. **Under 5 cohorts, ATF currently has 42+ portfolio startups with 43 Patents and 100+ AT products. Along with that, we have a strong network of 400+ AT startups across the nation and 1200+ AT startups globally.**

We believe that AT can be a catalyst for economic growth and social change, and we are committed to supporting startups and innovators who share our vision. At the same time, we recognize that there are still significant challenges that need to be addressed. Access to AT remains a major issue for many people with disabilities in India, particularly in rural areas. We are working to address this through our partnerships with NGOs, government agencies, and other organizations to promote awareness of AT and provide training and support to users and caregivers.

Finally, we believe that the empowerment of people with disabilities is a critical component of our mission. Through our programs and initiatives, we are working to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to develop skills, gain employment, and participate fully in society. With our initiatives, we have overall impacted 5.1 lacs (510,000) lives of people with disabilities so far and with the same spirit, we aim to empower 5 million (500,000) people with disabilities in the next three years.

Looking forward, we are thrilled to announce two groundbreaking initiatives that are currently in the pipeline. Firstly, we are proud to be spearheading the establishment of **India's First Assistive Technology-focused Atal Incubation Centre (AIC)** in partnership with NITI

Aayog, a think tank of Govt of India and Atal Innovation Mission (AIM). This visionary project will provide a nurturing environment for AT startups, fostering innovation, collaboration, and entrepreneurship. By harnessing the potential of the vibrant startup ecosystem in India, we aim to drive transformative change and revolutionize accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities.

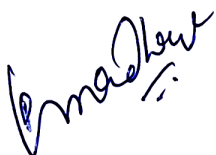
Additionally, we are excited to share that we are working closely with the Government of Karnataka to establish **Karnataka's First Centre of Excellence for Assistive Technology Innovation**. This state-of-the-art facility will serve as a hub for research, development, and training in the field of AT. Through this collaboration, we seek to harness the collective expertise of academia, industry, and government agencies to accelerate the pace of AT innovation and implementation in Karnataka. This center will be instrumental in nurturing talent, fostering partnerships, and providing a conducive ecosystem for groundbreaking AT solutions to flourish.

These upcoming initiatives symbolize our relentless pursuit of creating a more inclusive and equitable society. As we reflect on our progress, we acknowledge that there is still much work to be done. However, with the support and collaboration of our partners and stakeholders, we are confident in our ability to advance the cause of Assistive Technology and empower individuals with disabilities throughout India.

Together, let us embrace the future with optimism and determination, as we forge a path towards a more accessible and inclusive society.

Inviting you to collaborate and join hands with us in creating a world of joy by empowering every person with disability. Write to me at - prateek@atflabs.org.

Sincerely,



Prateek Madhav
CEO & Co-Founder, AssisTech Foundation (ATF)



“Assistive Technology (AT) is helping people with disabilities to overcome barriers and perform tasks that might otherwise be challenging or impossible. While providing assistive technology to people with disabilities is undoubtedly a humanitarian decision, it is also a smart economic and social decision.”

02

Landscape Overview

Disability and Assistive Technology (AT)

-
- 2.1 Overview of Disability and Assistive Technology
 - 2.2 United Nations SDGs and Assistive Technology

2.1

Overview of Disability and Assistive Technology (AT)

Disability is a global issue that affects millions of people around the world. Despite a staggering number, many people with disabilities continue to face barriers to full participation in society.

Assistive Technology (AT) is an essential tool for empowering people with disabilities and promoting inclusion. AT has the potential to transform the lives of people with disabilities, and to unlock their untapped potential. Nonetheless, access to AT remains a challenge for many people with disabilities in India, particularly those living in rural areas. Lack of awareness, inadequate infrastructure, and affordability are some of the major issues that need to be addressed.

There is a lot of untapped potential for AT in India. The country has a large pool of talented engineers, entrepreneurs, and innovators who can develop new and affordable AT solutions. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in AT startups in India, with many new ventures emerging in the space. This is a positive trend that can unlock the potential of AT and help to address the challenges faced by people with disabilities in India. A report published by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that access to AT can improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, increase their independence, and enhance their social and economic participation.

**People Living
with some
form of
Disability.**

According to WHO, Globally

1 billion (15%)

According to Census 2011, in India,

26 million



Despite the staggering number, many people with disabilities continue to face barriers to full participation in society. Due to,

Lack of Awareness

Inadequate Infrastructure

Affordability

Untapped Potential of Assistive Technology

A person on wheelchair getting restricted by stairs - Portrayal of barriers w.r.t. Disability.



A close-up image capturing the use of braille display keyboard.



- **90%** in developing countries
Do not have access to the AT.

In low and middle income countries,

- **80%** People in Working age are
Unemployed or Underemployed.

- **32 million**
Children are out of School

Globally,

- **2.1 billion**
People above 60 years, by 2050.

By 2030, Assistive Technology is envisioned to have

- **\$8 Trillion**
Estimated Market Potential.

Technological Advancements like,

**Artificial Intelligence,
Robotics, Wearable
Devices, etc.**

**With the Expanding possibilities of AT, quality of life
for individuals with disabilities can be enhanced.**

2.2

United Nations SDGs and Assistive Technology (AT)

Assistive Technology plays a crucial role in achieving several Sustainable Development Goals, including:



AT can improve access to healthcare, rehabilitation, and assist with daily living activities for people with disabilities.



AT can support inclusive education by enabling students with disabilities to access learning materials, communicate, and participate in educational activities.



AT can enhance the employability and productivity of individuals with disabilities, facilitating their inclusion in the workforce.



AT can help bridge the digital and accessibility divide, ensuring equal opportunities and access for people with disabilities.



AT ecosystem plays a pivotal role in advancing SDG 17 by fostering inclusive partnerships and leveraging technological innovations to empower persons with disabilities and ensure equal access to opportunities worldwide.

AT has the potential to be a game-changer in promoting disability inclusion. By removing barriers and enabling people with disabilities to participate more fully in society, AT can unlock the untapped potential of millions of people around the world. It is our responsibility

as disability inclusion advocates to promote awareness of the benefits of AT and to advocate for increased investment in research and development in this area. It is an exciting time for the field of AT, and we are optimistic about the future.

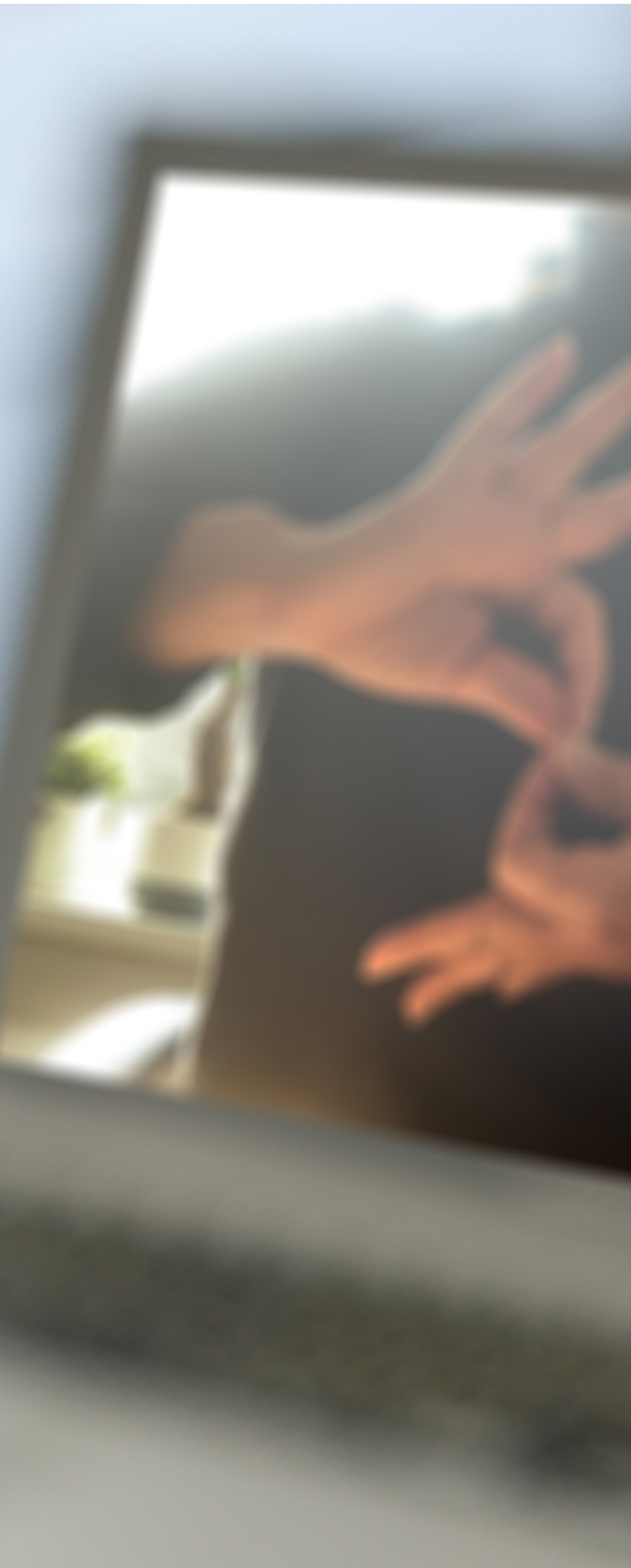
A photograph of a man with long dark hair and a beard, wearing a white shirt and a yellow cap with 'USA PARALYMPICS' on it. He is seated in a wheelchair, which has a large black wheel visible in the foreground. He is holding a wooden baseball bat and is in the middle of swinging it to hit a red ball. A white sign with the word 'TON' is visible in the lower left. The background is a blurred green field.

WHO says,
*“Assistive Technology
can improve the quality
of life for people with
disabilities, increase
their independence, and
enhance their social and
economic participation.”*

A person seated in a Neo-Motion, ATF Portfolio Startup, wheelchair confidently hitting a ball with a bat.



A snapshot of a person immersing into digital experience using a hearing aid.



We Envision,

A future where the full potential of every individual is realized, and no one is left behind.

03

Transforming Lives Together

Our Vision and Values

3.1 Our Vision

3.2 Our Belief

3.3 About AssisTech Foundation (ATF)

3.4 ATF Impact Themes - 3Ls

3.5 ATF Framework - 4As

3.1

Our Vision

Creating a world of joy by empowering every person with disabilities is a noble and essential goal, and one that the AssisTech Foundation is passionately committed to achieving. At the heart of our mission is the belief that everyone, regardless of their abilities, has the right to participate fully in society and to experience joy in their lives.

For too long, people with disabilities have been excluded from many aspects of society, from employment opportunities to social and recreational activities. This exclusion has often resulted in isolation, loneliness, and a lack of fulfillment. But the AssisTech Foundation is working to change that.

Through our work in the field of Assistive Technology (AT), we are empowering people with disabilities to access the tools and resources they need to live full and joyful lives. AT encompasses a wide range of devices, software, and services that are designed to support people with disabilities in performing tasks and activities that might otherwise be difficult or impossible. We have seen firsthand the transformative power of AT in the lives of people with disabilities. We have seen people with

visual impairments become successful entrepreneurs, people with physical disabilities become competitive athletes, and people with cognitive impairments become successful students.

We believe that by empowering every person with a disability to access the tools and resources they need to participate fully in society, we can create a world of joy for everyone. We are proud of the work we have done so far, but we know there is still much to be done. We remain committed to our mission and to creating a world where every person, regardless of their abilities, can experience joy and fulfillment.

Moreover, as the AssisTech Foundation continues to pave the way forward, it envisions a future where AT seamlessly integrates into society, becoming ubiquitous and indispensable. It envisions a world where individuals of all abilities have equal access, opportunities, and experiences, where technology is a powerful enabler rather than a barrier. By shaping the AT landscape today, AssisTech Foundation is driving a paradigm shift, creating a future where the full potential of every individual is realized, and no one is left behind.

Creating a World of Joy by Empowering Every Person with Disability.

Unlocking Potential, Empowering All

Harnessing the Power of Assistive Technology for a Barrier-Free World

At the heart of AssisTech Foundation's mission is the recognition that AT is not solely about addressing disabilities but is a means to multiple ends.

We envision a future where AT seamlessly integrates into society, becoming ubiquitous and indispensable, where AT empowers individuals across various domains, unlocking their full potential and enabling them to thrive in education, work, health, recreation, and beyond, where technology is a powerful enabler rather than a barrier.

By shaping the AT landscape today, AssisTech Foundation is driving a paradigm shift, creating a future where the full potential of every individual is realized, and no one is left behind.



A doctor fitting a hearing aid, restoring sound, and enhancing the quality of life for their patient.

Our Belief

Disability is often seen as a limiting factor, something that holds individuals back from achieving their full potential. But the truth is that everybody has the ability to change disability, to challenge the status quo and create a more inclusive world. By focusing on ability rather than disability, we can unlock the untapped potential of millions of individuals and create a society that is truly equitable and just.


One of the ways in which we can change disability is through the promotion of Assistive Technology (AT). AT refers to any technology that is designed to assist individuals with disabilities in their daily lives. From mobility aids and communication devices to sensory equipment and smart home automation, AT is transforming the lives of individuals with disabilities and breaking down barriers to access.

However, the impact of AT goes far beyond just assisting individuals with disabilities. By creating a more inclusive world, AT is changing the way we perceive disability and challenging traditional notions of what it means to be disabled. This shift in perspective has the potential to unlock the untapped potential of millions of individuals with disabilities, who are often excluded from mainstream society due to societal barriers and negative attitudes.

By focusing on ability rather than disability, we can create a more inclusive and equitable society that values the contributions of all individuals, regardless of their physical or cognitive abilities. This means designing products, services, and environments that are accessible and inclusive to all. It means challenging stereotypes and promoting a culture of inclusion and acceptance.

But changing disability is not just about creating a more inclusive society. It's also about empowering individuals with disabilities to live their lives to the fullest and achieve their full potential. By promoting AT and other disability inclusion-based solutions, we can provide individuals with the tools they need to succeed in their personal and professional lives.

**Disability
is
not a
problem.**

A photograph of a prosthetic arm and a human hand reaching towards each other against a solid yellow background. The prosthetic arm, on the left, is made of polished metal with white, finger-like tips. The human hand, on the right, is a natural skin tone with the index finger extended. The two hands are positioned as if they are about to meet or shake hands, symbolizing connection and inclusion.

Everybody has the ability to change disability, to challenge traditional notions of what it means to be disabled, and create a more inclusive and equitable society. By promoting AT and other disability inclusion-based solutions, we can unlock the untapped potential of millions of individuals and create a world that values ability over disability. It's time to change the conversation and focus on what individuals with disabilities can do, rather than what they cannot do.

**Everybody
has the
ability
to change
disability.**

An image displaying a connection through a prosthetic arm and an usual arm - demonstrating inclusion and togetherness.

3.3

About AssisTech Foundation (ATF)

The AssisTech Foundation is established to combat the issue of insufficient access to assistive technology (AT) for those who need it. We work to promote the development and distribution of AT by supporting research, innovation, and collaboration among various stakeholders such as startups, organizations, and governments. We also advocate for policies that promote the use of AT, raise public awareness about the importance of AT, and provide access to funding and resources to improve access to AT for people with disabilities. Ultimately, **the goal of the AssisTech Foundation is to ensure that everyone who needs AT can access it easily and affordably.**

Being an ecosystem enabler, we work with startups and other stakeholders to facilitate the growth of the innovative Assistive Technology (AT) ecosystem. We design exclusive programs to promote and facilitate outreach collaborations and networking opportunities with the vibrant AT ecosystem. We collaborate with various entities like Government, Corporates, People with Disabilities, Education Institutions, Startups & Innovations, Investors and NGOs to maximize outreach and work together towards creating and sustaining innovation in the AT ecosystem. With our initiatives, we primarily aim to impact learning, living and livelihood of people with disabilities through Assistive Technology.



“AssisTech Foundation is doing great work for driving innovation and entrepreneurship in the field of AT. Their commitment to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities is truly commendable. By hosting events like this Investors Meet, they facilitate vital connections between entrepreneurs, investors, and industry experts. This synergy is instrumental in building a funding ecosystem that can turn ideas into reality and transform the lives of millions of people.”

- Krishnakumar Natarajan (KK),
Co-Founder Mela Ventures and
Former Co-Founder Mindtree



A person sitting on wheelchair playing basketball

ATF Impact Themes

AssisTech Foundation aims to impact lives by focusing on **3Ls** - Learning, Livelihood, and Living - these are the critical components of empowering people with disabilities and promoting social inclusion.

Learning

Learning is essential for people with disabilities to acquire knowledge and skills that can help them become self-sufficient and participate fully in society. This includes **access to quality education that is inclusive and accommodates the diverse learning needs of people with disabilities.**

Livelihood

Livelihood is also crucial for people with disabilities as it enables them to earn a living and be financially independent. This requires **creating inclusive workplaces, promoting disability-friendly policies, and investing in vocational training and skill development programs which can in turn help to break the cycle of poverty and dependence and promote their dignity and self-worth.**

Living

Living is about ensuring that people with disabilities have access to basic rights, such as healthcare, housing, recreation, marriages, travel and transportation, that enable them to lead fulfilling lives. This requires **creating accessible environments, promoting positive attitudes towards disability, and investing in assistive technology and other support systems that can enable people with disabilities to live independently and with dignity.**

The 3Ls are interconnected and essential for promoting the social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities. Investing in learning, livelihood, and living can help to create a more inclusive and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential, regardless of their abilities.

ATF Framework

4As - Acceleration, Availability, Awareness, and Association are the four pillars of the work done by the AssisTech Foundation to promote access to assistive technology for people with disabilities.

Acceleration

Acceleration refers to the need to speed up the development and dissemination of assistive technology solutions. This requires investing in research and development and promoting innovation in the field of assistive technology. **ATF works towards accelerating the development and dissemination of assistive technology solutions by providing grants and support to innovators and startups working in this area.**

Availability

Availability refers to the need to ensure that assistive technology solutions are widely available and accessible to those who need them. This requires addressing barriers to access such as affordability, availability of trained professionals, and infrastructure. **ATF works towards increasing the availability of assistive technology solutions by partnering with government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders to develop and implement policies and programs that promote access.**

Awareness

Awareness refers to the need to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of assistive technology solutions and the impact they can have on the lives of people with disabilities. This requires investing in education and advocacy efforts to promote greater awareness and understanding of the needs and experiences of people with disabilities. **ATF works towards increasing awareness of assistive technology solutions by conducting outreach programs, training workshops, and awareness campaigns.**

Association

Association refers to the need to build networks and associations among stakeholders in the assistive technology ecosystem. This requires promoting collaboration and partnerships among researchers, innovators, service providers, and other stakeholders. **ATF works towards building associations in the assistive technology ecosystem by facilitating networking opportunities, promoting knowledge sharing and collaboration, and supporting the formation of communities of practice.**



A rear angle picture of a person with a prosthetic arm

04

Making a Difference

Highlights of the FY 2022-23

4.1 Key Milestones ATF accomplished

4.2 ATF Portfolio Startup Success Stories

4.1

Key Milestones Achieved

Impacted, lives of

5.1 lacs

People with Disabilities so far.

Addressed

12 Disabilities
through Portfolio Startups.

Network of

60+ Mentors
Across Business,
Technology & Disability.

Collectively, ATF Portfolio Provides Employment

400+ Individuals
which includes 45 People with
Disabilities.

INR 40 Crores
Money Raised by 19 of ATF's
Portfolio of AT Startups.



A snapshot of a hand holding a globe depicting global network concept.

ATF is a part of the steering committee instituted by NITI Aayog, a think tank of Govt of India to design

National Strategic Framework for Assistive Technology in India

with an objective to make India as a Global Hub of Assistive Technology.

Co-Founded

Global Alliance on Assistive Technology Innovations & Investments

Inclusive Innovation Network (+N) along with partners across Australia, Canada, Kenya, New Zealand and Hong Kong. The alliance has a **network of 1200+ AT startups**.

Areas of Impact

Education, Employment, Rehabilitation, Mobility, Independent Living, Communication, Awareness & Social Inclusion.

4.2

ATF Portfolio Startup Success Stories



- **Neo Motion's groundbreaking appearance on Shark Tank** - Rs. 1 Crore investment for just 1% equity.
- **Neo Motion's Livelihood on Wheels initiative, in collaboration with Zomato**, is dedicated to providing essential livelihood opportunities for individuals with locomotor disabilities.



- Recognized as an **Emerging Social Enterprise** at **TiE Sustainability Summit 2021**.
- **Winner in the Medical Devices category** at the **National Startup Awards 2021**.
- Awarded for being the **most prominent contributor to innovation** at the **World Innovation Congress 2023**.



- **2nd place in The GAIN Women Elevate Women Acceleration program** supported by Startup Karnataka and K-Tech.
- **Coverage on the Discovery+ program** - The Journey of India, Episode-5, showcasing TrueAssistech's journey and its solutions for empowering persons with disabilities and senior citizens.



- **National Award 2020** from **H.E. The President of India**, India's Ministry of Social Justice, and the Government of India.



- **Prosus Social Impact Challenge for Accessibility | 2021: Trestle Labs emerged as the winner of this challenge and received a cash prize of 25 lakhs.**
- **MIT Solver for the Class of 2022 :** Trestle Labs became a recognized Solver by MIT Solve, an initiative that identifies and supports innovative solutions to global challenges.
- **The Patrick J. McGovern Foundation AI for Humanity Prize:** Trestle Labs
- **General Motors Prize for Learning-focused Solutions :** Trestle Labs for creating learning-focused solutions.
- Kibo, a product of Trestle Labs, has been selected as the **Global winner of the Santen Lead 2030 Challenge for SDG8**, recognizing Trestle Labs' impactful work in contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG8) that focuses on promoting decent work and economic growth.



- **Recognition at Smart Solutions Challenge and Inclusive Cities Award 2022, New Delhi, by Honorable Minister Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri.**
- **Founder Mr. Ravindra Singh was Honored at the Bombay Stock Exchange for entrepreneurial expertise and remarkable work in mankind.**
- **National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People 11th Universal Design Prize(2021).**



- **Winner of the Innovative Social Enterprise Award at the TSS Social Entrepreneur Awards 2021 (By TiE, Adani).**
- **Winner in the Inclusive Category at the NASSCOM AI Gamechangers Awards 2021.**



- **2nd place at Action in Prosus SICA 2022.**
- **Dextroware Devices was featured in YourStory Media's list of 30 most promising Indian startups at TechSparks2022.**



A visually impaired individual navigating with a white cane.



“ATF can be for start-ups in assistive tech and disability space what Y Combinator was for companies like Airbnb and Dropbox while they were starting up. Startups require that much needed partner hours and guidance from industry experts to scale and ATF is that successful first step in the space of disability.”

- Kalyani Khona, Inclov - ATF Incubatee

05

Empowering through Innovation

Our Programs

- 5.1 **ATF Awards 2022** - Honoring Excellence in AT
- 5.2 **ATF Enable Acceleration Program** - Empowering Startups, Inspiring Success
- 5.3 **Adidvara** - Breaking Barriers for Accessible Learning, Livelihood & Living (3Ls)

5.1

ATF Awards 2022

ATF Awards is an accolade that recognizes unsung heroes who aim to make a change in the lives of people with disabilities across the globe by leveraging assistive technology. Through India's first assistive technology awards, ATF aims to bring focus on how technology innovation can enable people with disabilities to become independent and empower them to live with dignity.

India's First Assistive Technology Awards was a grand felicitation ceremony dedicated to promoting inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities wherein ATF has taken upon itself the noble task of recognizing and honoring the individuals and organizations driving change in the assistive technology landscape. The atmosphere was filled with anticipation and excitement as people from all walks of life gathered to celebrate the extraordinary achievements and innovations in assistive technology. It was organized at **IIT Madras Research Park as a part of EMPOWER 2022** : India's foremost Assistive Technology conference on October 14, 2022.

The brand ambassador of ATF Awards was Mr. Rahul Dravid. He is a former Indian cricketer and captain of the Indian national team, currently serving as its head coach. It's hard to plot Rahul Dravid on the graph of cricketing greats. There has rarely been a historic Indian win without a vital contribution from 'The Wall'. He introduced ATF Awards and unveiled the trophy as well. Mr. Dravid has been associated with ATF since the beginning and relates with the vision of empowering lives of people with disabilities.

The end is the beginning. With a successful commencement of ATF Awards 2022, we are all set to move forward and launch ATF Awards 2023 really soon.

“I am sure it's just the beginning of a big collective movement around accessibility and inclusion to support persons with disabilities.”

- Akshita Sachdeva, Trestle Labs -
ATF Startup Incubatee

“The ATF Awards Event was very nicely done. Look forward to working with ATF on future innovations in the AT Space.”

- Prof Sujatha Srinivasan
(IIT Madras, TTK Center for Rehabilitation Research and Device Development (R2D2))



ATF CEO Prateek Madhav in conversation with Rahul Dravid (legendary Cricketer) who is supporting ATF's mission since Inception.



Dhanvantri Biomedical Receiving Best Assistive Technology Start-up People's Choice Award



Rishi Krishnan, Founder Symbiotic showcases his prosthetic arm.



A vibrant group picture captures the spirit of the ATF Awards during Empower 2022 at IIT Madras Research Park.

A Journey down the memory lane.

To honor the impact made by startups and enablers, ATF (in partnership with Titan) designed the trophy that's inspired by implementations of concepts of Japanese and Buddhist philosophy along with the theme of minimalism. A Japanese philosophy called “Wabi-Sabi” was the elementary theme, which means finding beauty in the imperfections. Wabi-sabi is the view or thought of finding beauty in every aspect of imperfection in nature. It is about the aesthetic of things in existence that are “imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete”. Moreover, another concept that was used in structuring the trophy was the basic principles of Buddhism that is embracing impermanence, suffering and absence of self. The design was minimalist with a major element of “Kintsugi”, through the cracks that are seen as assets rather than flaws.

“It was an amazing event. I am sure it’s just the beginning of a big collective movement around accessibility and inclusion to support persons with disability.”

- Akshita Sachdeva, Co-Founder,
Trestle Labs, ATF Startup Incubatee



ATF Awards trophy designed in collaboration with Titan.

Winners of ATF Awards 2022

Emerging Startups

Best AT Start-up for Innovation



Established Startups

Best AT Start-up : Jury's Choice



Best AT Start-up : People's Choice

Women Ahead : Best Women led
AT Start-up



Most Impactful AT Start-up



Enablers

CSR Initiative of the Year



Best AT Initiative among NGOs



Amar Seva Sangam

Best Government AT Initiatives



AIIMS Delhi

Best AT Initiative among
Educational Institutes



IIT Delhi

ATF Enable Acceleration Program

ATF Enable Acceleration Program is an exclusive program for Assistive Technology based startups creating impact in the world through empowering people with disability. It focuses on accelerating the startup's journey and assists them in seizing the limitless opportunities of growth and prosperity in the AT Sector.

The Program leads startups on a transformative journey where tailored support is provided to them along with limitless opportunities of networking and collaboration with an aim to take the startups forward from their current stage to a desired milestone. The program's spirit lies in unleashing the full potential of startups, assisting them in reaching their full potential and flourishing further ahead by accelerating their growth and impact. Since its inception, the program has consistently demonstrated its ability to empower startups, fuel their growth, and contribute to the overall advancement of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This groundbreaking program has not only provided these startups with a platform to showcase their innovative solutions but has also garnered immense recognition for their efforts to create a more inclusive society. By focusing specifically on startups dedicated to developing solutions for individuals with disabilities, the program not only addresses a critical societal need but has also amplified the visibility and impact of these startups.

The onset of the ATF Enable Acceleration Program Cohort has brought about a transformative shift in entrepreneurial recognition for the selected startups focusing on assistive technology for disability inclusion solutions. The program's targeted support, strategic partnerships, and rigorous selection process have propelled these startups to new heights of recognition, positioning them as key players in the assistive technology space and advocates for inclusivity and accessibility.

5 Cohorts

42 Portfolio Startups

43 Patents

100+ AT Products

60+ Mentors

19 Startups collectively raised
40 Crores

“Having attended a few lean startup accelerators previously, ATF is the most direct and growth driven accelerator for an accessibility tech enterprise. Personal involvement of mentors continuously helped the team identify and refine core focus areas, accelerating growth, resolving challenges.”

- Gaurav Mittal, Founder, Eye-D, ATF Startup Incubatee

Why apply to ATF Enable Start-up Acceleration program?



Go-To-Market Strategies

- Business Model Innovation
- Sales & Marketing Strategy
- Access to ATF's Global AT partners in 7 countries



Access to Funds

- Early stage Investors
- Impact Investors
- Venture Capitalists (VC)
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)



Access to Disability Market

- Mentorship from Disability Experts
- Access to Disability focused NGOs/ Associations/ Beneficiaries
- Government Partnerships (Directorate for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Government of Karnataka (GoK))
- Product Validation/ Testing by super-users (persons with disabilities)



Access to Mentors

- Mentors across Disability, Business, Technology & Organization Design
- Invitation to webinars on various topics (growth strategy, product design, financial management etc)
- Invitation to Investor Pitch Sessions & Assistive Technology Conclave



Networking

- Connect with startups in Assistive Technology & other domains
- Partnership with corporates for pilots, technology etc
- Collaboration with ATF's partners (Incubators, Accelerators, Innovation programs etc)



Enabling Services

- Access to ATF's Playbooks (CSR, Digital Marketing etc)
- Legal and Accounting support
- Start-up Kit with collection of Software Tools & Services at subsidized cost

Media Visibility

PC Quest in their February 2023 issue has featured top 20 innovative Assistive Technology Solutions that have been a part of ATF Portfolio and network of 400+ Assistive Technology startups.



ATF Portfolio Startup 05

The onset of the ATF Enable Acceleration Program Cohort 5 has ushered in a new era of entrepreneurial recognition and empowerment for the selected **10 startups focusing on Assistive Technology (AT) for disability inclusion solutions.**

The ATF Enable Acceleration Program Cohort 5 stands out as a trailblazer in the field of assistive technology and disability inclusion. The selected startups in the Cohort 5 represent a diverse range of assistive technology solutions, encompassing areas such as **accessibility, mobility aids, communication tools, sensory enhancements, and independent living support.** Each startup brings a unique perspective and innovative approach to addressing the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities, striving to improve their quality of life and promote inclusivity.

100+
Applications Received

34 from Tier 1 Cities

17 from Tier 2 & 3 Cities

17 Startups have PwD as Employees

3 founders with disability

Cohort 05 Incubated Startups



Learn and Empower Pvt Ltd
Transforming digital learning, Nurturing lives





A group picture capturing the diverse community of individuals from ATF and startup circles at Microsoft Office.

The entrepreneurial recognition garnered by these startups within the program stems from several key factors. Firstly, the program's rigorous selection process ensured that only the most promising and impactful startups were chosen. This validation by industry experts and experienced entrepreneurs heightened the recognition and credibility of the selected startups.

The startups are receiving targeted mentorship, technical guidance, and market insights from industry veterans and subject matter experts. This hands-on support and knowledge sharing elevated the startups' capabilities and boosted their potential for success.

Furthermore, the program facilitated strategic partnerships and collaborations with key stakeholders in the assistive technology and disability inclusion space. This networking and ecosystem-building aspect of the program enabled the startups to gain exposure, access valuable resources, and forge connections with potential investors, customers, and advocacy organizations. The ATF Enable Acceleration Program Cohort 5 has served as a catalyst for the growth and recognition of the selected assistive technology startups.

As a result of their participation in the program, **these startups are already achieving significant milestones and garnered attention from various quarters.** Their solutions have been recognized for their innovation, impact, and potential to transform the lives of individuals with disabilities.

The recognition garnered by the startups within the program has not only enhanced their credibility and market positioning but has also opened doors to new opportunities. Investors, both in the social impact and mainstream investment sectors, have taken notice of the exceptional work carried out by these startups and have shown keen interest in supporting their growth.

Moreover, the ATF Enable Acceleration Program Cohort 5 has elevated the discourse around assistive technology and disability inclusion, shedding light on the importance of creating accessible and inclusive solutions. By highlighting the achievements and potential of these startups, the program has sparked conversations and encouraged collaborations in the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem, further bolstering recognition and support for this vital cause.

Cohort 05 Startups



Punarjeeva

The startup is revolutionizing rehabilitation by gamifying physiotherapy and AT. With a diverse portfolio of products like Samatved, Hasth, Tatvika, and Nibodh, they offer solutions for lower body exercises, fine motor skill improvement, virtual reality-based therapy, and blended learning for problem-solving and creative skill development.



H-Vision

H Vision is a pioneering company revolutionizing currency accessibility and security. Their innovative wallet empowers blind individuals to identify currency notes accurately, while their compact currency note checker provides a convenient and portable solution for verifying authenticity. With a focus on user-centric design and cutting-edge technology, H Vision is promoting financial inclusivity and independence for all.



nema

Nema AI

NEMA AI is a pioneering platform that offers a unique approach to student assessment and personalized learning for children with special needs. Through the analysis of brain waves while presenting simple videos, NEMA AI identifies each student's areas of interest. Leveraging this data, the platform creates a customized learning experience tailored to each student's affinity areas.



Kidaura

Kidaura is a social startup that is dedicated to improving and enriching the lives of children with special needs during their critical formative years of growth and development using assistive tools and technology. Recognizing the ages of 3 to 6 as a crucial period for learning and skill acquisition, Kidaura strives to provide care and support to these future champions as they embark on shaping a more inclusive world that celebrates differences.

Learn & Empower

LearnEmp is a pioneering startup that has developed a game-based teaching and assessment platform specifically designed for deaf and hard of hearing children. Through this innovative platform, students can practice and understand their school lessons four to six times better, while educators can utilize it as a teaching aid and assessment tool.



Halara

Halara is a company that leverages the power of virtual reality (VR) to provide immersive training and educational experiences for neurodiverse young adults, all within the context of gaming. By blending the captivating elements of VR with engaging gameplay, Halara creates a dynamic learning environment that promotes skill development, cognitive training, and personal growth.



Dextroware Devices

Dextroware Devices has a flagship product, Mouseware is an affordable head-wearable device that enables hands-free operation of computers & smartphones. It helps to operate smart devices with any operating system hands-free. This helps people with various conditions use computers without the need for a mouse or any pointing device.

Robo Bionics

Robobionics is an innovative assistive tech solutions company specializing in rehabilitating hand-related issues, including amputation, limb difference, nerve damage, paralysis, and tendon injuries. It enables individuals to regain dexterity and functionality through their cutting-edge technologies, empowering them to perform daily activities with increased ease and confidence.



Backyard Creators Pvt. Ltd.

Backyard Creators is building a world's first Adhesive Non Surgical hearing device for by birth and severe hearing loss patients without the hearing implant surgeries. They are overcoming all the disadvantages of Implantation surgery by providing a non-surgical adhesive hearing aid.



Ripple Healthcare

Ripple Healthcare is an innovative startup dedicated to developing a revolutionary product to protect the elderly from severe and potentially life-threatening hip injuries caused by falls. Their smart wearable device, also known as HIP PRO+, offers a combination of advanced technology and an elegant design, all at an affordable price point.

Adidvara

One-stop Digital Platform for People with Disabilities

Adidvara, India's First curated digital platform for people with disabilities, has made significant strides in its mission to accelerate the adoption of assistive technology solutions and create limitless possibilities for individuals with disabilities. **The platform, with its Sanskrit name meaning “door to infinity,”** serves as a gateway to enhanced learning, livelihood, and living opportunities, transforming lives.

In the realm of learning, Adidvara has been at the forefront of empowering individuals with speech and hearing disabilities. Through partnerships with organizations like **BleeTech**, **Adidvara has developed a sign language-enabled video course curriculum.** This innovative approach to skilling ensures that individuals with speech and hearing disabilities can access high-quality educational content and acquire essential skills. Additionally, **Adidvara has integrated with the Infosys Springboard Platform, a digital literacy program that leverages AI, cloud-first, and mobile-first learning.** This integration comes with 60,000+ courses for our users and further enhances access to digital education, equipping individuals with disabilities with the necessary knowledge and skills for a brighter future.

In the domain of livelihood, Adidvara has forged partnerships with the **Directorate for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Government of Karnataka (GoK) and Quess Corporation.** This collaboration aims to onboard 1 lac (100,000) people with disabilities on Adidvara and give them access to 5 lacs+ (500,000+) job opportunities for people with disabilities in Karnataka. By working closely with the government, Adidvara ensures that the platform aligns with the skill requirements and job market dynamics of the region. Furthermore, partnerships with the **Quess Corps and access to QJobs, a blue collar job providing platform facilitates access to job opportunities and sustainable employment.**

**Opening
the door
to infinity,
transform-
ing lives for
individuals
with
disabilities.**



Transforming Learning, Livelihood & Living for People with Disabilities

People with Disabilities

Solution Providers

Sponsors / NGOs / Government

Adidvara

Curate | Collaborate | Commerce

Programs

- Health
- Special Education
- Skilling
- Jobs

Sandbox

- Prototypes
- Product-Market Fit
- Pilots with Users, NGOs, Government

Ecosystem

- AT Potential Customers
- AT Providers
- NGOs
- Government
- Sponsors

Marketplace

- Free Content
- Digital Products
- Physical Products

Adidvara also recognizes the importance of fostering a supportive community for caregivers and parents of children with disabilities. The platform is taking strides to create a dedicated space that provides resources, support, and information to caregivers and parents. By connecting them with relevant services, organizations, and knowledge-sharing opportunities, Adidvara aims to empower caregivers and parents, promoting holistic well-being and a sense of belonging within the community.

One of the standout achievements of Adidvara is its commitment to ensuring accessibility and modernity in its high-tech platform. The team has diligently worked to make the platform inclusive and user-friendly, considering the diverse needs and abilities of its users. Through partnerships with NGOs and organizations serving people with disabilities, Adidvara has conducted user testing workshops. These workshops enable individuals with disabilities and their trainers to provide valuable feedback and insights, ensuring that the platform is designed to cater to their specific requirements and preferences.

Way Forward

As we eagerly anticipate the launch of Adidvara, India's First curated digital platform for people with disabilities, we cannot help but be overwhelmed with excitement and anticipation for the revolutionary impact it holds. **Adidvara has the potential to redefine digital accessibility, opening doors to limitless possibilities for individuals with disabilities.**

In a world that is increasingly interconnected and reliant on digital technologies, it is essential that everyone, regardless of their abilities, has equal access and opportunities. Adidvara aims to shatter barriers and create a more inclusive digital landscape by providing a platform that caters specifically to the needs of people with disabilities.

Why Adidvara?

1/3rd

Children with Disabilities do not attend Primary School

3-7%

GPD loss due to Exclusion of People with Disabilities.

75%

People in Employable age are Unemployed.

8.5%

Only get Graduate Degree.

41%

Never get Married.

4500 Crore

Commercial Opportunity for People with Disabilities.



Adidvara Workshop in collaboration with National Career Service Centre for Differently Abled, Bengaluru



Adidvara Workshop with Rehabilitation Workers at the Department of Women & Child Development, GoK.



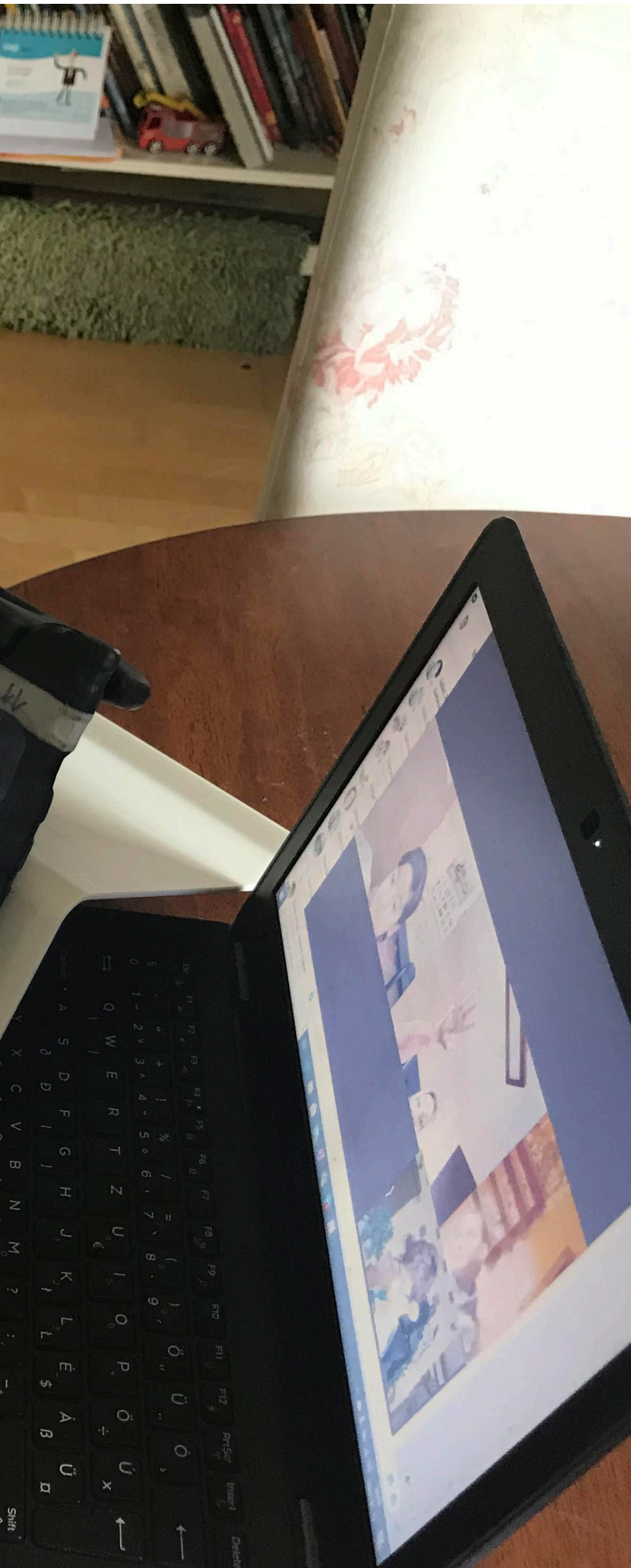
Adidvara Workshop with the students and faculty at Deepa Academy.



Adidvara workshop - empowering students with Visual Impairment and driving change.



A non-verbal child learning with the help of Avaz application, a product by Invention Labs, ATF Portfolio Startup.



“Imagine having a thousand thoughts and not being able to express even one. A person with Autism struggles with social interactions. Communication a lot of repetitive behavior autism is not like a mental disorder. Every parent and caregiver wants to do best for their children a very disheartening when they don’t know what the child actually wants.”

- Vaanya’s Mother, Avaz App User,
A product of Invention Labs, an ATF
Startup Incubatee

06

Driving Change

Overall Impact by ATF in
2022 - 2023

-
- 6.1 Ecosystem Involvement
 - 6.2 ATF Portfolio Startup Impact Stories

Ecosystem Involvement

Over the years, the AssisTech Foundation has successfully engaged a wide range of stakeholders, fostering collaboration and creating a vibrant ecosystem to address the issue of insufficient access to assistive technology (AT).

Corporates

ATF has forged partnerships with corporates that recognize the importance of AT and its potential to empower individuals with disabilities. They provide financial support, expertise, and resources to assist our initiatives. Additionally, through collaborations, corporations have integrated AT into their products and services, funded startup projects, thereby driving innovation and accessibility. Moreover, we've also assisted startups in their DEI journey, leader mentorship and sensitisation and inculcated the belief in AT. Some of our partners include **Microsoft, Scientific Games, TE connectivity, Unisys, JP Morgan, Thought Works & Thomson Reuters.**

NGOs

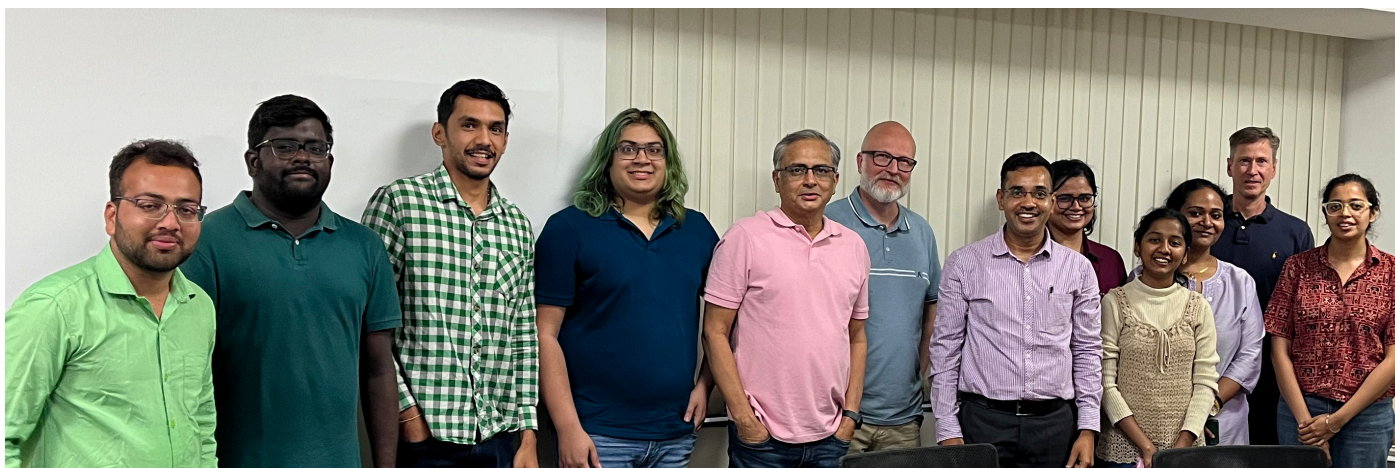
Collaborating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has been crucial in expanding the reach of the AssisTech Foundation's initiatives. **NGOs working in the disability sector bring invaluable insights, on-the-ground experience, and a deep understanding of the needs and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities.** Through partnerships, the foundation leverages the expertise of NGOs to develop targeted programs, provide pilot testing opportunities to the startups and ensure the effective delivery of AT solutions to those who need them the most.

Investors

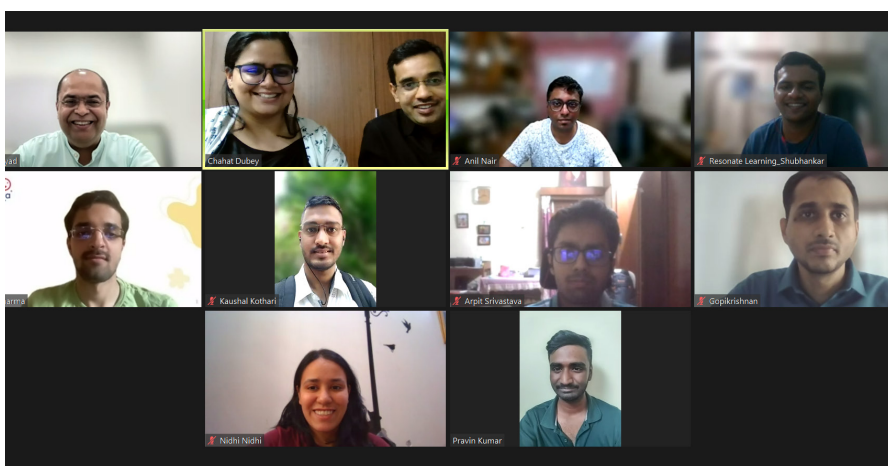
The AssisTech Foundation actively engages with investors who recognize the potential of AT and its social impact. By fostering connections between investors and AT startups, the foundation facilitates funding opportunities, accelerates the growth of innovative solutions, and drives the development of the AT ecosystem. Investors play a vital role in providing capital, mentorship, and guidance to AT startups, helping them scale their operations and reach a wider audience.

Startups

Startups are at the forefront of innovation in the AT sector, developing groundbreaking technologies and solutions. The AssisTech Foundation actively supports and collaborates with startups, providing them with mentorship, resources, and funding opportunities. Through these partnerships, the foundation helps startups refine their products, navigate regulatory challenges, and access a broader market. The foundation's initiatives also create networking opportunities, connecting startups with potential customers, investors, and collaborators.



ATF team in conversation with the +N Global Partners - Jani Jalavisto & Randy Belcher - Disability Impact Fund, Hong Kong.



A glimpse of a common session of ATF Enable Acceleration Program Cohort 5



A snapshot of MoU signing between ATF & Govt of Karnataka



A glimpse of Adidvara workshop at National Career Service Centre for Differently Abled, Bengaluru

Government

Working closely with governments is crucial for the AssisTech Foundation to advocate for policies that promote the use of AT and ensure its availability and affordability. By engaging with government entities at local, regional, and national levels, we aim to contribute to the formulation of inclusive policies, standards, and regulations. These collaborations also enable the access to government funding and resources, further amplifying its impact on the accessibility of AT for people with disabilities. Some of our key partnerships include **NITI AAYOG, AIM, Startup India, Invest India, GoK Department of Empowerment of People with Disabilities, StartupTN, Kerala Startup Mission, Office of Principal Scientific Advisory, Govt of India, Telangana State Innovation Cell.**

Educational Institutions

We collaborate with educational institutes like **IIM-B, ISB, IITMRP, IIIT-B & many more who specialize in fields relevant to AT.** Academicians serve as advisors, offering their insights, technical expertise, and guidance on strategic directions. Moreover, academic institutions are often hubs of innovation and creativity, nurturing the next generation of professionals in various disciplines. We actively engage with students pursuing engineering, design, or healthcare, to encourage their involvement in the AT ecosystem. This includes internships, research collaborations, student-led projects, and competitions, providing opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and contribute to the development of AT solutions.

Global Network

ATF actively seeks global partnerships to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing on a global scale. **ATF along with Remarkable (Australia), Access to Success (Canada), AT Innovate Now (Kenya), Global Centre of Possibility (New Zealand) and Disability Impact Fund (Hong Kong)** - six global leaders in the AT ecosystem, co-founded a Global Alliance on Assistive Technology Innovations and Investments - Inclusive Innovation Network (+N). This groundbreaking alliance signifies our commitment to transcending geographical boundaries and harnessing collective efforts to enable disability inclusion worldwide.

Throughout its journey, the AssisTech Foundation has brought together a diverse and interconnected network of stakeholders. By fostering collaboration and partnerships among corporates, NGOs, educational institutions, government bodies, investors, startups and global stakeholders the foundation has created a powerful ecosystem that drives innovation, supports advocacy efforts, and ensures that people with disabilities have improved access to life-changing assistive technology. Together, these stakeholders work towards a shared vision of inclusivity, empowerment, and equal opportunities for all by leveraging Assistive Technologies.



A group picture with startup founders at the Microsoft Office during the induction session of ATF Startups Portfolio Cohort 5



A picture demonstrating MoU signing between IIT Madras Research Park & ATF



A picture taken during the Vaccination campaign supported by Unisys



ATF team in a meeting with Directorate of Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Government of Karnataka.

ATF Portfolio

Startup Impact Stories



NeoMotion is a distinguished enterprise specializing in the production of meticulously crafted, tailor-made wheelchairs and adapted scooters, catering specifically to individuals with disabilities. As a constituent of the esteemed AssisTech Foundation's portfolio of startups,

NeoMotion fervently endeavors to effectuate a profound transformation in the lives of the disabled community. By virtue of its unwavering commitment to excellence, NeoMotion aspires to make a significant and positive impact on the well-being and mobility of persons with disabilities.

Products



NeoFly

Personalized wheelchair for enhanced health and lifestyle.



NeoBolt

Motorized add-on for independent mobility.

Impact

The utilization of NeoMotion's products has engendered a transformative effect on the lives of those who benefit from them. These individuals have experienced a profound and positive alteration in their circumstances through the adoption of

NeoMotion's customized wheelchairs and modified scooters. NeoMotion's unwavering dedication to excellence has resulted in a tangible improvement in the well-being, mobility, and overall quality of life for those who rely on their products.



Asmit Khati - Chandigarh

Asmit unfortunately suffered spinal cord injury when he was 16 years old. However, he did not want to discontinue his education. He would take cabs and taxis to go for classes which would cost him Rs 350-400 per day. The expenses were becoming too high for him and his family to bear. Asmit got the NeoFly & NeoBolt in 2021. **Now he goes for his classes and also does a part-time job, saving and earning simultaneously. He is a guitarist in the band - Flowing Karma which is an ALL-Wheelchair- Music Band.**



S. Vaishnavi - Gudiyatham

"I am more confident today", says Vaishnavi. Previously, she had to be carried by her parents and kept on the desk in the classroom. She could move out during recess or lunch break unless she had help. Today, she goes to school independently. Her school is 2 kms from home, but she covers that distance independently ***"Instead of staying at home, I can go to school and meet my friend"***.



V. Manoj Kumar - Chennai

A Para-shooter, 19 year old Manoj Kumar suffered from spinal cord injury in 2010, he still managed to go to school and get a sound education and also represent the state in the National Para-Rifle shooting championships, he used to use a traditional wheelchair which gave him back and shoulder pain. Now with the NeoBolt, **Manoj Kumar hopes to represent India in the Paralympic games and win laurels for the country. He goes for his trainings independently and meets his friends in his free time, instead of being at home watching TV aimlessly.**



Gururaj - Tamil Nadu

Gururaja's school is 2 kms from his home. His mother used to take him from school daily, and even used to move him around from class-to-class between periods. When his mother was not available or was sick, he couldn't go to school and had to miss classes. He was supported by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in getting a NeoFly & NeoBolt. **Now, he travels to school independently. His mother is now free and can focus on her household chores and livelihood options. He does not miss classes anymore.**



Avaz Inc

Avaz is a mobile app developed by Invention Labs, an Indian startup based in Chennai, that assists individuals with speech disorders in communicating using pictures and symbols. Founded in 2009 by Ajit Narayanan, Aswin Chandrasekaran, and Preetham Kariyaiah Shivanna, Avaz has been widely recognized and used by over 1 million people in 100 countries.

Invention Labs, a social enterprise, aims to make technology accessible to people with disabilities, expanding its impact through apps like Avaz, FreeSpeech, and iHear. Avaz is also a portfolio startup of the esteemed AssisTech Foundation, which supports the improvement of the lives of people with disabilities.

Features

Easy to use

Avaz is designed to be easy to use for people with speech disorders. The app uses simple, intuitive controls that can be operated with one hand.

Customizable

Avaz can be customized to meet the needs of individual users. Users can choose the words and phrases that they want to use, and they can also change the appearance of the app.

Comprehensive vocabulary

Avaz has a comprehensive vocabulary of over 10,000 words and phrases. The app also includes a variety of symbols and pictures that can be used to communicate.

Affordable

Avaz is available for free on the App Store and Google Play. The app also offers a premium subscription that provides access to additional features.

Benefits

Increased Communication

Avaz can help people with speech disorders communicate more effectively. The app provides a variety of ways to communicate, including pictures, symbols, and text.

Improved Social Skills

Avaz can help people with speech disorders improve their social skills. The app can help people learn how to interact with others and express their needs.

Improved Independence

Avaz can help people with speech disorders become more independent. The app can help people communicate their needs without relying on others.



Vaanya's Mother

“Imagine having a thousand thoughts and not being able to express even one.”

“Autistic person’s struggles with social interactions. Communication a lot of repetitive behavior autism is not like a mental disorder. Every parent and caregiver wants to do best for their children a very disheartening when they don’t know what the child actually wants so Alexa was one of my daughter’s first vocalizations that’s when I got the idea of making a folder in AVAZ for Alexa itself as avaz speech generating device it helps create the Voice output required to access Technologies like Alexa which is voice based so you know she just has to click on those icons and the device would speak give that command on behalf.”



Rudhransh's Mother

“As a mother of immediate diagnosis we just try to look out for options of how to motivate him to speak so as a mother that started making me feel I want my son to communicate to me at least. Avaz and Alexa are really like immediate help for me to understand what is his emotion what does he want to communicate being non-verbal he can’t just come and say Amma or communicate his basic needs with hours, ***that Communications are happening and I started feeling that he is talking to me.***”



Trestle Labs

Trestle Labs is an Assistive Technology company founded by Bonny Dave and Akshita Sachdeva. Their mission is to provide blind and visually-impaired individuals with inclusive access to various forms of content. Through their innovative solutions such as the Kibo mobile app, Kibo device, and Kibo API, they enable audio-based access and conversion

of printed, handwritten, and digital content in over 60 languages. With a user base of over 65,000 people across 22 countries, Trestle Labs has received recognition from prestigious publications and won notable awards for their commitment to accessibility. As a social enterprise, they strive to expand their impact on the lives of people with disabilities globally.

Products



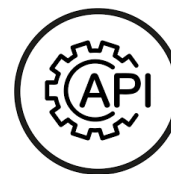
Kibo mobile app

For on-the-go audio-based access to any printed, handwritten and digital content across 60 languages with support for 12 File-formats (Images, Documents, Audio).



Kibo device

A portable device that can scan and convert printed content into audio. The Kibo device is available in two models: the Kibo Mini and the Kibo Pro.



Kibo API

An API that developers can use to integrate Trestle Labs' technology into their own applications.

Features



Listen

Listen documents across 12 formats.



Translate

Translate across 100+ languages.



Digitize

Download it in editable format.



Audiotize

Prepare audio books from documents.



Patil Pranjal, IAS Officer, Sub-Divisional Magistrate

“It helps read Printed and Handwritten text. It is also useful for reading confidential documents.”



Dr. H. Anil Kumar (Librarian, IIM-Ahmedabad)

“Kibo XS fills the critical gap of providing relevant library services to the visually-challenged students and staff. Our experience has been excellent and we have no hesitation in recommending this product to other institutions.”



Nema AI

NEMA AI is a pioneering platform that offers a unique approach to student assessment and personalized learning for children with special needs. Through analyzing brain waves, while presenting simple videos, NEMA AI identifies each student's areas of interest, such as fruits or cars, providing valuable insights into their strengths and weaknesses. The platform uses this data to create a customized learning experience tailored to each student's affinity areas. By combining scientific techniques

with teaching expertise, NEMA AI showcases the potential for enhancing learning outcomes through innovative methods. This ground-breaking platform benefits the students and provides valuable tools and insights for educators, enabling them to deliver more effective and engaging educational experiences. NEMA AI stands as India's first EEG-based special education platform, paving the way for inclusive and personalized learning for children with special needs.

Features

Nema.AI offers a range of innovative solutions designed to make your school inclusion-ready and promote personalized learning experiences. With a focus on early identification and intervention, vocational training, interactive learning, behavior training, mental and emotional analysis, and digital special education, Nema.AI is revolutionizing how we approach education.



Testimonials

Mona - Special Educator, Dhanvantri Special School

NEMA AI app is quite good, our students really showed interest the moment we tried it with them students loved an interactive screen while studying at the same time. It is very useful for us and our students.

Harsh, Special Teacher

NEMA AI is very useful and helpful not only for special students but also for special teachers also because it tells us at which stage of learning the child is enjoying or getting stressed, which helps me in making teaching and learning easier and skillful.

Offerings

Screening & Assessment for Early Identification & Intervention

Nema.AI's advanced screening and assessment tools enable early identification of students' learning needs and challenges. By proactively identifying potential areas of concern, educators can provide timely interventions and support, ensuring that every student receives the assistance they require to thrive academically.

Vocation Training for Above 18

Recognizing the importance of preparing students for the transition into adulthood, Nema.AI offers vocational training programs for students aged 18 and above. These programs equip students with practical skills and knowledge, enabling them to pursue meaningful careers and lead independent lives.

Interactive Learning & Behaviour Training

Nema.AI's interactive learning platform creates engaging and immersive experiences that foster student participation and knowledge retention. Additionally, their behaviour training modules provide strategies and techniques to address challenging behaviours, promoting a positive and conducive learning environment for all.

Mental and Emotional Analysis

Understanding the importance of students' mental and emotional well-being, Nema.AI incorporates advanced analysis techniques to assess and monitor students' psychological states. Educators can tailor interventions and support services accordingly by gaining insights into their emotional needs, ensuring students' holistic development.

Digital Special Education - RCI Certified Curriculum & Virtual School from Home

Nema.AI offers a comprehensive digital special education program that adheres to RCI (Rehabilitation Council of India) certified curriculum standards. This virtual school-from-home solution provides accessible and flexible education for students with special needs, ensuring equal opportunities and empowering their educational journey.

Personalized AI-Based Recommendation

Leveraging the power of artificial intelligence, Nema.AI provides personalized curriculum recommendations and faster learning pathways for each student. By analyzing individual learning patterns and preferences, the platform tailors educational content to meet their unique needs, optimizing their learning experience.



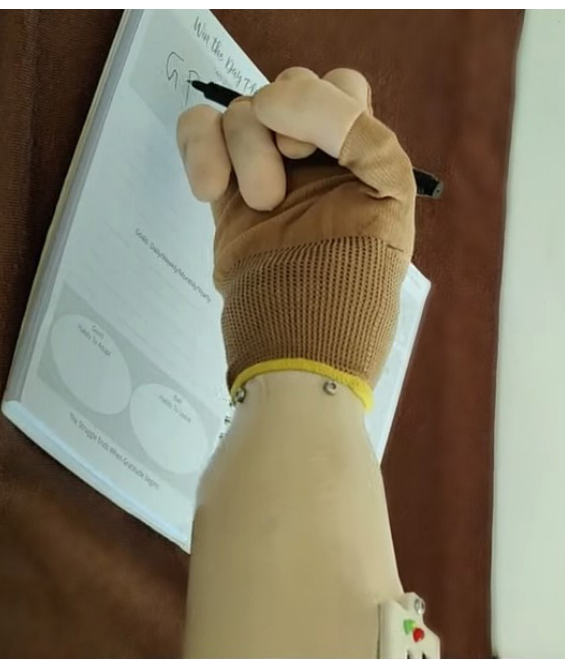
Robobionics

Robobionics is an innovative assistive tech solutions company specializing in rehabilitating hand-related issues, including amputation, limb difference, nerve damage, paralysis, and tendon injuries. With a core focus on providing a sense of touch to their solutions, Robobionics aims to enhance the user experience and expedite the rehabilitation process, ultimately promoting user independence. Robobionics enables individuals to regain dexterity and functionality through their cutting-edge technologies, empowering

them to perform daily activities with increased ease and confidence. By combining expertise in robotics and rehabilitation, Robobionics is at the forefront of revolutionizing hand rehabilitation, improving the quality of life for those facing hand-related challenges. For individuals seeking innovative and effective solutions, Robobionics stands as a trusted partner in their journey towards recovery and independence.

Product

Grippy a revolutionary 3D printed prosthetic hand proudly made in India by Robo Bionics. This lightweight and affordable battery-powered prosthesis, certified by NABL Lab Safety, brings a sense of touch and multi-grip control to individuals with below elbow amputation aged 15 and above. Grippy offers an unparalleled level of independence, allowing users to perform a wide range of two-handed tasks with ease. Its patent-pending technology enables a realistic experience of touching and gripping objects, mimicking the sensation of a real hand. Designed for improved ergonomics, Grippy not only moves and looks like a real hand but also feels like one. With its user-friendly interface, both clinicians and users can quickly adapt to Grippy, reducing the learning curve and enabling faster integration into everyday life. This innovative prosthesis serves as an alternative to myoelectric hands, eliminating the need for clinicians to relearn fitting processes.



Grippy is a testament to India's self-reliance and technological advancements, making bionics as simple as switching on a light bulb.



Akhil Mangalapalem, Andhra Pradesh

As I continue to use Grippy and improve my skills, I feel welcomed into the Robo Bionics family. I am grateful for this life-changing opportunity and wish to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved. With the support of CSR initiatives like these, *I am confident in my speedy recovery and future success.*



Murali

“I faced challenges due to Double Limb Difference. However, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Sri Gurudeva Charitable Trust, I was provided with counseling, evaluation, and fitting of the Grippy prosthetic hand within just two days. Since receiving Grippy, I have experienced remarkable progress in my recovery journey.

With Grippy by my side, I am confident in my continued recovery and eagerly look forward to the future with renewed hope and determination. I am forever grateful for this support and sincerely wish to inspire others with my journey. Together, let us celebrate the power of innovation, compassion, and the pursuit of independence.”



Dextroware Devices

Dextroware Devices is dedicated to becoming a comprehensive hub for affordable assistive technologies. Their mission extends beyond assisting individuals with disabilities, as they believe that assistive technology should benefit everyone by helping them overcome their own challenges. By innovating popular consumer electronics, Dextroware Devices aims to simplify everyday tasks for people from all walks of life. Recognizing the unique obstacles faced by different communities, Dextroware Devices focuses on understanding their specific pain points and developing tailored solutions.

They are committed to making technology accessible and affordable, addressing the individual problems that a significant portion of society encounters regularly. In doing so, they aim to be more inclusive, considering diverse financial, ethnic, and age groups. Dextroware Devices envisions a future where technology breaks down barriers and empowers individuals to lead fulfilling lives. By bridging the gap between technology and accessibility, they strive to create a more inclusive society where everyone can benefit from the transformative power of innovative devices and software.

Product

MouseWare by DextroWare Devices is a cutting-edge technology designed to enhance the user experience with computer mice. This innovative product offers a range of features and functionalities that aim to improve productivity, convenience, and overall user satisfaction.

MouseWare introduces advanced customization options, allowing users to personalize their mouse settings according to their preferences and needs. With its intuitive software, users can modify button assignments, adjust sensitivity levels, and create custom macros, empowering them to optimize their workflow and streamline repetitive tasks.

One of the standout features of MouseWare is its intelligent gesture recognition. It enables users to perform various actions and commands by simply making specific hand movements or gestures. This hands-free interaction enhances accessibility, particularly for individuals with



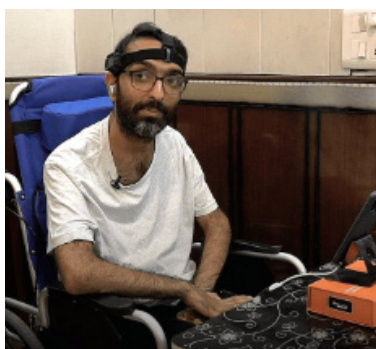
mobility challenges, and provides a more intuitive and seamless user experience.

Another notable aspect of MouseWare is its ergonomic design and focus on user comfort. The product is crafted with ergonomics in mind, aiming to reduce strain and fatigue during prolonged computer use. It offers customizable grip options, adjustable angles, and intuitive button placements to ensure optimal comfort and minimize the risk of repetitive strain injuries.



Dr. Malavika Iyer, Motivational Speaker

I have used my right stump to control smart devices. But over time, I started to develop shoulder pain. But ***this product allows me to use smart devices for long hours without strain! The voice feature is amazing for navigating through various programs.*** Primarily use it to type emails, respond to messages, and write my scripts. Anyone with good stability in their neck can now use Mouseware.



Anuj Arora, Blogger

I have started to pen down my thoughts and feelings. I am back to reading some news and interesting articles which is really fulfilling. The journey of using this device has made me feel very empowered to say the least.



A man with prosthetic leg doing carpentry work for livelihood



“By adopting forward-looking business models, the businesses will not only address the needs of today but also anticipate the demands of tomorrow.”

- Ravi Narayan, Co-Founder and Board Member, AssisTech Foundation

07

Expanding Boundaries, Envisioning Possibilities.

Aspirations and Future Plans

- 7.1 AssisTech Foundation Shaping the Assistive Technology Landscape
- 7.2 Embracing the Global Tapestry of Inclusion : ATF's Transcendent Global Leadership

Pioneering the Future: How ATF Plans to Influence the Assistive Technology Landscape

- by Ravi Narayan, Co-Founder and Board Member AssisTech Foundation



In a world filled with diverse needs and aspirations, Assistive Technology (AT) has the potential to become a universally transformative force.

Much needs to be done in the disability space. There is a significant gap in access to AT worldwide. **The WHO estimates that around 90% of people with disabilities in developing countries do not have access to the AT they need.** With a growing global aging population, the demand for AT is increasing. The United Nations estimates that by 2050, **the number of people aged 60 and above will reach 2.1 billion, highlighting the importance of AT in supporting healthy aging.** In the context of education, UNESCO estimates **32 million children with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries are out of school,** and AT can help remove barriers to their education. AT also plays a crucial role in facilitating employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The International Labour Organization (ILO) reports that around **80% of people with disabilities of working age in low- and middle-income countries are unemployed or underemployed.**

According to the Global Economics of Disability report, addressing the barriers faced by people with disabilities through AT and other measures could unlock an estimated market potential of **\$8 trillion globally by 2030.** At the same time, the UN estimates AT directly contributes to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly SDG3 on Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG4 on Quality Education and SDG10 on Reducing Inequalities. The implementation of AT can have positive economic implications and effective social leveler. With each passing day, the world of AT is evolving at an extraordinary pace, setting the stage for a

future brimming with transformative possibilities. Developments such as artificial intelligence, robotics, wearable devices, and smart home automation are expanding the possibilities of AT. And by embracing innovative business models, AT companies and startups can create sustainable and scalable ventures that drive social impact while ensuring financial viability. By adopting forward-looking business models, they will not only address the needs of today but also anticipate the demands of tomorrow. From innovative subscription-based services that provide continuous support and updates to agile pay-as-you-go models that enable flexible access, the possibilities seem boundless.

ATF is at the forefront of realizing the visionary future of AT. With a steadfast commitment to empowerment and inclusivity, ATF is broadening its horizons through the following initiatives:

1. Policy Advocacy - AssisTech Foundation recognizes the importance of advocacy and policy reform in creating an inclusive environment. ATF will actively engage with policymakers and stakeholders to influence and shape policies that promote accessibility, funding opportunities, and support for AT including manufacturing and building standards, thus enabling an ecosystem for innovation and ensuring equitable access to AT through education and awareness initiatives.

2. Global Reach and Collaboration - ATF aspires to expand its global reach and collaboration. By forging partnerships with organizations, governments, and communities worldwide, the foundation can leverage collective expertise, research breakthroughs and share best practices. These collaborations will help drive systemic change on a global scale.



A handshake between two people - one with a prosthetic arm and one with a usual arm.

3. Enhanced Funding Opportunities - ATF will work toward building funding mechanisms to support entrepreneurship and innovation in the field of AT. This could involve creating dedicated grants, innovative financing models and venture capital funds specifically focused on supporting startups and innovators in developing assistive technologies.

4. Industry-Startup Collaborations - ATF plans to facilitate collaborations between startups and established industry players in the AT sector. By fostering partnerships and joint ventures, startups adopt a market-centric approach and carve a path for them for continuous innovation in consonance with market demand. Also, startups can gain access to industry knowledge, resources, and distribution channels, while established companies can benefit from the innovation and fresh perspectives brought by startups.

By implementing these initiatives, ATF can further strengthen the ecosystem for entrepreneurship and innovation in AT ultimately making a significant positive impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Embracing the Global Tapestry of Inclusion: AssisTech Foundation's Transcendent Global Leadership

- by Prateek Madhav, Co-Founder, Board Member & CEO, AssisTech Foundation



In today's interconnected world, it is imperative that we address global challenges such as disability inclusion with a collaborative and unified approach. Disabilities know no boundaries, and their impact can be felt in every corner of the globe. **The projected growth of the global disabled and elderly assistive technology market, expected to reach \$26 billion by 2024 and \$31.5 billion by 2027,** highlights the urgent need for global partnerships to address the complex challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and the elderly population.

While the market potential is promising, no single entity or organization can adequately tackle the diverse and evolving needs of this demographic on their own. Collaborative efforts, through global partnerships, are essential to unlocking the full potential of assistive technology and ensuring its effective implementation worldwide.

With this thought, AssisTech Foundation along with Remarkable (Australia), Access to Success (Canada), AT Innovate Now (Kenya), Global Centre of Possibility (New Zealand) and Disability Impact Fund (Hong Kong) - six global leaders in the AT ecosystem, co-founded a Global Alliance on Assistive Technology Innovations and Investments - Inclusive Innovation Network (+N). This groundbreaking alliance signifies our commitment to transcending geographical boundaries and harnessing collective efforts to enable disability inclusion worldwide.

+N inclusive innovation network is a community of innovators, accelerators and investors dedicated to growing the impact of technology on disability inclusion. We believe that technology and entrepreneurship have important roles to play in ending the exclusion of those of us with disabilities.

The mission is to connect a global ecosystem of partners who shape future technologies that lower barriers to disability inclusion. We do this by facilitating interactions and cooperation between users, innovators and entrepreneurs, capital and expertise. The formation of the Inclusive Innovation Network (+N) represents a paradigm shift in the way we approach disability inclusion.

We understand that innovation and entrepreneurship are vital in advancing AT. **By nurturing over 1200+ AT startups** affiliated with the alliance, we are igniting a wave of innovation that knows no bounds. These startups are pushing the boundaries of what is possible in disability inclusion, creating groundbreaking solutions that enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities across the globe. Through mentorship, funding, and knowledge sharing, we are cultivating a robust ecosystem that fosters entrepreneurial spirit and accelerates the development and adoption of life-changing AT solutions.

Disabilities are not restricted to specific countries or regions. They affect individuals irrespective of their nationality, race, or creed. Recognizing this universal truth, we are committed to looking beyond geographical boundaries. The Inclusive Innovation Network (+N) embraces a global perspective, acknowledging that every contribution, no matter how small, can have a profound impact on disability inclusion. By breaking down silos and encouraging collaboration, we are ensuring that no one is left behind, regardless of where they reside.

As we strive for a more inclusive and equitable world, let us remember that disabilities do not respect geographical boundaries. It is only through collective action, collaboration, and a global perspective that we can truly address the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. Our thoughts and proceeding transformed into action and became a collective consciousness during **the first ever Remarkable Tech Summit in October 2022, a global compendium to amplify the voices of disabled innovators, create connections, explore challenges, set commitments, and actively support one another to drive change.** It was incredible to see the joint commitment

from founding partners of +N and other joining forces to these goals, which we are proud to say we reached by the end of our two days together. The summit is a testament to what can be achieved when we unite our efforts, share our knowledge, and leverage the power of assistive technology.

So, let us embrace this call for collective action and work hand in hand across borders, transcending boundaries to create a world where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can thrive and contribute their unique talents. Together, we can build a future that is truly inclusive and leave no one behind.



Access to Success
(Canada)



AssisTech Foundation
(India)



Disability Impact Fund
(Hong Kong)



Global Centre
of Possibility

Global Centre of Possibility
(New Zealand)



AT Innovate Now
(Kenya)



Remarkable
(Australia)



A toddler with cerebral palsy learning to walk using Assistive shoes



***“AssisTech Foundation :
Empowering the
marginalized, unlocking the
digital world.”***

- Chahat Dubey, Head of Partnerships
and Programs, AssisTech Foundation.

08

Voices of Inspiration

Snippets and Articles

- 8.1 Marketing, a key to Success
- 8.2 Disability with Digital Self-Determination
- 8.3 Empowering People with Disabilities - A One-Stop Digital Solution
- 8.4 Empowering Accessibility - Build User-Centric Products with Empathy
- 8.5 Unlocking Accessibility - The Ethical Paradox of Assistive Technology for those with Disabilities in India.

Marketing, a key to Success

- by Jawahar Bekay, Co-Founder and Board Member AssisTech Foundation



In the realm of disability inclusion and assistive technology startups, among other things, there exists an oft overlooked area viz. an underwhelming Marketing function and elements of branding and effective marketing communication, which go with it.

While these startups are driven by noble missions and innovative solutions, they often fail to harness the full potential of branding to create a strong narrative that can leave an everlasting impact, raise awareness, and foster an aspirational purchase value.

There could be several reasons for this. Primary among those seem to be a lack of understanding of the role of marketing, as well as not having experience or sufficient knowledge of it, within the leadership. It is important to understand that even at the early stage in which many of these startups come to us are, it is important for them to put in place key elements that will position the company for the future.

It is through marketing that one sharpens the message, identifies market segments that would purchase the product, and build out those business strategies for its success.

And the marketing communication could then harness aspects such as emotional storytelling, representation, educational initiatives, collaborations, and digital platforms, to overcome the challenges they face in building an impactful brand.

On the other hand, actual **success stories of assistive technology companies are not made available, commensurate with the potential that this market has.**

Social impact funds which are essential for the growth of these companies in this market as a whole, probably do not get enough messaging about this.

How many of us are aware that there have been **successful early stage fundraises internationally ranging from \$ 1 – 10 million by AT companies** building cutting edge assistive products. Or acknowledge that this is a multi-billion dollar opportunity on par with many other sectors.

Any good story told well will have a listener. Whether it is the consumer or the funder or anyone else in the ecosystem.

ATF 's startup mentoring program focuses on these aspects with its cohorts even at their early stages, in the hope of mitigating the gaps and enabling some of these startups to success.

Disability and Digital Self-Determination: Unveiling the Veiled Autonomy

- by Chahat Dubey, Head of Partnerships and Programs, AssisTech Foundation



In a world that increasingly revolves around digital connectivity, the concept of digital self-determination holds profound significance, particularly for individuals with disabilities. The digital landscape promises unprecedented freedom and choice but a subtle injustice persists for millions of individuals with disabilities. The glaring disparity in digital self-determination must be acknowledged, for it denies these individuals the agency they deserve.

Digital self-determination allows individuals with disabilities to shape their own narratives, make informed decisions, and express their unique identities. By having control over their digital experiences, people with disabilities can transcend the confines of their physical conditions and be recognized for their abilities, ideas, and contributions. It encompasses **the right to privacy, security, and autonomy over personal data, free from the perils of algorithmic bias and data discrimination.**

Even as technology evolves at an exponential pace, the marginalized are often left behind. The ubiquitous use of CAPTCHA systems serves as a stark example, inadvertently barring access to those with visual or hearing impairments. By emphasizing the importance of digital self-determination for people with disabilities, we acknowledge their inherent right to navigate the digital world with agency, choice, and dignity. It is a vital component in fostering inclusive societies that celebrate diversity, amplify voices, and embrace the untapped potential within each individual.

At the AssisTech Foundation, we stand firm in our commitment to challenging these inequities. Through our vast ecosystem of partnerships and collaborations, we are championing the cause of digital empowerment for people with disabilities.

Our research and development initiatives drive innovation, striving to make assistive technologies more accessible and inclusive. By working alongside assistive technology developers, content creators, and policy makers, we forge a path towards digital equality.

Our initiatives encompass advocacy for inclusive design, promoting accessibility standards, and fostering awareness about the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities. We actively engage in knowledge-sharing platforms, enabling stakeholders to reimagine the digital landscape as a realm of equal opportunities. Together, we can dismantle the barriers that hinder digital self-determination, ensuring that no one is left behind.

To achieve true empowerment, collaboration is essential. We invite governments, technology companies, non-profit organizations, and individuals to join forces with us in this noble endeavor. By leveraging collective knowledge, resources, and influence, we can drive transformative change and pave the way for a future where digital autonomy and choice are universally embraced.

Let us usher in an era where assistive technologies become more than mere tools, but instead catalysts for freedom, choice, and self-determination. Together, we can shape a digital landscape where every individual, regardless of ability, can flourish and thrive. The time for change is now.

Empowering People with Disabilities: The need for a One-Stop Digital Platform

- by Suryaprakash K, Co-Founder and Board Member AssisTech Foundation



As the project director of an upcoming initiative aimed at empowering people with disabilities, I am proud to introduce a ground-breaking solution. The vision is to create a comprehensive digital platform that serves as a one-stop solution, covering the aspects of the 3L - Learning, Living, and Livelihood.

In this thought leadership article, we delve into the pressing need for such a platform and highlight the transformative impact it can have on the lives of individuals with disabilities.

1. Bridging the Gap in Access to Information and Resources:

One of the greatest challenges faced by people with disabilities is the limited access to information, resources, and support systems. Existing platforms often fail to provide a centralized hub that addresses the diverse needs of individuals across different domains.

2. Holistic Support for Learning:

Education and skill development is the gateway to personal and professional growth, yet individuals with disabilities encounter significant barriers that impede their access to inclusive learning opportunities. The digital platform will provide a comprehensive suite of learning resources, including adaptive technologies, specialized tools, and assistive learning materials.

3. Enhancing Independent Living:

Living independently is a fundamental aspect of a fulfilling life, but it can be particularly challenging for individuals with disabilities. The platform will offer a range of resources and services aimed at improving the quality of life for people with disabilities. This includes providing information on accessible housing, assistive devices,

healthcare services, and recreational activities. By centralizing these resources, we empower individuals to live independently and with dignity.

4. Facilitating Inclusive Employment:

Access to gainful employment remains a significant barrier for people with disabilities, leading to lower employment rates and financial instability. The platform will serve as a bridge between job seekers with disabilities and inclusive employers. Through job listings, skill development resources, and mentorship programs, we aim to create a supportive ecosystem that promotes inclusive hiring practices and fosters professional growth and development.

5. Collaboration and Networking Opportunities:

Creating a vibrant and inclusive community is crucial for individuals with disabilities. The digital platform will facilitate networking opportunities, enabling users people with disability, caregivers etc to connect, share experiences, and collaborate with like-minded individuals, organizations, and disability advocacy personnel. By fostering these connections, we aim to create a sense of belonging, encourage peer support, and drive collective action towards a more inclusive society.

6. Fostering Entrepreneurship and Startups:

The digital platform also holds immense potential to inspire and foster entrepreneurship within the disability community. By showcasing success stories, providing mentorship programs, and connecting individuals with disabilities to relevant resources and support networks, we create an environment conducive to innovation and startup growth. As a result, startups focused on developing assistive technologies, accessibility solutions, and inclusive products and services can flourish, driving economic growth while simultaneously addressing the needs of people with disabilities.

The need for a one-stop digital platform that caters to the domains of learning, living, and livelihood for people with disabilities is undeniable. By creating such a platform, we aim to break down barriers, provide equal access to information and resources, and empower individuals with disabilities to reach their full potential. Through holistic support, collaboration, and networking opportunities, our initiative will hopefully transform the lives of countless individuals, fostering inclusion, independence, and empowerment. Let us unite in the mission to create a more accessible and inclusive world for all.



A person with intellectual disability using AT for learning

Empowering Accessibility : Build User-Centric Products with Empathy

- by Ruchi Bakshi, Design Fellow, AssisTech Foundation



In today's digital era, accessibility is no longer a mere luxury but an essential requirement. With over 1 billion people worldwide living with disabilities, it is imperative that products and services are designed with inclusivity in mind. The impact of accessibility extends beyond moral obligations; it has become a strategic advantage for businesses. In fact, a study conducted by Accenture estimated that by improving accessibility, companies could tap into a potential market worth a staggering \$8 trillion. This highlights the immense value in designing products, services, and environments that cater to the diverse needs of individuals.

When we prioritize accessibility, we do more than just promote inclusivity. We drive innovation, unlock new market opportunities, and foster economic growth. **Accessibility is not limited to people with disabilities alone; it benefits older adults, individuals with temporary impairments, and even those without disabilities who may encounter situational limitations.** By considering the diverse needs of users, we can create solutions that cater to a broader audience, enhancing usability, satisfaction, and the overall user experience.

Accessibility is not just a legal requirement; it is a fundamental principle of inclusivity that ensures everyone can use products regardless of their abilities, enabling them to live a life of dignity. As an organization, it is crucial to prioritize user needs and empathize with customers in order to build truly user-centric products.

Let's delve into the significance of accessibility in product development and explore actionable steps that founders can take to cultivate empathy and create products that meet diverse user requirements. By doing so, we can contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

Why Accessibility?

Accessibility is the key to unlocking the full potential of any product. By considering the diverse needs of users, we can design solutions that cater to a broader audience, enhancing usability, satisfaction, and the overall user experience. Accessibility benefits not only people with disabilities but also older adults, individuals with temporary impairments, and even those without disabilities who may encounter situational limitations.

The following points shed light on why accessibility should be a priority for all—

Inclusive Product — Accessibility ensures that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in activities, enabling equal opportunities for education, employment, and social engagement.

Expanded Market Base — By creating accessible products, we tap into a vast and often overlooked market segment, encompassing individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with temporary impairments.

User Satisfaction — User-centric design, driven by accessibility, improves user satisfaction. When products are designed with users in mind, considering their needs and preferences, it enhances the overall user experience.

Tap into Innovation and Creativity — Prioritizing accessibility in the product development process encourages us to think beyond traditional solutions and embrace innovative approaches. Accessibility challenges can lead to breakthroughs that benefit not only users with disabilities but the entire user base.

Steps for Empathy and User - Centric Product Development

To create user-centric products, one must prioritise understanding and empathizing with the target audience. By gaining insight into users' challenges, preferences, and goals, we can develop solutions that truly resonate with our customers. Here are some steps to foster empathy and create user-centric products:

The following points shed light on why accessibility should be a priority for all—

User Research — Invest time and effort in conducting comprehensive user research. Engage with the target audience through various channels and tools to understand their challenges, needs, and preferences. This research forms the foundation for empathetic product design.

Persona Development — Create user personas to represent different segments of your target audience. These personas humanise your users and provide a framework for understanding their motivations, goals, and pain points. Personas help align product development decisions with user needs.

Empathy Mapping — Develop empathy maps to delve deeper into users' emotions, thoughts, and experiences. This exercise helps in understanding their perspectives and designing solutions addressing their needs.

Co-Creation and Iteration — Involve users throughout the product development lifecycle. Encourage feedback, conduct usability tests, and iterate based on user insights. Co-creating with users ensures their needs are at the forefront of decision-making, leading to more inclusive and effective products.

Engaging with Accessibility Experts & Community — Seek guidance from accessibility experts or consultants who can provide valuable insights and guidance on inclusive design practices. Their expertise helps address potential accessibility barriers early in the development process.

Building accessible and user-centric products is not only a moral obligation but also a strategic advantage. AssisTech Foundation's impactful work in disability inclusion demonstrates how organizations can create inclusive, user-friendly solutions that cater to diverse individuals. By understanding user needs, empathizing with customers, and prioritizing accessibility from the very beginning, they have already positively impacted the lives of 5.1 lakh individuals.

Fostering empathy and prioritizing accessibility is an ongoing commitment towards creating a more inclusive world. By embracing technology and incorporating accessibility into product development strategies, we can empower individuals and build a society that leaves no one behind.

“Accessibility is not a luxury; it's a necessity.”

- Steve Ballmer, Ex-CEO
Microsoft

Unlocking Accessibility : The Ethical Paradox of Assistive Technology for those with Disabilities in India

- by Shantosh Kumarasurier and Chahat Dubey



In an era of rapid technological advancement, assistive technology (AT) has emerged as a game-changer for those with disabilities in India and the world. These innovative devices and tools have the potential to empower individuals, break down barriers, and foster a more inclusive society. However, as we embrace the transformative capabilities of AT, it is crucial to consider the ethical dimension associated with accessibility, privacy, and security. Here, we delve into the ethical considerations surrounding AT and the importance of striking a delicate balance between accessibility and the protection of privacy and security for people with disabilities in India.

AT has revolutionized accessibility by providing innovative solutions for individuals with disabilities. From screen readers that enable visually impaired people to access digital content to alternative input devices for those with motor impairments, AT has opened doors to independence and more inclusive participation. However, the ethical imperative lies in ensuring equitable access to these technologies. We must bridge the digital divide, making assistive devices affordable, readily available, and culturally sensitive. **Prioritizing inclusivity and equal opportunities for all, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds, is essential to prevent marginalization and discrimination.**

As AT advances, privacy concerns become increasingly pertinent. To function effectively, these devices often collect sensitive personal data,

such as biometrics, health records, and personal preferences. **Protecting privacy necessitates robust privacy regulations and data protection laws. Establishing stringent guidelines that require AT product companies to handle personal data ethically and responsibly is essential.** Transparency and informed consent should be at the forefront, ensuring that individuals are aware of how their data is collected, stored, and used. The interconnected nature of assistive devices raises legitimate concerns about security vulnerabilities. These devices are essential for crucial tasks such as communication, mobility, and health management for individuals with disabilities. Any compromise in the security of these devices not only risks privacy but also compromises physical safety. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritize robust cybersecurity measures throughout the process of developing and deploying AT. Manufacturers and developers must implement stringent security protocols, regularly update software, and conduct comprehensive vulnerability assessments.

Ethical considerations must be at the core of AT design and development. User-centered design principles should guide the creation of accessible and inclusive products that cater to the unique needs and preferences of individuals with disabilities. Additionally, **user empowerment is paramount.** Feedback from the end users and involvement should be actively sought during the design and development phases to ensure that it genuinely meets their needs and enhances their independence.



A person experiencing AR/VR technology for immersive living experience

By embracing ethical design principles and promoting user empowerment, we can build AT that truly serves the interests and aspirations of people with disabilities.

As we navigate the evolving landscape of AT, it is imperative to address the ethical considerations surrounding accessibility, privacy, and security. **By striking a delicate balance between the benefits of accessibility and the protection of privacy and security, we can ensure the dignity, autonomy, and well-being of individuals with disabilities.** Incorporating ethical design principles, promoting user empowerment, enforcing privacy regulations, and implementing robust cybersecurity measures are integral to this equation. By doing so, we can leverage the transformative power of AT while upholding the rights and welfare of people with disabilities in India. Our ethical choices can create a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

In conclusion, we must urgently address the ethical considerations surrounding accessibility, privacy, and security in the realm of AT. It is imperative for all stakeholders involved to step up and lead the charge in shaping policies that prioritize the welfare of those with disabilities. **We call upon decision-makers to take immediate action and collaborate closely to establish robust regulations and guidelines that ensure equitable access, protect privacy, and enhance security.** Let us all unite and forge a path towards a more inclusive and empowering future for people with disabilities in India. Together, we can make a profound impact and create a society that leaves no one behind.



A person using a magnifying glass to enhance learning



09 Patrons

10 Acknowledgment

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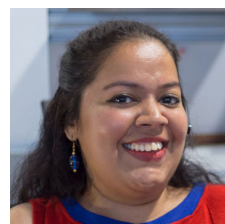
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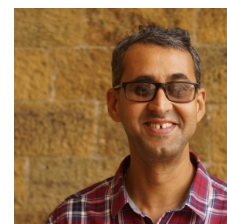
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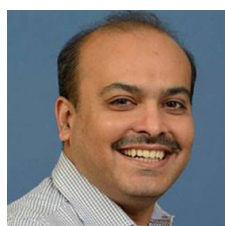
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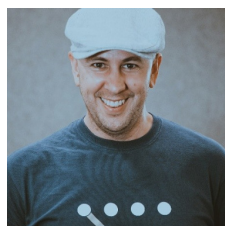
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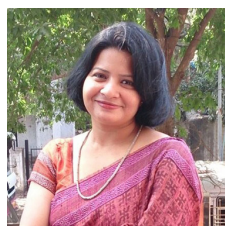
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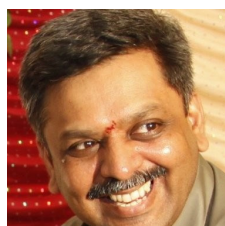
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| S.D. Shibulal and Kumari (Sarojini Damodaran Foundation) |
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Acknowledgment

Dear valued partners,

As the CEO of the AssisTech Foundation, I am immensely grateful for the incredible support and funding that we have received over the past year. It is because of your unwavering dedication and commitment to our cause that we have been able to make such significant progress in the field of Assistive Technology (AT) in India and beyond.

We recognize and appreciate the trust that our partners have placed in us, and we take this responsibility very seriously. Your continued support has enabled us to provide crucial AT solutions and services to individuals with disabilities, empowering them to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

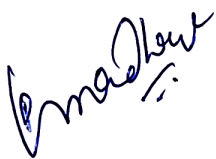
Through your generous contributions, we have been able to expand our reach, develop innovative new technologies, and provide valuable training and support to individuals, families, and caregivers. Together, we have made great strides in improving the quality of life for people with disabilities, and we are excited to continue this important work in the years to come.

To our Board of Directors & friends of ATF, I extend my deepest appreciation for your unwavering commitment to our cause. Your guidance, support, and strategic vision have been invaluable in shaping the direction and success of the AssisTech Foundation.

And to our team, I am particularly grateful for their exceptional leadership in cultivating and nurturing relationships with our partners across the AT ecosystem. Through their tireless efforts, we have been able to forge new partnerships, deepen existing relationships, and secure the funding and resources necessary to advance our mission. I cannot express enough how proud I am of your resilience, creativity, and unwavering commitment to our mission. Your dedication to our work and to the individuals and communities we serve is truly inspiring, and I feel honored to work alongside you every day.

As we look ahead to the future, I am confident that with your continued support and partnership, we will continue to make a meaningful impact on the lives of people with disabilities and create a more inclusive and accessible world for all.

Sincerely,



Prateek Madhav
CEO, AssisTech Foundation

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