

Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award

Award #1: Individuals, academic institutions, corporations, or NGOs

Award #2: Government authorities

Award Criteria - Individuals, corporations, academic institutions, corporations, NGOs or government authorities that have made a remarkable and successful effort at providing digital opportunities to those in need are eligible for this award. In order for the Digital Age to fulfill its promise, it must consider the unique challenges faced by diverse populations. Examples could include deployment of ICTs and Internet access among inner city populations, or in towns, rural areas or cities in developing and least-developed countries. This award also includes programs and initiatives that aid people with disabilities and others who face longstanding barriers to social inclusion. Digital Inclusion is defined as the “ability of individuals and groups to access and use information and communication technologies (ICTs). Digital inclusion encompasses not only access to the Internet but also the availability of hardware and software; relevant content and services; and training for the digital literacy skills required for effective use of ICTs.”

This award recognizes solutions enabling accessibility for those individuals who have traditionally not benefited from ICT. This award also seeks innovative solutions that create meaningful employment through ICT for those who have traditionally been underrepresented in the labor force. Of particular interest to WITSA are applications that embed inclusion and accessibility in the original design as opposed to retrofitting existing applications.

YOUR NOMINEES (limit three nominations per award category). *Please specify whether the nominee(s) are for the private or public sector category.*

Award #2:

1. **Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC)**
2. **Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA)**
3. **Konnakotha, CCA, ICT Division**

REASONS FOR NOMINATION (NOTE): It is important that you make a detailed description of the nominee and why you think the nomination is justified. The absence of a detailed summary of qualifications as they *relate* to the above-mentioned award description will make it difficult for the awards committee to make an appropriate assessment of the candidate):

1. Bangladesh Computer Council

Bangladesh Computer Council is a government organization under Information and Communication Technology Division of Bangladesh. The main activities are encouraging and providing support for ICT related activities, formulating national ICT strategy and policy, creating standards and specifications of ICT tools for government organizations according to their necessity, working for human resource development in ICT sector. Bangladesh Computer Council has been working towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities through Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). In this area, the first step was inclusion of disability-related clauses in the National ICT Policies 2009. Later in 2011, BCC started ICT trainings for persons with disabilities and for them the trainings were offered completely free. In 2015, BCC organized a special job fair to

promote employments for persons with disabilities. Since then BCC has been organizing this job fair every year. Apart from these, BCC started organizing IT competitions exclusively for youth with disabilities to encourage the persons with disabilities to learn and use ICTs. The idea is to equip them with ICT skills so that they can take part in the ongoing digital revolution in the country. For creating a positive perception about disability among the people in the society, BCC organizes seminars and campaign. In this view, a project called “Empowerment of persons with Disabilities including NDD” has been taken and currently its implementation is going on. Based on that premise, BCC extended its services for Persons with Disabilities with the help of local NGO’s who have expertise in dealing with disability. On different occasion, BCC signed MoU with Suchona foundation, Center for Services and Information on Disability (CSID), Sight Savers etc. Disability-related activities as follows: - Policy Support - Skill Development: - Connecting to the employment market: - Social Awareness: - Social Awareness: - Encouraging Persons with Disabilities to embrace IT: - Participation in International Competition: - Participation in International Competition: - The software Platform ‘EMPORIA’ (e-Learning Platform Job Portal Mobile Apps)

2. Bangladesh Hi-Tech park Authority (BHTPA)

Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority started its journey to bring economic prosperity with gradual development of high-tech and software technology parks, IT incubation and training centers, specialized laboratories across the country and priority infrastructures on creating a technology research-based skill development. The entire ecosystem is driving towards the implementation of Digital Bangladesh, creating a stream of technology-based employments and decentralizing infrastructure and local employments by promoting entrepreneurship.

Contribution of Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority in Digital Opportunity / Inclusion Award:

- **Brik and mortar facilities, resulting in nationwide cultural shift, technology adoptions to country’s economic prosperity**

Rational: Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority is working to establish 39 Hi-Tech Parks and Software Technology Parks and 64 IT training and incubation centers across Bangladesh. Among which 8 hi-tech parks and software technology parks are already in business with 8 IT Training and Incubation Centers are going to be operational by the year 2021. These ready parks are home to 143+ startups and 160+ investors in hardware, software and biotech sector and contributed to decentralizing jobs in the technology sector with over 21,000 employments in just four years. Construction of the 31 Hi-Tech Parks and Software Technology Parks and 56 IT Trainings and Incubation centers are ongoing with a focus to create 2 million employments by 2030. Al-together, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority is developing a thriving ecosystem adding to the country’s economic prosperity.

- **Training Infrastructures to Foster Growth in the Hi-tech Sector:**

Rational: Considering the growing demand in the IT industry in coming years, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has planned to provide training to 60,000 youths by 2025 and 100,000 by 2030. Already over 36000 thousand youths have been trained on basic and advance level ICT domains such as Artificial Intelligence, Block Chain, Machine Learning, IoT Integration etc. Apart from that, to ensure the trainings are on international standard, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has partnered with global companies to provide the trainings.

- *Connecting Infrastructures to Develop Decentralized Entrepreneurial Culture:*

Rational: Realizing the potentials, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority is building 39 Hi-Tech Parks around the country and 64 Sheikh Kamal IT Training and Incubation Centers across the nation with infrastructures to support entrepreneurs to work and grow their ideas. Apart from that soft skill support programs, industry-academia-government partnership programs to develop a culture of entrepreneurship among the youths and digital incubation centers to connect aspiring entrepreneurs from the very beginning of their ideation stage.

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- *Entrepreneurship Development by developing Government – Academia – Industry Partnership*

Rational: Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority is working to build bridges between universities and industries with a focus to foster innovation and entrepreneurial culture among the students. And for the first time in Bangladesh, a university-based IT incubator cum training center has been set up to create research and training opportunities and develop industry-academia-government collaboration.

- *Development of 'Micro Level Mentors' by grooming University Teachers*

Rational: For the first time, the Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has organized, a four-day long Mentor Development Camp (MDC) where 20 university level teachers from 20 public universities were groomed to become mentors for the students. The Mentor Development Camp has already played an important role in creating a sustainable startup ecosystem by transforming university teachers into microlevel mentors. In last four months Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has connected 100+ ideas and provided guidance to further develop to transform the ideas into real ventures.

- *Developing Entrepreneur Supply-Chain:*

Rational: Keeping the culture development in mind, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority is working to provide skill-up, grooming, and mentoring support to the rest of the startups from the idea pitching to become ready for the next intake. This will allow Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority to have region basis potential list of entrepreneurs and can plan supporting programs in years to come.

- *Establishing University Based Incubator:*

Rational: Through UNIBATOR program, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA) hopes to bring a change in the thinking process of our educational institutions and upcoming graduate level students regarding the thesis / academic projects. The name UNIBATOR has been derived from the statement, 'University Incubator' that will be connecting graduating level students to guide them to pick up topics to find solutions of the national challenges. The Unibator platform Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has connected 7000 aspiring researchers, graduates and faculties submitted ideas.

- *Continued Commitment on Culture Development:*

- Rational: Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority has taken Initiatives to keep the ongoing projects continued under Digital Entrepreneurship and ecosystem development project. Under this project, BHTPA will develop 200 mentors, 5000 entrepreneurs and 3000 more trainings to continue leading the change in the culture and adoption of entrepreneurship.

3. Konnakotha, CCA, ICT Division

"Konnakotha" is a digital platform for all the teenage girls across Bangladesh where they can safely enter the cyber world, comment there and have their queries about cyber related issues. The main objective of the platform is educating the girls about cyber-crime. In this context, 'Konnakotha' platform is playing an important role in raising social awareness about cyber-crime.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION: Please send any supporting information to the address above, including information from candidate (i.e. excerpt from program description, web site print-out, press release, etc.)

03 Attached file has been enclosed herewith to consider the award proposals:

1. Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) : BCC.pdf
2. Bangladesh Hi-Tech park Authority (BHTPA): BHTPA.pdf

3. Konnakotha, CCA, ICT Division: CCA.pdf

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