

NASSCOM Foundation and Hinduja Global Solutions Launch a Center of Excellence for Persons with Disabilities in Noida

- *The center to train at least 100 Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and make them job ready*
- *First Center of Excellence for PwDs in the NCR Region*

NASSCOM Foundation, in collaboration with Hinduja Global Solutions Limited (HGS), launched a training center with an aim to make Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) skilled for job roles and make them industry ready. The center will train a minimum of 100 PwDs in the NCR region over the next 12 months, with a target of placing at least 50% of them in companies already sensitized to accommodate them.

The trainees will be skilled in a variety of job roles suitable for IT/BPM, Hospitality and Retail industries, along with soft skills, interview skills, communication skills, English language training etc. Efforts have been made to ensure that the center is accessible not just in terms of physical accessibility but also through technology and follows the principles of Universal design of learning. Training will be conducted using the best accessible technology and training methodologies.

HGS is supporting this cause as part of their CSR agenda. Centum will be the training partner for this initiative and has vast experience in conducting training programs for PwDs and others from marginalized backgrounds. NASSCOM Foundation will be the overall owner of the initiative ensuring the maximum impact.

Shrikant Sinha, CEO, NASSCOM Foundation said, *“According to Census 2011, there are 2.68 crore PwDs in India, of which about 1.34 crore are in the employable age and 99 lakh persons with disabilities in the employable age group are non-workers or are marginal workers. We celebrated our 71st Independence Day yesterday and still haven’t been able to justify ‘right to information or equality’ for persons with disabilities. NASSCOM Foundation is trying to do its bit to cater to PwDs but India definitely needs more hands and minds working towards this direction. The Center of Excellence in Noida is one small step towards helping PwDs become financially independent and get included in the community. We are thankful to HGS who came forward in full support for this initiative. We encourage more corporates to collaborate with us towards making PwDs employment ready.”*

Speaking on the occasion, **Partha DeSarkar, CEO, HGS** said, *“One of HGS’ seven core Values, Global Mindset is all about thinking global and respecting cultural diversity. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment and encourage hiring of PwDs to empower them. This will also bring in divergent perspectives and experiences in to the workplace. Our association with NASSCOM Foundation demonstrates our support to the very talented PwD community, who we believe can achieve amazing things if given the right opportunities and training.”*

NASSCOM Foundation's Disability Initiative encourages inclusion in the IT/BPM industry by sensitizing the sector about accessibility (barrier-free workplace and assistive technology) and employment. Disability Initiative helps companies inculcate inclusive best practices from all four aspects of disability - Physical Accessibility, Web Accessibility, Assistive technologies, and Employability.

Also, NASSCOM Foundation enables PwDs to get trained on employable skills to be able to have better job opportunities. It also looks forward to directly interact with employers and help them interact with PwDs in a more efficient way.

The Foundation also recently launched an assistive technology marketplace that will engage PwDs, experts, developers, IT industry and the Government in promoting and implementing web accessibility and creating effective indigenous solutions that are Assistive Technologies (AT).