



Cousins Help Students Discover Good Tutors



Asad Daud & Ali Asgar Kagzi
Founders, Genext Students

By **Benedict Paramanand**

In 2013, Cousins **Ali Asgar Kagzi** and **Asad Daud**, both graduates from London School of Economics (LSE), believed that only technology can help Indian students get around pathetic infrastructure and poor teaching quality. Fortunately, technology has hit the sweet spot where it's both accessible and affordable today by the aspiring community in the developing world. They launched Genext Students in February 2013 and the platform went live in early 2016.

This idea has already impressed many a jury. It won the RED HERRING TOP 100 ASIA COMPANIES award (2016) and has been listed among TOP 40 ED-TECH start-ups in Asia Pacific (2015).

The firm caters to students of classes K-12 of CBSE, ICSE, (National Boards) and State Boards like Maharashtra, UP and Rajasthan. Currently it operates with 4,000+ tutors primarily in Mumbai and

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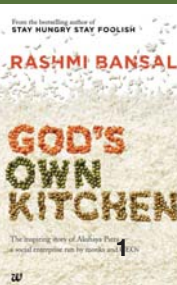
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Prof. Creates Energy From CO₂

CR's Top 10 Corporate Citizens

Books, Events, Courses

BookReview





Purpose: To excite Indian businesses, SMEs, executives and students about the immense business opportunity in not only adopting Sustainability as Strategy in their companies but also inspire them to the possibilities of a big market for innovative sustainability products and services.

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REVOLUTIONIZING
EDUCATION



STUDY



TAKE TESTS



ANALYZE
PERFORMANCE



CONNECT WITH
TUTORS



Pune and has facilitated 20,000+ tutoring sessions through its platform. **It already has 1million+ digital content users across India and the Middle East. Its target is to have 80,000+ tutors onboard providing 10 million tutoring sessions by 2020.**

GenextStudents is India's first Hybrid Tutoring Platform combining the best of private tutoring with technology-enabled learning for CBSE, ICSE and State Boards. It enables personalized learning for students and provides real-time progress updates to parents. It empowers educators and tutors to become entrepreneurs, and in turn, leads to creation of a wave of 'Tutorpreneurs' across the country.

Tutoring in Hindi

Genext Students is the first ed-tech company to have launched content for Hindi medium students in Rajasthan and UP. However, the platform couldn't deliver the expected impact on a mass level. Rigorous work on-ground and **detailed research by the team showed that digital content alone wasn't sufficient to deliver the required outcome and that a tutor was an essential component of the entire ecosystem.**

Empowered Tutors

A majority of the edu-tech platforms have been trying to eliminate the tutor instead of empowering them. With this lesson the founders evolved their business model. This platform closely ties in all the three stakeholders of the education system – students, parents, and tutors in an unprecedented way. **It bridges the existing discovery, connection and delivery gap in the K-12 education system.**

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Excerpts of an interview with Ali AsgarKagzi, co-founder and director, Genext Students with SustainabilityNext

What vital need/pain is this service addressing?

The most important pain point is parents' difficulty in discovering suitable and affordable tutors for their kids. The firm addresses this need by using latest technology for data-driven decision-making to ensure the right fit.

Tutors too need to find right students so that their skills are put to good use and they can supplement their income well. We help by ensuring that the tutors are verified, are experts with excellent teaching ability. This is done via year round orientation and skills development workshops and training sessions.

What's unique about this platform – is it simply a tutor aggregator?

The uniqueness is the use of technology to identify the right tutor for each unique child's learning needs. This is done through our propriety artificial intelligence (AI) based algorithm which matches the requirements with the profiles of the tutors.

What also differentiates us from an aggregator is our unique Hybrid Model of learning, combining technology-based online and offline content and assessments. In an aggregator model, once the connection happens, the aggregator's involvement is over. In contrast, here, the connection is only the first step on our platform.

The tutor takes a benchmark test before the class which helps both parents and tutors understand the current preparation level and identify weak areas of the student. This forms the basis for the tutor to mold tutoring according to the child's learning needs. They also get access to curated online and offline study notes and three different levels of tests, which marks the progress of the child's performance over a period of time. We strongly believe that this hybrid model is what sets us apart as we are creating an entire ecosystem for conducive learning for the child, and at the same time, **solves the scarcity of quality tutors by creating Tutorpreneurs.**

What stage is it in and how do you intend to scale?

We are at a very early stage. We have successfully implemented this model in Mumbai and expanded to Pune within a year. We plan to reach out to many more cities soon.

We will be concentrating on expanding to Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities across India in the KG to 12 standard space followed by adding co-curricular and extracurricular verticals in established cities. Also, depending upon the advancement of the technological infrastructure in the country and the acceptance of different media for learning, we will also be moving to online tutoring along with physical in-home tutoring.



Rainforest Alliance Impact in India

Image Source **Sustainable Agriculture Network**

A Rainforest Alliance report shows how people working in certified tea and cocoa estates have much better livelihood indicators than the others. It published its impact across the world in January 2017 titled 'The Contribution of Rainforest Alliance Agriculture Training and Certification to Meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals - A Summary of the Evidence'. Excerpts:

- In Tamil Nadu workers on Rainforest Alliance (RA) Certified estates received significantly higher income than those on non-certified estates, the hourly rate for overtime was higher, a higher percentage of workers had contracts and were entitled to annual paid leave, sick leave and maternity leave. Other wage and benefit variables were the same in both groups.
- On Indian tea estates, a significantly larger proportion of workers on RA Certified estates than non-certified estates reported that they experienced positive changes in occupational health. **Specifically, on certified estates, 56% of female workers and 58% of male workers reported experiencing positive changes to their health;** for non-certified workers, these rates were only 40% and 13% for female and male workers, respectively. Two managers of certified estates reported that the number of person-days lost to sickness had been reduced due to certification.
- Two studies in India found that RA Certified farms exhibited greater adoption of worker health and safety measures (safety training, personal protective equipment, and no-pesticide buffer zones around houses and schools).
- In India, a higher proportion of workers' children on Rainforest Alliance Certified estates attended school, compared with children of workers on non-certified estates. Those workers were also more satisfied with the schooling than workers on non-certified estates.

The Rainforest Alliance is a global NGO that works to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices and consumer behavior. Through creative and pragmatic collaboration, it aims to rebalance the planet by building strong forests and healthy communities around the world. **It conducts training, certification, and verification in 78 countries.**

Global Impact

- In Colombia, **coffee farm productivity on RA Certified farms was double that of non-certified farms**, and net revenue was 2.5 times higher.
- In Peru, after RA certification, a coffee cooperative increased its annual production by 148 kg/ha, which led to an additional US \$280 / ha in coffee net revenue for certified farms.
- In Nicaragua, annual productivity was higher on RA Certified coffee farms than on non-certified farms (1,430 kg/ha versus 872 kg/ha, respectively), as was annual gross income (US \$4,256/ha versus US \$2,025/ha).
- Data encompassing 220,000 cocoa farms in four countries indicate that RA Certified cocoa farms generate yields that exceed the respective national averages by 69% in Ecuador, 33% in Ghana, 15% in Côte d'Ivoire, and 27% in Indonesia.
- In Ghana, cocoa yields were significantly higher on RA Certified farms (averaging 394 kg/ha) than on uncertified farms (averaging 251 kg/ha).
- In Ghana, established certified farms averaged 774 kg/ha of dried cocoa beans, compared with 527 kg/ha on newly certified farms, 544 kg/ha on comparable non-certified farms, and 400 kg/ha across Ghana.
- In Côte d'Ivoire higher annual yields on certified farms (576 kg/ha vs. 334 kg/ha).
- In Ghana and Nigeria, two studies reported that RA Certified cocoa was more profitable to farmers than non-certified cocoa, based on several standard business measures of profitability. In Ghana, the benefit/cost ratio was estimated at 1.34 for Rainforest Alliance Certified cocoa versus 1.18 for non-certified cocoa, while the internal rate of return was 54% for certified cocoa versus 30.5% for non-certified cocoa. In Nigeria, internal rate of return of 59.6% for certified cocoa (including Rainforest Alliance and three other certification systems) versus 31.3% for non-certified cocoa, based on 59% higher gross revenues and 161% higher net revenues.
- In **Kenya, workers on RA farms were paid 49% more** than their peers on non-certified farms per quantity of tea leaf picked.

2015 SAN/Rainforest Alliance Impacts Report: <http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/impact>





Saving Western Ghats

Karnataka's Rejection of Kasturirangan Report Could Be a Recipe for Disaster

Image Source **Thousand Wonders**

By **Tania Devaiah**

The Karnataka Government's rejection of the draft notification in its entirety is a massive abdication of duty towards betterment of the state. It shows a lack of understanding of just how intricately human lives are linked to ecosystems and how much we will suffer if we do not protect and sustain Western Ghats.

Our governments have made no attempts to let the truth of these reports and notifications reach the people of the Ghats in a manner in which it can be understood. Truth is that it is not as complicated as they make it seem.

So the idea of informed responses from citizens is completely negated. It appears that these governments have chosen to add fuel to the fire and pick the voices of those whose fears are based on incorrect information. **They have used these fears as a reason to validate not protecting the Western Ghats in a holistic manner as this will fit their business agenda.**

Coming from Kodagu I understand the fears some people have. I also know from experience that given the chance to actually understand what the draft notification and/or the Kasturirangan report are saying, most people I have interacted with have agreed that this is a necessary step. It will help us protect our land and keep it fruitful.

Our rivers are dying in front of our eyes. No one knows this better than a farmer or a forest dweller. Till date, these communities have been fed lies meant to create panic. For example, people are told that they cannot use fertilizer on their farms, that they cannot use their vehicles after dark; that they

cannot build on their land; that they cannot repair their homes; that they cannot till their land. NONE of this is true.

So, keeping all this in mind, I believe that our governments have forgotten that they are merely custodians of all our resources. The principle of intergenerational equity is something they have to keep in mind while deciding how we use and safeguard these resources. They have done us a huge disservice.

Even if cities are all they care about, Karnataka in particular will suffer as most of its cities depend wholly on the resources of the Ghats for their sustenance.

Climate change is at our door and the farming and indigenous communities of the Ghats will be some of the first to bear the brunt.

The author works at Jhatkaa (jhatkaa.org) is a Bengaluru-based digital campaigning organization.

Read Jhatkaa's full report submitted to the Centre <https://jhatkaa.org/western-ghats-fact-finding-report/>

Highlights & Talking Points

- Western Ghats is one of the world's eight mega hotspots of biological diversity. Was recognized as UNESCO's World Heritage Site in 2012
- Dr. Kasturirangan committee earmarked an area of 56,825 square kilometers spread across six states as the Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Area. It is one-third of the overall area of the Western Ghats
- Draft notification bans all red category of industry like mining, thermal power plants and other polluting industries
- The Kerala government has asked the Centre to exclude 886.7 sq km "non-forest land" from the area demarcated as Ecologically Fragile Land (EFL)
- The five states are yet to respond even after the passing of the March 2017 deadline
- Over 1500 villages in Karnataka come under the eco-sensitive zone
- The environment ministry has asked for ground verification of all claims of the states
- Environment groups report large scale rigging by local MLAs of compulsory consent of local gram sabhas
- Public hearings are manipulated by local MLAs who have vested interest in timber, mining and sand
- NGOs in Karnataka say the Kasturirangan report was not even translated into Kannada and given to people for reading before the consent meetings were held resulting in exaggerated fears of local people
- NGOs demand a fresh public consent exercise and recommend this to be video recorded
- A well planned and executed Rebalancing of livelihood and ecology is possible. Examples are a plenty around the world
- Only a mass citizen movement with effective communication to local communities is the only way to defeat vested interests of local political groups



Blended MOOC Faculty Discussion: Professor PC Narayan (standing), Professor Shankar Venkatagiri, Professor Rahul De (seated far right), IIMB, share faculty insights from their experiments with blended learning

IIMB's MOOCs a Big Hit

Higher education with online and hybrid modules is seriously bridging skilling and quality gap of both students and faculty

By **Ramya Srinivasan**

India's higher education sector has been seeking a robust solution that could be scaled to enhance access for more than a decade. Only 10% of our youth, which is 20 million, have access to higher education. A very high student-teacher ratio means that India will find it difficult to meet the higher education demands with the brick-and-mortar institutions. Therefore, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) came into being to offer a scalable way of increasing access to quality education using technology.

The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore launched its MOOCs Programme – IIMBx – with the objective of making business and management education accessible and using educational technology to improve the quality of management education. MOOCs allow learners to enroll into courses in a free and open manner and complete courses in a flexible direct-to-device format.

Link to IIMBx MOOCs: <https://www.edx.org/school/iimbx>

Current impact, future potential – at IIMB MOOCs

The IIMBx MOOCs Program started in August 2014 and the first IIMBx MOOCs went live in July 2015. Since then, IIMBx has reached out to more than 5 lakh learners from 185+ countries around the world through 25+ unique online courses in subjects ranging from Accounting and Finance to Entrepreneurship.

[illegible]

In addition to producing MOOCs, IIMBx is also working on Blended or Hybrid learning using MOOCs, by delivering academic and faculty development programmes that leverage the power of MOOCs and supplement them with live faculty, in-class sessions. It recently completed a couple of academic programmes using blended MOOCs.

MOOCs are very effective for the constant upskilling. It not only paves the path for life-long learning but also provide flexibility of anytime, anywhere learning. In fact, **the median age of learners in IIMBx MOOCs is 30** – and there is a high presence of working professionals in it.

MOOCs for Faculty Development

India has more than 4000 management educational institutions and availability of quality faculty is a common problem. MOOCs can play a strong role in improving quality of teaching by encouraging faculty to use digital courseware available through MOOCs in blended format in the classroom. **Through faculty development programmes in Blended MOOCs, IIMBx has trained more than 500 B-school faculty in blending MOOCs in the classroom.**

9

Why We Need to Build Consciousness of the Place

French architect Didier Prost, an advocate of bioregionalism, calls for a renewed focus on local people and knowledge to innovate for greener solutions. He spoke to Down to Earth (DTH) magazine recently on how bioregional approaches can be adopted to solve India's environmental problems. Edited Excerpts:



He said: "We have to build new borders—not administrative and political ones, but ecological and cultural ones. We have to build what we call "a consciousness of the place" by analyzing a particular area, its history and the "global archaeology" of that history. This can be done by eliciting the participation of people from all spheres of society—academia, polity, grassroot communities, non-profits and workers.

Using their inputs, we need to develop a plan for that area that will be different from other regular economic development process. **Our current development process sucks all the resources and reserves from an area and then dumps the waste in the environment. Bioregionalism, on the other hand, integrated local ecologies in the economy.**

India's Approach?

India should rejuvenate its ecology. It needs to put in place a renewed National Reforestation Program, with special emphasis on native plant life. **That's because climate change is a reality, and it will cause major catastrophes in the next 10-20 years. Unfortunately, neither the government nor its people realize they are sitting on a ticking time bomb.**

Governments are completely clueless, and people are too busy indulging in a consumerist lifestyle and do not care about what is happening to the poor. That's why I believe that **social science educational reforms are important**, because they can put the larger masses in sync with reality.

Green Party in India?

India still does not have a green political party because in the popular **Indian psyche, there is a strong disconnect between poverty and the environment.** Poverty and environment are always at work. To have a real green party, you will have to connect the two.

However, I don't blame Indians for making this distinction. After Independence, and especially since liberalization, India has adopted a model of development influenced by Western values, which are essentially materialist in nature. It is not bad, but it is not sufficient either. In the next five years, the problems of a globalised world will increase, as will the awareness of people. Consequently, they are going to look for alternatives.

<http://www.downtoearth.org.in/interviews/-bioregionalism-could-become-a-global-movement--57613>

BARC Develops Credit card-size ECG Machine For Rs 4000



It's just slightly bigger than a debit or credit card but works like a full-fledged ECG machine. A team of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) announced their compact ECG machine recently. Soon, people could have an ECG machine at their homes just like they now have a personal blood sugar and/or blood pressure monitor. An app will connect the device to a smartphone and the user will not have to undergo special training to operate it.

Called Tele-ECG, work on its commercially producing is underway. Commercial machines currently available in the market cost between Rs 40,000 and Rs 50,000. The Tele-ECG will have a battery inside it and will be chargeable with a mobile phone charger. Also, the accompanying app will ensure real-time sharing of a patient's ECG report with doctors. The time saved will be of critical importance in saving lives.

A researcher from the BARC team said Tele-ECG machine will be able to churn out around 300 ECG reports on a single charge. In rural areas where, where almost 70% of Indians live and where critical cardio care facilities are rare or absent, this machine could be a life saver.

The concept of a 12 channel Tele-ECG is not new. With the advent of GSM network and 3G and 4G network has now got a big boost. The ECG image can be shared over any file sharing app, including WhatsApp. For a printed output link any printer for an A4 sized printout will do.

Indus Tower Achieves 30% Energy Savings

Indus Towers, nine-year old India's largest telecom tower company, has reported a nearly one-third saving in energy use by using solar and moving the towers outdoors. It currently operates over 1.22 lakh towers across India.

The company reported reduction in consumption of diesel by 10.39% and reduced CO₂ emissions per tenancy over 2014-15 by 5.03%. **The company has crossed 50,000 diesel-free sites by utilizing non-polluting backup sources of energy and multiple energy efficiency measures. It has deployed solar solutions at 1000+ sites so far.**

Manoj Kumar Singh, Chief of Regulatory Affairs, Sustainability & CSR, Indus Towers, said the roll-out of the 4th Generation data networks has put enormous strain on the tower infrastructure but they are ready for the challenge. **Bimal Dayal, CEO, Indus Towers,** said *"Sustainability defines the way we operate and maintain our relationship with our stakeholders."*

Highlights from its third annual Sustainability Report 2015-16

- Growing total number of 'Green Sites' to 50,461; achieving 25-30% energy saving from solar-cooling units by converting 50% of its tower portfolio to outdoor sites
- Over 13,990 sites converted from indoor to outdoor
- Deployed solar solutions at 1000+ sites to reduce CO₂ footprint
- Reduction in consumption of diesel by 10.39%,
- ID – OD conversion lead to 40,955 kg/annum reduced CO₂emissions
- Providing near perfect uptime of 99.98% with 2,70,006 tenancies and 1,19,881 towers in 2015-16 in India(2016-17 – Tenancies 2,82,909& Towers 1,22,044)



Salesforce Achieves Net Zero Emissions

Salesforce, a leading enterprise software company, said it has achieved net-zero greenhouse gas emissions and is now providing a carbon neutral cloud for all customers—two critical milestones in the company’s ongoing sustainability journey.

“Salesforce is committed to harnessing the company’s culture of innovation to improve the state of the world and drive toward equality for all. Every individual, company, city and nation experiences the effects of climate change, which disproportionately impact many of the world’s poorest regions and amplify global inequality,” a company note said.

It said its multi-tenant architecture is 50 times more energy and carbon-efficient than traditional on-premise software, enabling **Salesforce and its customers to avoid significant emissions over time—two million metric tons of carbon dioxide in 2016.**

Salesforce has achieved net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by building on longstanding efforts to drive efficiency in the company’s operations, executing two 12-year renewable energy agreements announced last year and supporting sustainable development projects through the purchase of high-quality carbon credits.

“Reaching net-zero quickly is critical to addressing the effects of climate change,” said Suzanne DiBianca, Salesforce executive vice president, corporate relations and chief philanthropy officer. **“Climate change affects everyone and every organization, but especially the young, old, sick and less fortunate. The carbon offset projects we have chosen create both economic opportunity and positive environmental impact to make a difference in the future of our planet and communities around the world.”**

“The B Team congratulated Salesforce on achieving net-zero so far ahead of the Net Zero 2050 commitment,” said Leah Seligmann, Director of The B Team’s Net Zero by 2050 initiative. “Salesforce’s leadership will enable their customers to expand their networks emissions free and inspire other companies around the world.”



Salesforce Chief Philanthropy Officer
Suzanne DiBianca Wants All Companies
To Drive Social Change

Impact Guru Partners With Global Giving So That Diaspora Can Get Tax Exemption

Accredited Indian NGOs can now access funding from NRIs/PIOs through Impact Guru. By virtue of tie-up with [Global Giving](#), the donors could now get tax exemption in the country of their residence. Impact Guru has entered into a strategic partnership with US and UK based Global Giving, the world's first and largest non-profit crowd-funding platform.



Piyush Jain - Co-founder CEO of Impact Guru

India is home to the highest number of nonprofits in the world (33 lakh NGOs), and raises more than Rs. 8,500 crores annually from international donors. Tax incentives are often considered a crucial factor in encouraging philanthropy.

According to the Indian government estimates there are more than 60 lakh NRIs / PIOs residing in the US and UK alone. According to a research report by The Bridgespan Group, if the charitable contributions of Indian diaspora in US were consistent with those of other American households in similar income brackets, and if they directed 40% of their philanthropy to India, **Rs 8000 crore additional funds could flow from such donors towards Indian social causes every year.**

Social enterprises based in India are also eligible to either raise funds online or route their grants via Impact Guru. Beyond India, this partnership will also enable nonprofits and social enterprises across Southeast Asia (including

Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia) to raise funds via Impact Guru.

Speaking on the partnership, Impact Guru's co-founder and CEO, Piyush Jain said: "Having spent over a decade outside India prior to starting Impact Guru, we can relate to the desire of Indian diaspora to give back while obtaining local tax benefits, and their concerns around transparency of Indian NGOs. Impact Guru is thrilled to be partnering with Global Giving to address these gaps, thereby making us the platform of choice for crowd-funding by Indians globally."

In the past, Impact Guru has executed a successful partnership with Fundnel, a Singapore based private investment platform. This collaboration strengthened the Indian platform's presence in Southeast Asia.

Since 2016, Impact Guru and Fundnel have helped mobilize over Rs 329 crores for various projects across 15 countries.

Impact Guru was also recently chosen as the official crowd-funding partner of Project Inspire, an initiative by Singapore Committee for UN Women and MasterCard that focused on creating a better world for women and girls in Asia Pacific. It raised approximately Rs 25 Lakhs from more than 1,100 supporters from over 30 countries in less than a month.

Intel, Microsoft, Cisco, Accenture Among Top10 Corporate Citizens

The CR (Corporate Responsibility) Magazine's 100 Best Corporate Citizens List this year has a few IT companies. The 18th annual ranking of responsible organizations 100 Best is based on seven categories and 260 data points.

"Being a good corporate citizen is a goal of most leading organizations, but actually achieving this can be a challenge in today's business climate. There are many working pieces of a responsible operation—risk management, diversity and inclusion, and the supply chain for example—that make efficient and effective operations quite onerous," a magazine note said.

The data was gleaned from publicly available information and each company was ranked in seven categories: Environment; Climate change; Employee relations; Human rights; Corporate governance; Financial performance; and Philanthropy and community support.

Methodology

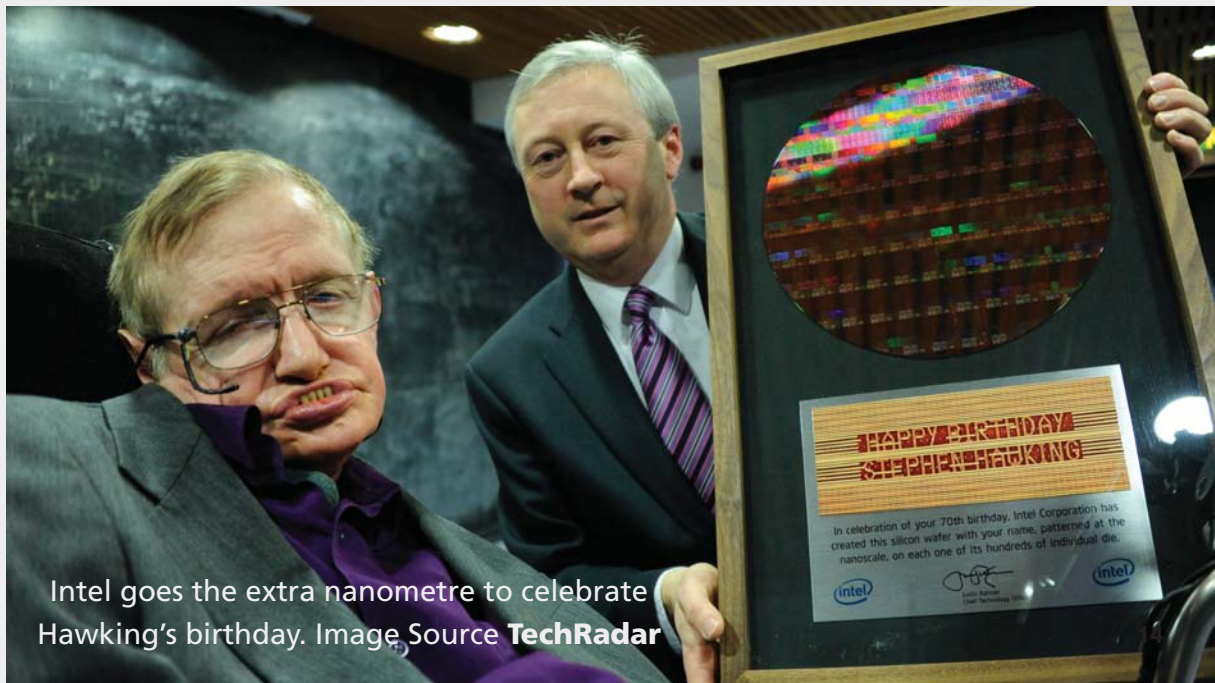
Accountability is a key part of corporate responsibility. "We believe it's vital for investors, regulators, customers, suppliers, and employees to know as much as possible about the companies they invest in, do business with, and work for."

"Our Corporate Citizenship Methodology realizes that task by urging companies to make their information available. Through this process, we put hard data into the hands of the people who have the most direct influence over these companies—and whose corporate behavior affects the most."

"By advancing accountability and transparency through this research, we allow stakeholders and customers to make better decisions and ultimately evaluate these companies at face value. With this effort, we all move closer to a world where everyone has the information they need and markets function more effectively."

Global Best Corporate Citizens

1. Hasbro
2. Intel
3. Microsoft
4. Altria Group
5. Campbell Soup Co.
6. Cisco Systems
7. Accenture
8. Hormel Foods
9. Lockheed Martin
10. Ecolab



Intel goes the extra nanometre to celebrate Hawking's birthday. Image Source **TechRadar**

Starbucks Promises 100 Million Healthy Coffee Trees



Starbucks Coffee Company has announced that it will deliver 100 million healthy coffee trees to farmers who need them by 2025. The pledge builds on Starbucks' **One Tree for Every Bag** initiative, which sees the company plant one tree is planted for every bag of coffee sold in a participating U.S. store.

With the extension of the program, Starbucks will replace trees that are declining in productivity due to disease and pests, which are intensifying with climate change, with healthy new seedlings. In some regions, farmers have already begun planting more resilient coffee tree varieties in anticipation of the effects of climate change. "Without enough healthy, productive coffee trees, the **economic future of 25 million coffee farmers** and long-term supply of **high-quality coffee** are at stake. So far, more than 25 million trees have been donated," a company note said.

Starbucks has been working with nurseries in Mexico, Guatemala and El Salvador to supply trees to its program and will continue to develop new supplier nurseries in additional coffee regions that would benefit from replanting.

Meanwhile, the **Sustainable Coffee Challenge** has launched an industry-wide effort to replant one billion coffee trees to ensure positive outcomes for both productivity and the environment. The challenge is a joint initiative of more than 60 corporations, governments, NGOs and research organizations working together to make **coffee the first sustainable agricultural product**. Tackling the most **important challenges facing the coffee industry** via individual and collective action is one of the key goals of the Challenge.



"Providing healthy trees to farmers in coffee-growing regions makes existing lands more productive and keeps us from expanding into forests," said **Dr. M. Saniayan, Executive VP and senior scientist at Conservation International**. "We're proud to stand alongside Starbucks in this long-term endeavor to ensure that both livelihoods and nature around the world are vibrant and healthy."

One Tree for Every Bag is just one of the investments Starbucks has made in coffee farming communities. The brand has committed to providing \$50 million in affordable credit to coffee farmers and cooperatives to reinvest in their farms by 2020 and invested \$20 million in open-source agronomy

through a network of Farmer Support Centers to train 200,000 coffee growers by 2020. **Additionally, 99 percent of Starbucks' coffee has been verified as ethically sourced through its C.A.F.E. Practices standards developed with Conservation International.**

Ashoka Chooses India's First Change makers



Kuldeep Dantewadia,
Founder Reap Benefit

Ashoka, world's largest network of social enterprises, has chosen two young social entrepreneurs as India's first Lead Change makers (LCMs): Kuldeep Dantewadia - founder of Reap Benefit, and Arundhuti Gupta – founder of Mentor Together. Ashoka, in association SAP, is investing in their enterprises and co-creating a three-month engagement with the LCMs.

These two social entrepreneurs and the teams they lead have recently started collaborating with Ashoka on the implementation of a pilot project that engages corporate employees, youth, and Ashoka Fellows in Bangalore. The project aims to increase the bandwidth of the LCM-led organizations in respect to youth change-making and social entrepreneurship. This is being done with SAP employees and Ashoka Fellows serving as mentors and advisors to groups of youth.



Arundhuti Gupta
Founder - Mentor Together

Mentor Together

Founded by Lead Changemaker Arundhuti Gupta, Mentor Together is a group of young change makers that enables people in the corporate sector to act as mentors with youth from low-income communities. **The engagement with SAP is unique to their model as it will be the first time that they are using the mentor relationships to produce social innovations in the communities of the mentees.** We are hoping to see 15-20 highly engaged SAP employees working with individual youth mentees. The teams will collaborate with Ashoka Fellows to create solutions for social problems identified by the youth.

Reap Benefit

Founded by Kuldeep Dantewadia, Reap Benefit works with youth on college and corporate campuses to help them start green initiatives, ultimately reducing the environmental impact of the campus. **The engagement with SAP will see a transposition of SAPs successful environmental practices to college campuses.** The aim is to give youth the knowledge and inspiration they need to create social and environmental change. This project aims to see 15 young leaders from campuses across Bangalore learn and implement the environmental practices of SAP.

Ashoka is the one of the largest networks of **social entrepreneurs** worldwide, with over 3,000 Ashoka Fellows in **70 countries** creating large-scale impact through new innovations. Founded by **Bill Drayton** in 1980, Ashoka is an international network that is driving the social sector and offering a platform for people dedicated to changing the world. Ashoka pioneered the field of social entrepreneurship and has built multi-level stakeholders across the world who increasingly look to entrepreneurial talent and new ideas to solve social problems.

In India, Ashoka has a vibrant fellowship of over **350 Fellows** and elects a new cohort of Fellows every year. Going forward Ashoka India will also select and elect new Fellows from Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and play a unique role in integrating the emerging social sector in South Asia.

Prof. Invents Way to Trigger Artificial Photosynthesis

A chemistry professor has just found a way to trigger the process of photosynthesis in a synthetic material, turning greenhouse gases into clean air and producing energy all at the same time. This process has great potential for creating a technology that could significantly reduce greenhouse gases linked to climate change, while also creating a clean way to produce energy.



“This work is a breakthrough,” said UCF Assistant Professor Fernando Uribe-Romo. “Tailoring materials that will absorb a specific color of light is very difficult from the scientific point of view, but from the societal point of view we are contributing to the development of a technology that can help reduce greenhouse gases.” The findings of his research are published in the Journal of Materials Chemistry.

Uribe-Romo and his team of students created a way to trigger a chemical reaction in a synthetic material called metal–organic frameworks (MOF) that breaks down carbon dioxide into harmless organic materials. Think of it as an artificial photosynthesis process similar to the way plants convert carbon dioxide (CO₂) and sunlight into food. But instead of producing food, Uribe-Romo’s method produces solar fuel.

It’s something scientists around the world have been pursuing for years, but the challenge is finding a way for visible light to trigger the chemical transformation. Ultraviolet rays have enough energy to allow the reaction in common materials such as titanium dioxide, but UVs make up only about 4 percent of the light Earth receives from the sun. The visible range – the violet to red wavelengths – represent the majority of the sun’s rays, but there are few materials that pick up these light colors to create the chemical reaction that transforms CO₂ into fuel.

Researchers have tried it with a variety of materials, but the ones that can absorb visible light tend to be rare and expensive materials such as platinum, rhenium and iridium that make the process cost-prohibitive.

Uribe-Romo used titanium, a common nontoxic metal, and added organic molecules that act as light-harvesting antennae to see if that configuration would work. The light harvesting antenna molecules, called N-alkyl-2-aminoterephthalates, can be designed to absorb specific colors of light when incorporated in the MOF. In this case he synchronized it for the color blue.

His team assembled a blue LED photoreactor to test out the hypothesis. Measured amounts of carbon dioxide were slowly fed into the photoreactor — a glowing blue cylinder that looks like a tanning bed — to see if the reaction would occur. The glowing blue light came from strips of LED lights inside the chamber of the cylinder and mimic the sun’s blue wavelength.

It worked and the chemical reaction transformed the CO₂ into two reduced forms of carbon, formate and formamides (two kinds of solar fuel) and in the process cleaning the air. “The goal is to continue to fine-tune the approach so we can create greater amounts of reduced carbon so it is more efficient,” Uribe-Romo said.



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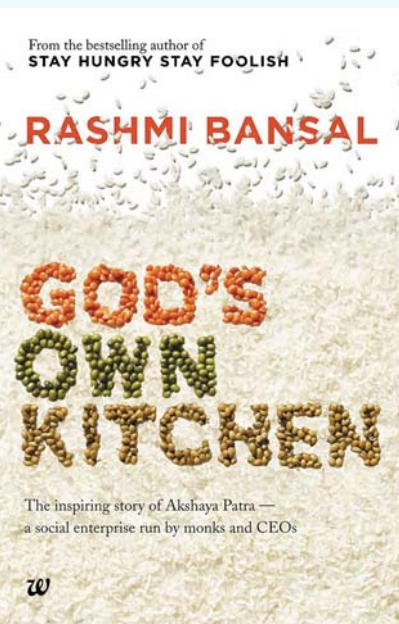
Travel



Travel



Total Recall – The Untold Story of Akshaya Patra



A few corporate stars associated with Akshaya Patra ensured that it got excellent press in recent years. The media has been lapping up the stories of how more than a million school kids are fed every day across the country in ultra-modern and ultra-hygienic conditions. The imagery of monks in saffron and CEOs in suits feeding the hungry school kids is difficult to ignore. The respected Harvard Business Review even did a case study of the unusual social-business model.

The full story of Akshaya Patra had to be told some day to answer typical questions such as - how did this brutally bold and wildly imaginative journey start; who were the early conspirators; how could they raise so much money, how could the monks and corporate financiers hit it off, how could monks turn into black-belt operations managers and the mother of all – how did they get the limp government machinery in many states to work in their favor.

Finally, Rashmi Bansal, the prolific chronicler of Indian entrepreneurship journeys, has unraveled the mystery. She has made the HBR-type story accessible to anyone who is in awe of Akshaya Patra that started modestly in the year 2000 and today serves 1.6 million meals every day from 27 kitchens across the country. The setting up of each of the 27 kitchen is a fascinating story in itself.

The book succeeds in capturing the fine blend of social, spiritual and entrepreneurial with serendipity. It illustrates the limitless possibilities of human potential when it's driven by deep compassion and willingness to make the difference in a big way.

Even with achieving such a mammoth scale, Akshaya Patra's efforts dwarfs amidst the magnitude of hunger and malnutrition that is painfully pervasive in India today. The government machinery serves nearly 120 million mid-day meals in 1.15 million schools every day. Even if Akshaya Patra achieves its goal of feeding 5 million kids by 2020 the gap will still be very wide.

The Akshaya Patra founders and collaborators rightly believe that they can make a much bigger impact by helping the government machinery with systems and processes they are so very good at. The emerging digital economy could make it easier. More than these, India needs a robust governance mechanism in place so that the agencies are held accountable.

God's Own Kitchen has immensely valuable lessons for everyone. For businesses it's a live case study in audacious goal setting (no child should go to school hungry); deftly managing diverse teams (of monks, corporate finance executives, volunteers); leadership (young monks set up and run kitchens which they have never done before); conflict management (with several politicians and state governments), excellence (highest safety and quality ratings), innovation (redesigning kitchens); governance (transparent financial transactions) and not the least frugal mindset. Most of all, the book demonstrates a working model which India can use to solve its other pressing problems such as public health, sanitation, primary education, community resources among others using the public private partnership platform.

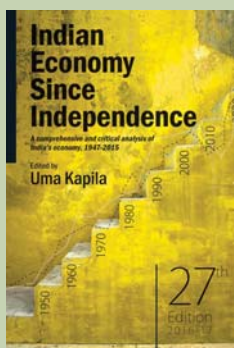
Akshaya Patra's journey is much more than a great inspiration. Its larger message 'Feeding a child is not charity, it is our collective duty. Let us do it well' should be a huge motivator to every Indian to end the scourge of child hunger.

BOOKSHELF



Annual State Of India's Environment - SOE 2017

This is the fourth Annual report from Down To Earth. Each chapter has relevant articles that deal with current developments and related archival material from CSE's more than 30 years of research. This makes each article/analysis wholesome as it gives one a true sense of history of the development, and a rounded view overall. We have roped in some well known external professionals to contribute to this year's SOE, besides our own group of experts.

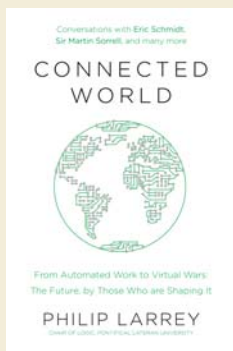


Indian Economic Development Since 1947

By Uma Kapila (Editor), April 2017, Academic Foundation

“The annual edition of Dr. Uma Kapila’s Indian Economy since Independence has become a staple, annually updated, reference for University students throughout the country, for aspirants for the civil service and other examinations, and for all those interested in a single comprehensive source of information, and analysis by a galaxy of scholars, on the Indian economy. This twenty-fifth anniversary edition marks a milestone in a remarkable journey, begun in 1988 by a revered teacher of long standing from Delhi University.” - Indira Rajaraman Former Member, 13th Finance Commission and presently Member, Central Board of Reserve Bank of India “Sharing a piece of its history...Year 1988: Upon publication of the first edition of this book, which was originally designed for students of the University of Delhi.

Uma Kapila, author/editor of several other books, has taught Indian Economy to undergraduate students for over forty-two years. She retired as Reader from the Department of Economics, Miranda House, University of Delhi. Presently, she is Senior Editor, Academic Foundation. An Honours Graduate from Miranda House, University of Delhi and M.A. and Ph.D. from Delhi School of Economics, Dr. Uma Kapila has also served on the Planning Commission Study Group on “Agricultural Strategies in the Eastern Region of India for the Seventh Five Year Plan” (Perspective Planning Division). Dr. Uma Kapila is the author of the book Oilseeds Economy of India (1982) published by the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi. She is also the author/editor of two other textbooks on Indian economy, one meant for B.A. (Hons.) Economics, and the other for B.A.(Programme) and B.Com (Hons.) and Honours other than Economics. She has edited, and co-edited with Raj Kapila, a number of books on India’s economy, banking and finance.



Connected World: From Automated World to Virtual Wars; The Future by those Who are Shaping It

By Philip Larrey, April 2017, Penguin

Want to know what your life, digital and otherwise, will be like in ten years? Philip Larrey, Ph.D., is a Catholic priest who holds the Chair of Logic and Epistemology at the Pontifical Lateran University in the Vatican. His publications deal with the philosophy of knowledge and critical thinking and his most recent work, in Italian, *Futuro ignoto*, focused on the impact of the new digital era on society.

For years he has been following the philosophical implications of the rapid development of artificial intelligence. With candour, he challenges industry leaders he comes into contact with at the Vatican to discuss how technology is shaping the fabric of our society. His new book, *Connected World*, represents some of the fruits of those dialogues.

The people with whom the author has interacted are by far the thought leaders in their fields. So the book is a good primer to get a hang of what to expect.



The Fourth Industrial Revolution

By Klaus Schwab, Portfolio Penguin, February 2017

When the author is such a big name, as someone who has led the World Economic Forum, one's expectation from the book will be lofty. He has brought together important technology changes that appear to be imminent in the next decade in one place and assessing their potential positive and negative impacts is great food for thought.

This book is probably intended for political decision makers in order to provide a heads-up for what lies ahead. Anyone who wonders whether their job could be at risk or whether their children are pursuing the right occupation should read this.

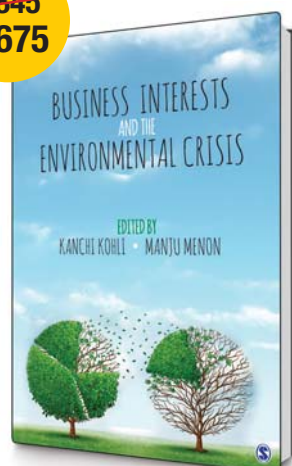
Some reviewers feel the book's focus on challenges that developing countries would face is weak.

As a summary of the techno-driven changes to come, 'the book is indeed serviceable.' A reviewer believes "he (the author) must surely have had a higher ambition than that. In the complexity-rapids of the fourth revolution, we do indeed need some pretty rugged intellectual helmsmanship. This book is not close to being on point."

Professor Klaus Schwab is founder and executive chairman of the World Economic Forum, the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation. In 1998, he created the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, which seeks to identify, recognize and disseminate initiatives in social entrepreneurship that have the potential to be replicated on a global scale.

Save environment, save earth, save tomorrow
with these must-have resources

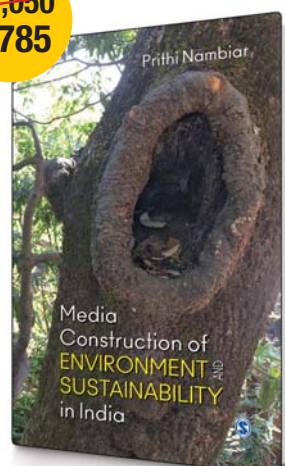
₹845
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This book highlights the manner in which key aspects in policy discourse—commodity, pricing, ownership, and regulation—have borrowed economic and trade principles to address the environmental crisis and to what effect. It addresses a fundamental issue in environment: if nature is no longer available as a limitless resource, how has the policy discourse on the environmental crisis come to view it, value it, and live with it?

2016 • 284 pages
HB 978-93-515-0860-1

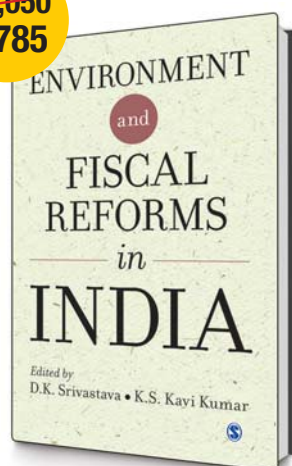
₹1,050
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The book presents a theoretical framework against which the role of media and communication in enabling this meaning negotiation is explored and illustrated through textual analysis and examination of interview data. The uniquely theoretical and practical perspective on the discursive construction of these concepts will be of immense value for policy makers, development and media practitioners, scholars, and students of media and communication.

2014 • 312 pages
HB 978-81-321-1741-4

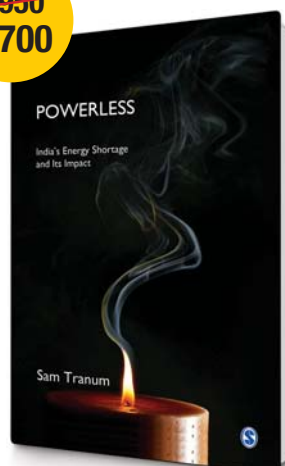
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The current structure of taxation in India, the book underlines, is characterized by inadequacies such as cascading, multiple tax rates and inter-state sales tax, fragmenting the all-India market. The book argues in favour of integrating environmental considerations in the GST regime. It emphasizes the importance of eco-taxes on polluting inputs and outputs.

2014 • 364 pages
HB 978-93-515-0041-4

₹950
₹700



Explains India's energy shortage, how much coal, oil, gas, uranium, and power the country uses, and for what purposes. It discusses how the shortages and resulting imports affect the country's economy, businesses, and residents. It also looks at the environmental and health effects of India's growing energy use and how efforts to mitigate these are likely to affect demand for coal, oil, gas, and uranium.

2013 • 312 pages
HB 978-81-321-1314-0

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<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/kanban-system-design-kmp1-in-bangalore-tickets-31704313455?aff=es2>

GSF5: India Demo Days & “AI and Fin-Tech”

May 25, 2017, Bangalore, India

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/gsf5-india-demo-days-ai-and-fin-tech-tickets-33593154028?aff=es2>

India-Pacific Islands

Sustainable Development Conference

May 25–26, 2017, Suva, Fiji

<http://indiapacificsdc.com/index.php>

Call for Papers: Immiserizing Growth – A Conference

May 26–27, 2017, Toronto, Canada

<https://hd-ca.org/events/call-for-papers-immiserizing-growth-a-conference>

Sustainability 4.0 Awards 2017

May 26, 2017, Mumbai

<http://ww2.frost.com/event/calendar/sustainability-40-awards-2017>

Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development 2016

June 7, 2017, Hayatt Regency, Mumbai

<http://cbs.teriin.org/lssd.php>

15th Annual International Conference on Management

26–29 June 2017, Athens, Greece

<https://inomics.com/go/15th-Annual-Internat/998509>

4th RSEP Multidisciplinary Conference

29–30 June 2017, PRAGUE

<https://inomics.com/4th-rsep-multidisciplinary-conference-29-30-june-2017-prague-prague>

The STIA+Temenos Effect Gatherings

28 June 2017, Bangalore, India

<https://www.visiontemenos.com/gatherings>

Grid-connected Solar Rooftop PV System: Design, Development and Simulation

13–14 Jul 2017, Jaipur, Rajasthan

<http://www.teriin.org/management-development-programme/>

Equity and Inclusion Leadership Symposium 2017

August 18, 2017, Richmond, United States

<https://inomics.com/go/Equity-and-Inclusion/985898>

48th International Conference on “Business, Economics, Social Science & Humanities-BESSH-2017”

August 21–22, 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

<https://inomics.com/bangkok-48th-international-conference-%E2%80%9Cbusiness-economics-social-science-humanities-bessh-2017%E2%80%9D>

Challenging Inequalities: Human Development and Social Change

6–8 September, 2017, Cape Town, South Africa

<https://hd-ca.org/>

11th Annual Collateral Management Forum

October 5–6, 2017, Amsterdam, Netherlands

<https://inomics.com/11th-annual-collateral-management-forum-amsterdam>

Workshop on “Economic Governance of Data-driven Markets”

October 12–13, 2017, Netherlands

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/research/institutes-and-research-groups/tilec/events/economic-governance-workshop/>

Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth

19–21 October 2017, Brasov, Romania

<https://inomics.com/inclusive-and-sustainable-economic-growth-bra%C5%9Fov>

Global Science, Technology & Innovation Conferences (G-STIC) 2017 - Student & Research Challenges

23–25 October 2017, Brussels

http://www.teriin.org/index.php?option=com_events&view=details&sid=917&Itemid=110

4th International Annual Meeting of Sosyoekonomi Society

27–28 October 2017, Vienna, Austria

<https://inomics.com/4th-international-annual-meeting-sosyoekonomi-society-vienna>

2nd International Conference on Business Management (ICOBM’17)

15–16 November 2017, Kyrenia, Cyprus

<https://inomics.com/2nd-international-conference-business-management-icobm17-kyrenia>

World Sustainable Development Summit 2018

February 15–17, 2018, New Delhi

<http://wsds.teriin.org/>

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