



Network of Indian
Cultural Enterprises

NICE NEWSLETTER | MAY 2025

Namaste,

This May, we are pleased to share updates on the programs and initiatives undertaken in April 2025. We extend our sincere gratitude to the NICEorg community for its continued support. Stay tuned for further updates!

Happenings at NICEorg in April 2025!

NICEorg and IICD Join Forces to Empower India's Cultural Entrepreneurs



On April 24, 2025, NICEorg signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Crafts and Design (IICD), Jaipur, establishing a strategic partnership to bolster India's cultural and creative economy. This collaboration aims to empower entrepreneurs, artisans, and designers within traditional craft sectors by driving innovation, sustainability, and inclusive growth.

The partnership will focus on joint outreach, mentorship, and incubation programs to support emerging cultural enterprises. By combining IICD's academic expertise and grassroots artisan engagement with NICEorg's ecosystem-building experience, the initiative seeks to enable scalable and long-term impact.

Core areas of engagement include mentoring cultural entrepreneurs, offering business advisory support, expanding market access, and strengthening capacity for craft-led startups. The alliance also envisions research collaboration, knowledge exchange, and community-centric programs to enhance cultural sustainability and livelihoods.

This partnership has already led to the commencement of the Craft Accelerator Program comprising of a cohort of 10 Craft Entrepreneurs.

NICE Cultural Enterprises Investment Report 2024

NICE Cultural Enterprises Investment Report 2024

Empowering Cultural Entrepreneurs | Building Brand India

The **NICE Investment Report 2024** highlights how private equity and venture capital are driving growth in India's cultural sectors—handloom, wellness, heritage foods, arts, and more.

For founders, investors, and changemakers, this report is a compelling call to back India's creative economy.

👉 Click on the following link to access the full report:

<https://niceorg.in/knowledge/nice-cultural-enterprises-investment-report-2024/>

#NICESTORIES: StudioVam: Weaving Tradition with Modern Design



StudioVam, a 100% women-owned jewelry and accessories brand, is redefining contemporary design through deep engagement with Indian craft traditions. Founded by Mrunmayee Namjoshi—an NID Ahmedabad alumna—StudioVam emphasizes ethical practices, mindful growth, and hands-on collaboration with artisans across India.

Their collections blend traditional crafts like Dhokra, Ajrakh, copper enameling, and blue pottery with modern aesthetics, resulting in thoughtful, handcrafted pieces. What sets StudioVam apart is its immersive creative process, fair compensation for artisans, and commitment to sustainable production.

👉 [Read the full story and know the brand.](#)

NICE stories from around social media:

Discover how entrepreneurs, innovators, and culture champions across India (and beyond) are turning everyday traditions into extraordinary brands. From Assam's hill whiskey to AI Ayurveda, lost recipes, the Birkin's true cost, and Lonavla Chikki's branding potential stories that inspire, rethink legacy, and celebrate cultural entrepreneurship.

- ▲ Cherrapunji Gin, Naara Aaba Wine from Arunachal Pradesh and now corn whiskey from Karbi Anglong in Assam
<https://yourstory.com/ys-life/radiant-manufacturers-northeast-alcobeve-brand-castle-hill-dark-night-infamous-whiskey?>
- ▲ Lost Recipes - a necessity or a fad? How innovatively imagined food made by innovative chefs is recreating legacy with creativity
<https://yourstory.com/ys-life/revival-of-lost-recipes-a-necessity-or-fad?>
- ▲ And have you had the GI tagged Koraput coffee?
<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DI1KEmeSSF3/?>
- ▲ Birkin bag \$38000, cost of material and labour \$1400: what explains this?
The power of a brand is the price inelasticity of demand; through ace craftsmanship, meticulous attention to detail, careful nurturing of target customers, IP and so on
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sanjayanandaram_what-the-actual-cost-of-a-birkin-bag-worth-activity-7317443774152855553-_YGx?

- ▲ Lonavla Chikki anyone? If it were in the US, we would all have been munching a heritage, branded, catchily packaged, multi-flavoured, healthy, ecofriendly, organic energy bar packed with nutrients," and NOT JUST A CHIKKI BAR! Would have been written about breathlessly in blogs, health & nutrition magazines, social media etc etc
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sanjayanandaram_cultural-entrepreneurship-activity-7310559750008512513-37oH?
- ▲ ET's Brand Equity profiles Alyurveda - where tech meets wellness
<https://brandequity.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/business-of-brands/ai-and-ayurveda-technology-can-help-ayurvedic-methods-stand-out-in-a-crowded-wellness-arena/119297106>
- ▲ India, the Spice Capital of the world, controls only 0.7% of the \$14B global seasoning market. 48% of our spices are raw commodities, not value added. Turmeric from India becomes \$10 Latte. Akash Agrawalla is changing that with his Zoff Foods.
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sanjayanandaram_seasoning-business-exports-activity-7308379173998247937-K00C?
- ▲ An Indian origin spice being sold by a South African brand? If we don't control our destiny someone else!
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sanjayanandaram_makeinindia-exportfromindia-indianagriculture-activity-7306493613805355008-IfgZ?
- ▲ 6 important branding lessons to learn from South Korea
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sanjayanandaram_why-koreans-sell-their-culture-as-premium-activity-7296074703335563264-z4wq?

- ▲ Darjeeling heritage tea Syangbo's Living Food and Beverage recognised by DPIIT

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sanjayanandaram_darjeeling-startup-owner-among-40-special-activity-7289507602634264577-6S9t?

- ▲ Annapurna Certificate: an Indian equivalent to the Michelin rating: a good beginning but miles to go!

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sanjayanandaram_annapurna-certificates-why-indias-michelin-activity-7293617851171487745-De_v?

Enterprise Updates

Chittam Toys Secures Dual Wins, Receives National Recognition with Two ₹10 Lakh Grants



Chittam Toys, a Chennai based Cultural brand and a core member of the NICEorg network has recently secured **two prestigious recognitions**, each accompanied by a **₹10 lakh grant**.

At the **Startup Mahakumbh**, founder Charanya V Kumar emerged as a winner under the Maharathi Challenge, competing against more than 2,400 startups across 10 sectors. Chittam stood out in the Games and Sports category for its innovative and culturally-rooted approach to education. The recognition highlights Chittam's mission to redefine how Indian children engage with cultural and spiritual learning through activity-based games designed around Indian mythology, festivals, philosophy, and values.

In addition, Chittam was featured on the Britannia Marie Gold Her Startup Show, a platform celebrating women-led ventures creating positive change. Charanya secured another ₹10 lakh grant after presenting Chittam's unique vision to a distinguished panel of mentors and jury members including Masterchef Shipra Khanna, Kalyanamalai T.V. Mohan, Ruma Devi, Shreshtha G., and Jyotsna Cheruvu. The show was hosted by actor Shriya Saran, directed by Sanjeev Kumar, and produced by Kavitha Thomas.

These accolades mark a significant milestone in Chittam's journey, bringing both national visibility and funding support. In a market dominated by digital entertainment, Chittam continues to carve a distinct space by offering play-based tools that make learning about Indian heritage engaging and meaningful for young minds.

We at NICEorg extend our heartfelt congratulations to Charanya V Kumar and the entire Chittam team. Their success is a shining example of how cultural entrepreneurship can create value-driven, innovative solutions for future generations.

You can view Chittam's feature on the Britannia Marie Gold Her Startup Show [here](#).

👉 To learn more, visit: [Chittam Toys Website](#)

Kosha.ai Secures Patent for IoT-Based Handloom Authentication System



We are excited to announce that [Kosha.ai](#), a key member of the NICEorg network, has achieved a significant milestone in securing patent for its innovative IoT-powered handloom authentication system under the FibreSENSE initiative. Founded by [Vijay Krishnappa](#), Kosha.ai's breakthrough technology leverages the power of Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to authenticate handloom products in real-time, ensuring they are genuinely handwoven and not machine-made or counterfeit.

This patented solution embeds smart sensors and AI algorithms to verify the authenticity of each handloom piece from point-of-sale to the entire supply chain. This addresses a long-standing challenge in the Indian textile sector, where fake handloom products often flood the market.

👉 To learn more, visit:

- [Kosha.ai LinkedIn Post](#)

Upcoming Initiatives

Launching a National Accelerator for India's Craft-Based Cultural Enterprises



Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail Ltd. (ABFRL) and NICEorg have come together to launch a national accelerator program focused on celebrating India's rich craft heritage and supporting cultural entrepreneurs in building sustainable, scalable businesses.

This strategic collaboration is set to offer mentorship, business development support, and market access to selected craft-based enterprises in the fashion and home décor sectors. The initiative aims to preserve endangered craft traditions, enhance rural livelihoods, and integrate traditional skills into modern, market-driven models.

Through this program, cultural enterprises will gain tools to thrive in contemporary markets while maintaining the authenticity and value of India's artisanal heritage.

Application link coming soon!

👉 Stay updated by following ABFRL and NICEorg on social media.
To know more, visit: <https://lnkd.in/dax8JHJV>

Culture Catalyst 2025–26: Empowering Craft, Culture, and Community Enterprises

POP | nice
Network of Indian Cultural Enterprises

ISB | **oic**

POP | nice
Network of Indian Cultural Enterprises

ISB | **oic**

Culture Catalyst

Local Roots
Global Vision

A unique accelerator
for cultural brands in
North India

CULTURE CATALYST IS OPEN TO BUSINESSES
REGISTERED IN AND WORKING WITH THE
ARTISANS, CULTURE, HERITAGE PRODUCTS IN.....

- PUNJAB
- HARYANA
- HIMACHAL PRADESH
- JAMMU & KASHMIR
- UTTARAKHAND
- UTTAR PRADESH

APPLICATIONS TIMELINE
01 MAY 2025 - 31 MAY 2025

Applications Open ↗

Get ₹1L grant,
mentorship,
market access
and much more

APPLICATIONS FOR CULTURE CATALYST 2025-26
ARE NOW OPEN! TO APPLY, CLICK HERE

Culture Catalyst 2025–26 is a one-of-a-kind accelerator program supporting early-stage cultural brands rooted in crafts, heritage, ecology, and community. Launched by the Punjab Cultural Project (PCP), AIC–ISB, and NICEorg, it aims to help businesses scale sustainably and profitably.

The program is open to brands in Home Décor, Wellness, Fashion, Food & Beverages, and Experiential Tourism, operating in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh. It offers 3 in-person immersions, 12 virtual masterclasses, 3 industry deep-dives, monthly 1:1 mentorship, and guidance from resident investor-mentors.

Applications are open from May 1 to May 31, 2025.

👉 Apply now at: <https://i-venture.org/culture-catalyst/>

Be a part of NICEorg

To join the NICE Chapters and contribute to building the cultural entrepreneurship community in your city.

- Join the Bengaluru chapter: nicebengaluru@niceorg.in
- Join the Mumbai chapter: nicemumbai@niceorg.in
- Join the Chennai chapter: nicechennai@niceorg.in
- Join the Hyderabad chapter: nicehyderabad@niceorg.in
- Join the Delhi chapter: nicedelhi@niceorg.in
- Join the Bengal chapter: nicebengal@niceorg.in
- Join the Punjab chapter: namaste@niceorg.in
- Start a Chapter in your City: namaste@niceorg.in

Get featured on NICE Stories. Tell us about your enterprise.

Fill this Google Form to share your story: <http://bit.ly/nicestories>

Interested in Partnering / Volunteering / Collaborating with us in this exciting journey of building Brand India? Please write to us at namaste@niceorg.in

Follow us on our social media to learn more about our work and to connect with us!



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[@NICEorg.in](https://www.facebook.com/NICEorg.in)



[Network of Indian Cultural Enterprises](https://www.linkedin.com/company/network-of-indian-cultural-enterprises)



[@niceorg.in](https://www.instagram.com/niceorg.in)



[NICEorg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

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