

Alumni social initiative : *Rethinking the marketplace for a sustainable world*

Lithics.in

Empower Promote Sustain



Kirti Krishan , Divya Darshan , Desh Deepak
(who attended the Brazil 2017 Project Programme)
Saurabh Patel ,Shubhankar , Neel and Pankaj



...en Factory , with visually – challenged artisans

“The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own.”
- Benjamin Disraeli

The aim of a social enterprise is to benefit Society and generate profits to continue operations simultaneously. Having the zeal and commitment for Society’s upliftment and community empowerment should never cease. It is an ongoing process.

With the constant support and guidance of *Cluster Innovation Centre* and Dean Alumni Affairs *Sydney Rebeiro* , a band of dedicated alumni and students set out on a path as an example. Their venture, **Lithics.in** is something born in the very University of which dedicated students – alumni are / have been a part of .

Lithics.in is an online marketplace with products which contribute to a social or environmental cause. Behind every product there is a story of positive change. They focus on market access, economic empowerment and capacity building of NGOs, social and environmental organizations, women, artisans, persons with disability, jail inmates, migrants, refugees and tribal communities, connect them to customers globally and help them create secure and sustainable livelihoods for themselves. **Lithics.in** offers a range of services which include marketing, product production, development and design, quality control, pricing, packaging and logistics. Their extensive product range includes quality handicrafts, handloom, jewellery, stationery, gifts, paintings, organics, naturals, apparel and FMCG products.

Bringing out innovation every now and then is not the only thing that matters, and as Prof. Sydney Rebeiro told the founders, “Implementation and fruition of Innovation – as – Service should be the goal.”

The journey began when a field visit, as part of an academic project, to the Delhi Foundation of Deaf Women brought to light some stark and shocking realities. **“We saw overstuffed cupboards filled with quality handicrafts**, paintings, gift items and other creative products. as the sales were meagre.” Further research revealed that the case was not very different with most social and environmental organizations.

This unsettling fact prompted **Desh Deepak Dwivedi, Saurabh Patel and Kirti Krishan** (BA Hons Humanities and Social Sciences Class of 2017) to ponder over the problem of market access and empowerment for these organizations.

Lithics.in, is their solution, to bring the e-commerce twist in their story.

“By promoting and nurturing conscious consumption, we aim to create a positive difference in the lives of the *underserved and underprivileged population* at the base of the pyramid and contribute towards the creation of a sustainable world ”.

The Team, which now stands at 15 strong, gives each person freedom in their work. The commitment and devotion of the whole team to the cause catalysed the entire process. They have **Pankaj** heading technical department, **Divyadarshan** heading the product development, **Shubhankar** overseeing the photography and design process, **Neel** heading the content department and so on. and, there is no end of talent in the team and the hard work is showing in the sales and appreciation they are getting.

Lithics.in is a Pollination Project grantee (USA) and an incubatee at DUCIC-TBI (funded by MSME, Govt. of India), University of Delhi. They received an initial grant of \$500 (Pollination Project) which helped them start their operations. DU CIC gave them the office space **but the monetary support is missed still**. Bootstrapping has set their foundation ever since they started working on the idea and hence are examples for all those who make the excuse of limited financial support.

They received critical appreciation at DBS-NUS Social Venture Challenge Asia 2016 whereby their idea was judged by an eminent jury worldwide. The feedback they received has helped them develop the idea into a venture of Quality .

The idea was appreciated at the Enactus India Nationals 2016, Mumbai where they had a separate presentation in front of reputed industry experts.

Delhi University Summer Training in Innovation and Entrepreneurship 2016 and Ashoka India Youth Venture Selection Panel (November 2016) trained the team .

Lithics.in was selected for the Entrepreneurship for Good Program of the DO School, **Berlin, Germany**. The training was in **Brazil** where the venture was one of its kind to be represented from India among the 19 others from around the world.

The venture has also been mentioned in the prestigious **Huffington Post** where it received critical appreciation.

Lithics.in is owned and run by Wayne Ventures Pvt Ltd New Delhi, India and its partner-seller Agrima Foundation is an organisation based in New Delhi which works for the welfare of persons with disabilities.

Desh Deepak Dwivedi Co - Founder & CEO Lithics.in 12.07.2017