



# FOREWORD



## Arvind Gupta

Former Head, MyGov.in

Head and Co-Founder, Digital India Foundation

The journey towards accessibility and universal design is a relentless mission. As we celebrate the Universal Design Awards 2025, it is both a privilege and a responsibility to reflect on the remarkable progress we've witnessed even as the long road ahead still looks daunting yet not unscalable. Universal Design is the belief that systems, spaces, products, and services must be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized solutions. It is not only a matter of good design—it is a matter of justice.

Much ahead of its time, the Universal Design Awards were created to celebrate this very vision: a world that works for everyone. Each year, we honour those who have moved beyond compliance and embraced inclusion as a design principle, a business imperative, and a social responsibility. This year's edition of the Awards is especially meaningful. The Supreme Court's landmark judgment mandating accessibility as a right has reaffirmed what the disability movement has long stood for. It is a validation of years of advocacy, and a signal to every institution—public and private—that accessibility is no longer optional.

As we celebrate these changemakers in 2025, we also look ahead to a milestone in India's democratic journey—the first-ever Digital Census in 2026. This is more than a data exercise; it is a historic opportunity to make disabled people count—not just statistically, but socially, economically, and politically. From accessible interfaces and assistive technologies to the representation of diverse disability identities, universal design can guide how we reach, record, and recognize every individual.

The awardees we honour today are at the forefront of this movement. Their work is a reminder that when we design for inclusion from the start, we don't just benefit persons with disabilities—we create systems that work better for all. We are deeply grateful to our partners, especially Mphasis, for walking this path with us. And to every nominee and award winner—thank you for showing us what is possible when we lead with empathy and design with purpose. Your remarkable contributions are milestones paving a way towards a New India—a global hub for assistive technology—an Accessible India.





## Deepa Nagraj

Senior Vice President & Head -ESG,  
Sparkle Innovation Ecosystem, and Communications, Mphasis

At Mphasis, we believe that the most powerful innovations are those that include everyone. Accessibility and universal design are not merely design principles—they are declarations of dignity, equality, and the right to participate fully in society.

The recent Supreme Court judgment mandating accessibility as a deemed fundamental right has powerfully validated the values that the Universal Design Awards have upheld for over a decade. This landmark decision has not only recognized accessibility as a matter of justice but also affirmed that inclusive design is essential to India's constitutional promise.

Universal design has also paved the way for the rapid growth of assistive technology—solutions that bridge the gap between potential and participation for millions of people with disabilities. From screen readers and AI-powered captioning to advanced mobility devices, universal design thinking has inspired innovations that benefit not only persons with disabilities but society at large. With our strong technology talent pool, entrepreneurial spirit, and emerging policy ecosystem, India has the potential to become a global hub for assistive technology—exporting not just products, but models of inclusive innovation to the world.

Looking ahead, the Digital Census 2026 offers a historic opportunity to put these principles into practice at a national scale. By embedding accessibility into its digital platforms, data collection tools, and outreach processes, the Census can ensure that every person with a disability is counted accurately and respectfully. This would not only strengthen data for policymaking but also set a precedent for accessible digital governance in India.

As a longstanding partner to NCPEDP, Mphasis is honoured to support this initiative that celebrates pioneers—individuals and organizations—who are reshaping our world to be more inclusive, empathetic, and future-ready. The awardees this year exemplify what it means to design not just for the majority, but for everyone.

With judicial backing, technological progress, and growing corporate commitment, the momentum toward accessibility is stronger than ever. But much remains to be done. It is now upon all of us—governments, industry, civil society, and citizens—to carry this mandate forward, turning inclusive intent into systemic impact.

We extend our warmest congratulations to the winners of the Universal Design Awards 2025. May your work continue to inspire a generation of designers, technologists, architects, and leaders to build a world that truly belongs to all.





The NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal Design Awards logo stands for the spirit of Freedom and Celebration. The person with disability appears to be throwing her/his arms up in the air in celebration of the Awards and the hope they bring to so many. The dynamic oval form gives an illusion of constant motion suggesting that people can achieve whatever they want, regardless of the odds stacked against them. The orange colour further enhances this optimism of the new universal and inclusive world.

## The NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal Design Awards

Over one billion people across the globe live with some form of disability, as per the World Health Organization (WHO). In India, while official Census figures cite that 2.21% of the population has a disability, estimates from WHO, World Bank, and the United Nations suggest that the number is closer to 16% — making India home to one of the largest populations of persons with disabilities globally. According to the WHO Global report on assistive technology, one in three people, or more than 2.5 billion globally, need at least one assistive product. Most Indian websites, applications and digital platforms remain inaccessible, television and OTT content rarely cater to people with hearing impairments.

The Supreme Court, in *Rajive Raturi vs Union of India*, declared accessibility to be deemed as a Fundamental Right, emphasizing that accessibility is not a standalone right but a necessary condition for realizing all other rights. Additionally, the Supreme Court in *Amar Jain vs Union of India and Ors.* held that inclusive and meaningful digital access to e-governance and welfare delivery systems is a part of the fundamental right to life

and liberty. With over 15 years in promoting universal design and inclusive development, the Awards have contributed to milestone achievements such as the framing of disability—inclusive ICT guidelines, inclusion of accessibility in the Bureau of Indian Standards and establishment of India's first Assistive Technology Hub—envisaged as a centre of excellence (CoE) for research and innovation, building an AT evidence base, making policy interventions, and all things related to assistive technologies.

The awards have been instrumental in creating an ecosystem of around 200+ changemakers across India over the period of 15 years, including the likes of new-age start-ups, government, and private companies pioneering accessibility and universal design through product, service and policies.



### Role Model Persons with Disabilities

Awards in this category recognize individuals with disabilities who have made a significant impact in the field of accessibility and universal design. Their contributions may span areas such as the built environment, transport infrastructure, service delivery, information and communication technology (ICT), universally designed consumer products, mobility and independent living aids, or assistive technology—whether in a personal or professional capacity. The individual's work may involve policy development, grassroots implementation, design and innovation, access audits, or engagement in rights-based advocacy.



### Role Model Working Professionals

This award category honours individuals who have significantly contributed to accessibility and universal design in areas such as the built environment, transport, service delivery, ICT, consumer products, mobility aids, or assistive technology. Awardees may be part of an institution—such as an NGO, government body, corporate, or start-up—or may work independently as consultants or advocates. Their personal contribution must have played a key role in the success of the initiative or movement they support. These awards aim to recognize such dedication, raise awareness, and inspire others to take up accessibility as a meaningful pursuit.



### Role Model Companies/ Organizations

This award recognizes companies and organizations that have advanced Accessibility and Universal Design in areas like the built environment, transport, ICT, services, consumer products, and assistive technology. Winners are those who have implemented inclusive practices that enable persons with disabilities to participate equally, either as employees or service users. Eligible entities include NGOs, educational institutions, corporates, government bodies, SMEs, and start-ups.



### Javed Abidi Public Policy Award

Access symbolizes true freedom for persons with disabilities. This award honours one individual/organization that have carried forward the legacy of Late Mr. Javed Abidi by championing universal design through impactful advocacy. It recognizes their pioneering efforts in creating a level playing field, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities in India.

# AWARD JURY 2025



## **Arvind Gupta** Jury Chair and Board Member, NCPEDP

Former Head, MyGov.in

Head & Co-Founder, Digital India Foundation

Arvind Gupta is a trustee at NCPEDP and an innovation evangelist. The Co-Founder of Digital India Foundation and Adjunct Professor at IIT-BHU, he has dedicated three decades to digital innovation. His work spans consumer internet, digital media, payment systems, analytics, and the data economy. An alumnus of IIT-BHU and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, he is recognised in the Global FinTech Top 100 list and has received the Eisenhower Global Fellowship for Innovation (2014) and the DataQuest Pathbreaker Award. Founder of amplify.ai and ApnaPay, he pioneered the implementation of Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) across India.



## **Deepa Nagraj** Jury Member

Senior Vice President & Head, Sparkle Innovation Ecosystem and Communications, Mphasis

Deepa brings rich experience in strategic marketing, corporate strategy, and communications, along with a strong focus on global relationships and ESG initiatives. Beyond her professional work, she is a connoisseur of art, a trained Kathak dancer, and a Tanjore painter. An avid traveller, she participates in marathons and treks, and her journeys have led to a diverse collection of antiques and curios from around the world.



## **Shilpi Kapoor** Jury Member

CEO, Barrier Break

A serial entrepreneur with a passion for technology and disability, Shilpi leads a team of 270+ accessibility experts, 65% of whom have disabilities. She is the founder of BarrierBreak and 247 Accessible documents that focus on digital accessibility. She has been recognised as one of the Top 15 Women Transforming India by NITI Aayog 2019, and one of the Top 20 Most Powerful Women in Business for the year 2017 by Business Today magazine. An Ashoka Fellow and a recipient of the "NCPEDP – Shell Helen Keller Award 2008", Shilpi has successfully built a sustainable business model in disability products and services.



## **Praveen Prakash Ambashta** Jury Member

Deputy Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, DEPwD, Government of India

Praveen Prakash Ambashta is an officer of the Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Service. He holds degrees in Law, Management, and Human Rights, and has over 17 years of training experience. His expertise spans disability law, vigilance, government litigation, and establishment rules. He is a guest faculty at premier institutions including the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy, and the Institute of Secretariat Training and Management. He supports the enforcement of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and promotes transparency in disability governance.



**P. V. Madhusudhan Rao** Jury Member

Professor, IIT Delhi and Head, ICMR National Centre of Assistive Health Technology

P. V. Madhusudhan Rao is a professor in the Department of Design at IIT Delhi and co-founder of the Assistech lab in the Khosla School of Information Technology. His current teaching and research interests include product design and manufacturing, with a special emphasis on the design of medical and assistive devices. He serves as founder, board member, and scientific advisor to many start-ups and technology business incubators. He has received the National Award twice for Scientist(s) working on Improving Accessibility for the Disabled from the Ministry of Science and Technology.



**Subodh Sachan** Jury Member

Director, Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), Ministry of Electronics and IT

Subodh Sachan is an alumnus of IIT Roorkee and IIM Bangalore. He leads more than 25 Centres of Entrepreneurship across India in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Blockchain, Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality, and Gaming. With a background in global telecommunications, including leadership roles at Motorola and Nokia, he has scaled the Software Technology Parks of India's startup ecosystem from a handful to over 1,200 startups in six years, fostering partnerships with more than 200 industry, academic, and funding institutions.



**Dr. Suja K. Kunnath** Jury Member

Professor, Department of Neurodevelopmental Sciences, National Institute of Speech and Hearing

Dr. Suja K. Kunnath received her Doctor of Philosophy in Speech Language Pathology from the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore, in 2006, and her Master of Science in Speech and Hearing from the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore, in 1999. She has more than 18 years of teaching, research, and clinical experience. Her current responsibilities include teaching postgraduate students of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology. Her clinical interests include Autism Spectrum Disorders, Language and Learning, and Global Developmental Delay.



## Role Model Persons with Disabilities

Awards in this category recognize individuals with disabilities who have made a significant impact in the field of accessibility and universal design. Their contributions may span areas such as the built environment, transport infrastructure, service delivery, information and communication technology (ICT), universally designed consumer products, mobility and independent living aids, or assistive technology—whether in a personal or professional capacity. The individual's work may involve policy development, grassroots implementation, design and innovation, access audits, or engagement in rights-based advocacy.

### Awardees

- Divyanshu Ganatra
- Rahul Gambhir
- Prof. Someshwar Sati
- Pragya Prasun

### Jury Appreciation

- Kapil Kumar Aggarwal
- Dr. Rimpi Arora





# Role Model Persons with Disabilities



**Divyanshu Ganatra** Pune, [divyanshu@abbf.in](mailto:divyanshu@abbf.in)

Divyanshu Ganatra, a visually impaired adventurer and social entrepreneur, is the Founder of Adventures Beyond Barriers Foundation (ABBF), a not-for-profit organisation based in Pune that pioneers disability inclusion through outdoor sports. Since its establishment in 2014, ABBF has created accessible adventure experiences including tandem cycling, scuba diving, paragliding, marathons, and treks for persons with disabilities across 20 states. The foundation follows an Ally Model that pairs persons with and without disabilities, transforming public events into inclusive platforms that challenge stereotypes and foster empathy. With persons with disabilities in leadership roles, ABBF has directly impacted more than 20,000 individuals and partnered with over 60 organisations. It was the first to introduce tandem cycling for blind participants in India. In 2025, ABBF organised Run InSync, India's largest inclusive run. Divyanshu's work has been recognised with the National Award for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities, Spirit of Humanity Award, Cavinkare Ability Award, and entries in the Limca and World Book of Records.



**Rahul Gambhir** Delhi, [rahul.gambhir88@gmail.com](mailto:rahul.gambhir88@gmail.com)

Rahul Gambhir, a visually impaired banking professional based in Delhi, serves as Chief Manager and Digital Accessibility Specialist at Union Bank of India. For over 15 years, he has led pioneering efforts to embed accessibility, inclusion, and assistive technology into the core of banking services. His work has shaped accessible products like Union Sparsh, India's first tactile-accessible debit card, and helped onboard over 500 employees with print disabilities through Sugamya Pustakalaya—the first digital accessible library in any public sector bank. He has also ensured the inclusion of Indian Sign Language in customer awareness campaigns, making digital services accessible for hearing-impaired users. In 2024, he led the accessibility overhaul of the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) app and Union Bank's digital platforms. Rahul has conducted nationwide financial inclusion workshops and authored e-learning modules reaching 70,000+ bank employees. His policy advocacy has influenced national banking reforms under the EASE agenda. He was also selected as India's representative to the Global Challenges of Youth with Disabilities fellowship in South Korea, where he presented a case study on banking accessibility.





**Prof. Someshwar Sati** Ghaziabad, someshwarsati@gmail.com

Someshwar Sati, an academican with vision impairment, has over 30 years of teaching experience and currently serves as Professor in the Department of English at Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi. He is also the Coordinator of the Centre for Disability Research and Training (CDRT) and the Founder-Chairperson of the Indian Disability Studies Collective (IDSC) - a national academic forum of disability scholars. Sati has been a leading force in integrating disability discourse into Indian higher education, advocating for the inclusion of lived experiences of disabled people in classroom and academic narratives. His work aims to establish disability studies as a respected academic discipline and to build an inclusive, equitable, and just academic environment. In recognition of his contributions, he was awarded the National Award for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (2022) and the C.D. Narasimhaiah Memorial Prize by the Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies.



**Pragya Prasun** Bangalore, pragyaprasunsingh@gmail.com

Pragya Prasun, founder of Atijeevan Foundation, is an acid attack survivor, changemaker, and advocate for the rights of acid attack survivors and persons with disabilities. Since 2013, her foundation has supported over 950 survivors with medical care, mental health services, and dignified livelihood opportunities. Through its EBAAS initiative and the JustHireOne campaign, Atijeevan promotes inclusive employment. In 2025, her Supreme Court petition led to a landmark judgment affirming digital access as a fundamental right under Article 21, mandating inclusive KYC methods and accessibility standards. Atijeevan's work has facilitated more than 300 reconstructive surgeries, 200 counselling sessions, and 100 awareness campaigns. Pragya's efforts have earned her the Naari Shakti Puraskar by the President of India, Guardians of Humanity Award, and Karnataka Women Achievers' Award. She leads a team of seven, including five persons with disabilities, working towards long-term rehabilitation and systemic inclusion.







## Kapil Kumar Aggarwal Delhi, [ceo.vssd1994@gmail.com](mailto:ceo.vssd1994@gmail.com)

Kapil Kumar Aggarwal, an individual with locomotor disability, is the Founder and CEO of Viklang Sahara Samiti Delhi (VSSD), an NGO he established in 1994. With nearly 30 years of experience in disability advocacy and community development, he leads a 34-member team—including individuals with disabilities—working across Delhi-NCR and five other states. VSSD focuses on inclusive education, skill development, livelihood generation, and legal empowerment, especially for children and youth with disabilities in urban slums and rural peripheries. Through initiatives like the Viklang Margdarshan Kendra, the organization provides support on disability certification, guardianship, health insurance, and access to government entitlements. Under his leadership, VSSD has partnered with institutions such as the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, The National Trust, Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL), and the Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities. His work has been recognised with several honours, including the National Youth Award, the NCPEDP Helen Keller Award (2004), and the Vishisht Sewa Samman by Tata Power-DDL.



## Dr. Rimpi Arora Chandigarh, [rimpiarora008@gmail.com](mailto:rimpiarora008@gmail.com)

Dr. Rimpi Arora is a researcher and advisor on policy and accessibility, currently associated with Pinaka Mediaworks. She serves as an Assistant Professor of Public Administration and consults on accessibility audits in education, public policy, and cinema. A Gold Medalist in M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Punjab University, her research has focused on accessibility and learning outcomes for students with disabilities in higher education. Starting as a student activist, she played a pivotal role in initiating access audits and helped establish the Equal Opportunity Cell at Punjab University. Her sustained efforts led to the university receiving a grant under the Scheme for Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA) to improve campus accessibility. She is currently writing a book on accessibility in Indian cinema, based on her work with Rabb Di Awaaz—India's first multi-inclusive and multi-accessible Hindi feature film. In recognition of her contributions, she received the Saksham Sewa Award in 2023.



## Role Model Working Professionals

This award category honours individuals who have significantly contributed to accessibility and universal design in areas such as the built environment, transport, service delivery, ICT, consumer products, mobility aids, or assistive technology. Awardees may be part of an institution—such as an NGO, government body, corporate, or start-up—or may work independently as consultants or advocates. Their personal contribution must have played a key role in the success of the initiative or movement they support. These awards aim to recognize such dedication, raise awareness, and inspire others to take up accessibility as a meaningful pursuit.

### Awardees

- Dr. Richa Gupta
- Neha Trivedi
- Guruprasad R. Pawaskar



# Role Model Working Professionals



**Dr. Richa Gupta** New Delhi, [richa.gupta@iiitd.ac.in](mailto:richa.gupta@iiitd.ac.in)

Dr. Richa Gupta is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Human-Centered Design at Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology Delhi (IIIT-D), and a researcher at the institute's Accessibility and Inclusive Design Lab. Her work focuses on inclusive interaction design and multimodal perception. Since 2021, she has been teaching a core course on Inclusive Design, Universal Design, and Accessibility, sensitizing engineering students to accessibility issues and encouraging them to integrate these principles into their work. Her doctoral research (2015–2020) examined tactile perception to improve tactile graphics for persons with blindness and visual impairment, with studies conducted at NAB Delhi and ISBVI Indianapolis. Earlier, at the ASSISTECH Lab, she contributed as a product designer on impactful assistive technologies including SmartCane, DotBook, and the OnBoard bus identification system. In recognition of her contributions, she received the Neilom Prize in 2021. Dr. Gupta continues to advance accessibility through rigorous research, teaching, and product development.



**Neha Trivedi** Mumbai, [nehatrivedi@gmail.com](mailto:nehatrivedi@gmail.com)

Neha Trivedi is the Founder of Spandan, a consultancy dedicated to transforming India's higher education landscape through system-driven, cross-disability inclusive practices. With over 19 years of experience in accessibility and inclusion, she has worked extensively with institutions to translate disability guidelines into actionable frameworks. Prior to founding Spandan, she served in leadership roles at the Xavier's Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged (XRCVC), where she was instrumental in landmark policy changes—enabling accessible STEM education, driving RBI reforms for inclusive banking and ATM deployment, and contributing to the 2012 Copyright Act amendment securing accessible content for persons with disabilities. She has co-authored several publications, including *Degrees of Accessibility*, *ABC of Inclusive Publishing*, *I for Inclusion*, and *Numbers and Reactions*. Through initiatives like the Inclusive University Alliance and national conclaves with Ashoka University, she continues to shape inclusive policy and institutional practice across the country.







## **Guruprasad R Pawaskar** [Panjim, dis-comm.goa@gov.in](mailto:Panjim, dis-comm.goa@gov.in)

Guruprasad Ramchandra Pawaskar is a prominent disability rights advocate and social sector leader with over two decades of experience in inclusive education, policy implementation, and community empowerment. As the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Government of Goa, he has led numerous reforms and large-scale initiatives for persons with disabilities (PwDs). He is the Chairman of Sanjay Centre for Special Education, overseeing six centres supporting over 1,000 children with disabilities, and the Founder-President of Aastha Society, awarded Best NGO in the Disability Sector by the Government of Goa. His employment and vocational training projects have empowered 150+ adults with disabilities and were recognized by the Zero Project at UN in 2020. Under his leadership, students won medals at the Special Olympics World Summer Games (2015). He also conceptualized Purple Fest Goa, India's first inclusive disability festival. He holds key roles including Vice Chairman, Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, and Managing Committee Member of Provedoria and Keshav Seva Sadhana.



## Role Model Companies or Organizations

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## Awardees

- Union Bank Of India
- DD News, Prasar Bharati
- Raised Lines Foundation
- Fupro Innovation Private Limited

## Jury Appreciation

- SignSetu



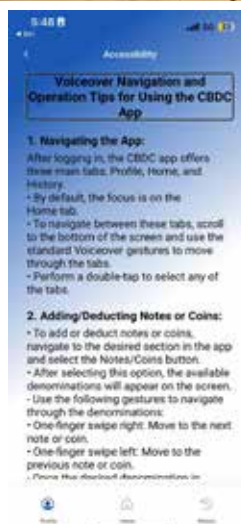


# Role Model Companies or Organizations

## Union Bank of India Mumbai, unionaccess@unionbankofindia.bank



Union Bank of India has emerged as a national leader in accessible and inclusive banking. It launched India's first Accessible Talking ATM in 2012 and continues to set industry benchmarks through innovations such as the Union Sparsh Braille Debit Card, the accessible VYOM mobile banking app, and the country's first accessible Digital Rupee App available on both Android and iOS platforms. In the financial year 2022–23, the bank established 'Union Access', a dedicated accessibility initiative led by employees with disabilities, and formed an 'Inclusion Cell' to support more than 2,600 employees with disabilities. UBI's digital platforms follow WCAG and IS17802 accessibility standards, with audits conducted by IAAP-certified professionals. Services include accessible CAPTCHAs, screen reader support, voice assistants, and user manuals in Braille, DAISY, and audio formats. The bank has also partnered with the DAISY Forum of India to provide accessible reading materials through Sugamya Pustakalaya for employees and customers with print disabilities. UBI's efforts have been recognised through awards such as the ATF Award 2023, Disability Positive Award 2023, and the Qorus Infosys Finacle Innovation Award 2024. It was also honoured with the NCPEDP–LTIMindtree Helen Keller Award in 2022 for its inclusive employment practices.





## DD News, Prasar Bharati New Delhi

[vasanth.meshachj@prasarbharati.gov.in](mailto:vasanth.meshachj@prasarbharati.gov.in)

DD News has been a pioneer in accessible journalism for over two decades. It launched India's first daily sign language bulletin on 6 September 2002 and continues to broadcast twice every day, reaching 63 million Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals nationwide. As the only channel to offer news in Hindi, English, Urdu, Sanskrit, and Indian Sign Language, it ensures inclusive multilingual access. DD News has provided sign language interpretation during key national events such as the Union Budget, Republic Day, Independence Day, Mann Ki Baat, and the International Film Festival of India. It has featured anchors with disabilities, including a visually impaired presenter on Helen Keller's birth anniversary, and covered major disability rights developments. The channel recently earned the STQC accessibility certification for its website and has redesigned its physical premises to be more inclusive, with ramps, Braille and voice-enabled lifts, and dedicated accessible parking.



## Raised Lines Foundation Noida, pulkit@raisedlines.org

Raised Lines Foundation (RLF) is a Section 8 not-for-profit startup incubated at IIT Delhi in 2018, committed to making education inclusive for visually impaired students through tactile diagrams, teaching tools, and accessible digital content. Emerging from the Centre of Excellence in Tactile Graphics, RLF pioneered the production of 2.5D tactile books, STEM kits, and geometry tools that enable access to subjects like science and mathematics. With over 12 lakh tactile diagrams produced, and more than 10,000 students and 1,000 special educators trained, RLF's work has reached 20,000+ individuals across India. During the COVID-19 pandemic, RLF delivered 1,000+ custom tactile learning modules to students unable to access digital whiteboards. Its projects include collaborations with NCERT, NIEPVD, Microsoft, and Saksham Trust. RLF was awarded the prestigious HCLTech Grant (10th Edition) in 2025 and envisions scaling globally to reach 500 schools worldwide in the next five years.







## Fupro Innovation Private Limited S.A.S Nagar, [nimish.mehra@fupro.in](mailto:nimish.mehra@fupro.in)

Founded in 2018 by Nimish Mehra and Cyril Joe Baby, Fupro Innovation Pvt. Ltd. is a Punjab-based company developing high-quality, affordable prosthetic devices through indigenous R&D. It is the only Indian manufacturer offering a complete range of prosthetic products, impacting over 15,000 persons with disabilities in six years. With 7% of its workforce being persons with disabilities, Fupro works closely with IIT Delhi, IIT Ropar, SCTIMST, and partners like Tynor Orthotics and Instalimb. The company has distributed over 200 limbs through CSR camps and collaborates with Rotary Clubs, Narayan Seva Sansthan, and NGOs. With a strong pan-India presence, 14 distributors, and international reach across South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, Fupro sold over 85,000 units in the last 2.25 years.



## SignSetu Chennai, shraddhaagarwal357@gmail.com



### JURY APPRECIATION

SignSetu is India's first ISL-integrated, gamified, and visual-first ed-tech platform for Deaf students aged 6–18, educators, and inclusive institutions. It addresses communication barriers in mainstream and special education through structured vocabulary lessons linked to images, Indian Sign Language videos, and contextual sentences. In a 15-day pilot in Chennai, students showed 50–75% improvement in word recall with just 15 minutes of daily use. Built on a B2B licensing model, with a B2C freemium version in development, SignSetu aims to scale through curriculum licensing, teacher training, and premium content. The platform has signed an MoU with ISLRTC to align with national ISL standards and is working toward integration with NCERT and state education departments. Its long-term vision is to become the Duolingo for Sign Language in India. SignSetu is the winner of the Youth Co:Lab India Award 2025 by UNDP and Atal Innovation Mission, and a seed grantee of the NCPEDP–Mphasis Assistive Technology Hub.



# Javed Abidi Public Policy Award

Access symbolizes true freedom for persons with disabilities. This award honours one individual/organization that have carried forward the legacy of Late Mr. Javed Abidi by championing universal design through impactful advocacy. It recognizes their pioneering efforts in creating a level playing field, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities in India.

## Awardee

Centre for Disability Studies, NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad



## Centre for Disability Studies (CDS), NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad

Hyderabad, [amitadhanda@nalsar.ac.in](mailto:amitadhanda@nalsar.ac.in)



With Prof. Amita Dhanda as its head, the Centre for Disability Studies was established by NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad, in 2006 and has since been a pioneering legal research and advocacy hub advancing disability rights through law and policy reform. With a sharp focus on inclusion, legal capacity, and psychosocial disability, the Centre played a key role in drafting India's disability legislation in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). It authored India's first CRPD report and developed mandatory national accessibility standards as directed by the Supreme Court in 2023–24. CDS's landmark report in *Rajive Raturi v. Union of India* catalyzed judicial enforcement of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act. Its Accessibility Lab fosters inclusive learning, while its research, training, and collaborations with Irish and US universities shape global discourse. Through academic rigor, student mentorship, and judicial advocacy, CDS–NALSAR continues to transform the legal landscape for persons with disabilities and remains a crucial force in embedding rights-based inclusion in public policy.











## National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP)

NCPEDP is a non-profit voluntary organisation, registered in 1996, working as a bridge between Government, Industry, International Agencies and the Voluntary Sector to advance the empowerment of persons with disabilities. Over the past 29 years, it has emerged as India's leading cross-disability organisation, pioneering the concept of cross-disability advocacy in the country. In 1999, NCPEDP established the National Disability Network (NDN), bringing together members from every State and Union Territory. Since its inception, the organisation has driven significant policy changes that have positively impacted the lives of persons with disabilities—promoting employment, raising public awareness, empowering people with knowledge and opportunities, and ensuring accessibility to public places, products, services and technologies. Its work is guided by six core principles, or pillars: Education, Employment, Accessibility, Legislation/Policy, Awareness/Communication, and Youth. Recognising accessibility as a cornerstone of empowerment, NCPEDP instituted the NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal Design Awards in 2010 to honour those advancing accessibility and inclusive design in India.

[www.ncpedp.org](http://www.ncpedp.org)



## Mphasis

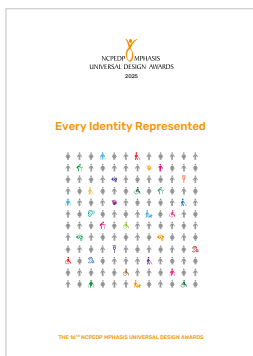
Mphasis (BSE: 526299; NSE: MPHASIS) applies next-generation technology to help enterprises transform businesses globally. Customer centricity is foundational to Mphasis and is reflected in the Mphasis' Front2Back™ Transformation approach. Front2Back™ uses the exponential power of cloud and cognitive to provide hyper-personalized ( $C=X2C^2_{TM}=1$ ) digital experience to clients and their end customers. Mphasis' Service Transformation approach helps 'shrink the core' through the application of digital technologies across legacy environments within an enterprise, enabling businesses to stay ahead in a changing world. Mphasis' core reference architectures and tools, speed and innovation with domain expertise and specialization are key to building strong relationships with marquee clients. To know more visit

[www.mphasis.com](http://www.mphasis.com)

## Theme

### Every Identity Represented

The cover of the Universal Design Awards 2025 brochure marks a historic moment in India's Census. For the first time, data will be collected on 21 specified disabilities, ensuring accuracy, inclusion, and visibility for millions. At the centre is a grid of human silhouettes—most in neutral grey, representing persons without disabilities, and others in bright, colourful icons symbolising each disability category. Each icon is distinct in colour and form, reflecting diversity and the equal place of persons with disabilities within the national population. The arrangement blends these icons seamlessly with the grey silhouettes, illustrating a society where all identities exist together and matter equally. The tagline, "Every Identity Represented", captures the essence of this shift, recognising disability as an integral part of the human spectrum. This progress is strengthened by the Census's first fully digital approach, using mobile apps and an online self-enumeration portal—making the process faster, more accurate, and more inclusive, so every person is counted.



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