

ENPRENDIA

NEWSLETTER - 4

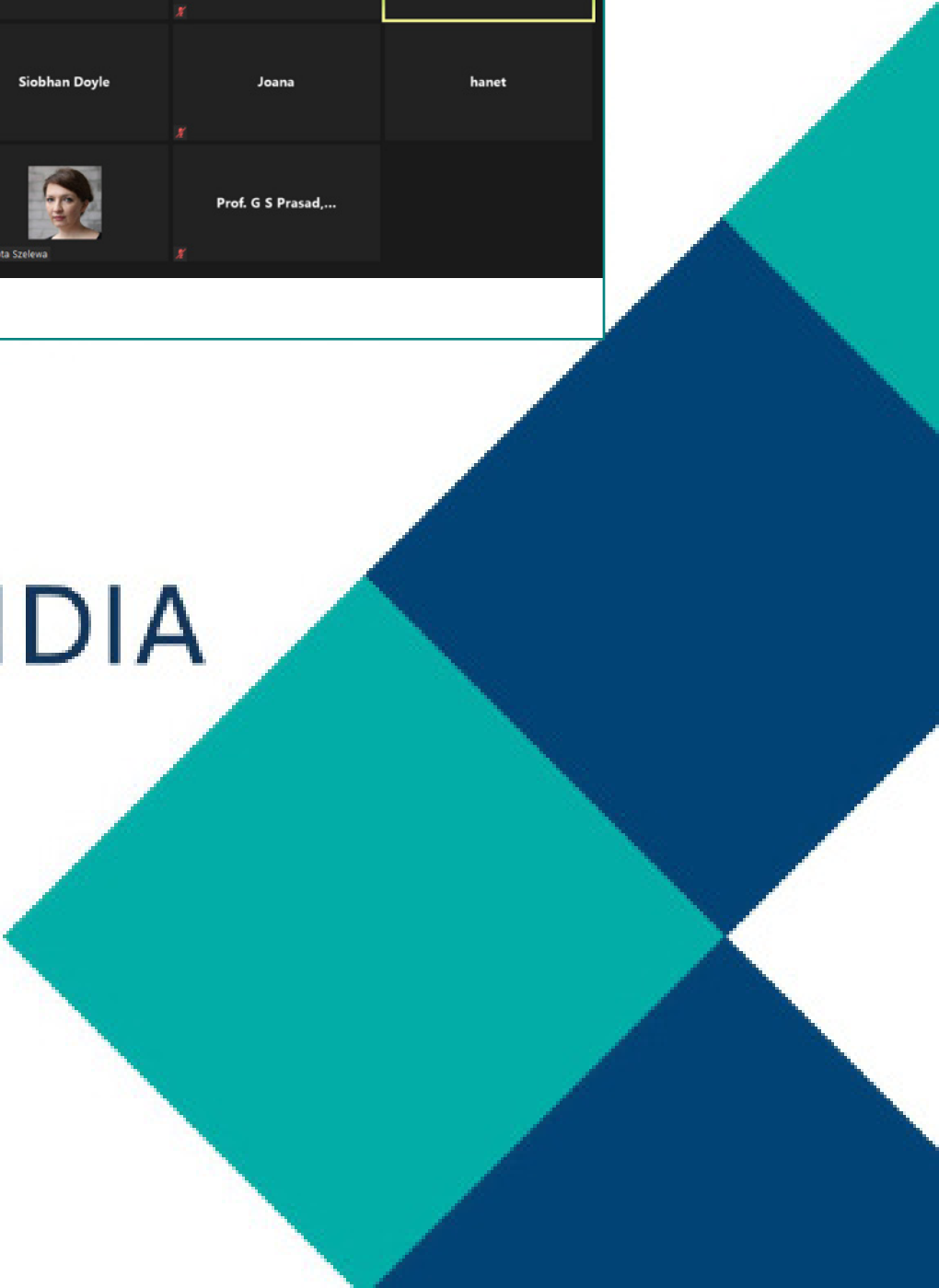


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COORDINATOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

The year 2020 has shown that the forward march of human progress is not an unstoppable force that can be taken for granted. In the space of a few months, decades of development have been knocked off course by a virus. Getting things back on track is not impossible. But it is not inevitable either. It will take conscious action and collective effort. It will need everyone to put their shoulder to the wheel and push hard in the same direction. As we realign our road maps and redesign the modus operandi we will encounter challenges in completing their deliverables as envisaged, however, we will work closely with each of them to assist in every way possible to ensure that we come out with flying colours.

Enprendia as a program plans to build on shared education initiatives, through curriculum building as well as a number of different women oriented development projects, to help raise awareness of the vital role of women in building diversity and leadership training that will directly benefit the communities in which they live. With the increased Global Internet access and new innovative technologies', we will leverage them to recreate connectivity amongst each other.

Currently we are at the half-way point in programme implementation, which marks a very busy time for the consortium especially as we have to catch up on the lost time. Not only are we involved in designing the architecture of the ERC but also planning ways to ensure that the ERC's can be leveraged by the students to the fullest. This is an exciting place to be, but one that presents its own unique set of challenges to overcome.

The contents of this newsletter focus on the key achievements of the women entrepreneurs across different sectors document by different universities and how they have dealt with this unforeseen pandemic and the role that work that they are doing is having in positively transforming lives.

I have never been more in awe of the determination of women who live unimaginably hard lives in humanitarian tragedies, have taken a larger brunt of the impact and their refusal to give up hope. As we look ahead and rebuild our world, working together to find solutions is the only way out. Let's the stories shared in this newsletter rekindle hope.... Happy Reading...

Surekha Routray

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to this fourth newsletter of the Enprendia project. In this newsletter we wanted to showcase some of the entrepreneurs our partners work with and how the current pandemic has impacted their venture and how they managed to overcome the difficulties resulting from the Covid19.

We will also give you the update about the project: our online meetings have had a great success with the consortium.

The newsletter team hopes that you will enjoy reading it. If you want to know more about the programme please visit our website and social media pages listed on the last page. We will see you in our fifth newsletter!

Damien Hanet

PROGRAMME UPDATE

The ongoing pandemic has popularised digital communication and developed new ways of staying connected. We have gone 100% online. We held several management meetings to map the path forward for the project with the new travel norms and social distancing regulations that were mandated by the state and central government of the participating countries. We held virtual trainings sessions in June and November to keep the momentum of the program.

In June, we had a 3 day training session where Prof Jorge Gonçalves (Instituto Superior Técnico) gave trainings on “Strategies for community engagement and identification of stakeholder” and “Mapping the local system (support mechanism, funding, business plan development and evaluation)”; Dr Julie Thomson and Dr Sonya Campbell-Perry presented (Glasgow Caledonian University) two topics “Creating an innovative and entrepreneurial environment/culture in the university” and “Soft skills for entrepreneurs”; lastly the team from Amity Kolkata presented a paper on “Industrial design thinking in relation to smart ecosystem development”.

In the training conducted in the month of November we had Dr Fiona Henderson, Robbie Norval, Melissa Mesek and Professor Lorna Paul, from the Glasgow Caledonian University as the list of presenters and they had a very interactive sessions covering key elements like how to plan your incubator, business plans and how to fund funding opportunities; they also presented UHatch the incubator of GCU. Lastly Dr Miguel

Amaral (Instituto Superior Técnico) closed the training session of 2020.

During this year, we decided to showcase the resilience and grit of the women entrepreneurs by conducting mini-interviews of them and getting their testimony on the impact of covid 19 and how they responded to it. The videos of the interviews have been uploaded on our Facebook group so that other entrepreneurs in similar situation can draw motivation and inspiration from them; we have pasted transcripts of these interviews in this newsletter.

One of the major milestones from last year was the submission of the mid-term report to the Erasmus + agency. The mid-term report is the first of two report the consortium has to give to the executive agency to show how the budget has been use and how the programme has been advancing.

As we enter the last year of the programme with EU funds we still have a lot of work to do but we are striving to complete what we had aimed to achieve with this project..

ENTREPRENEURS AND COVID 19

OUR FIRST INTERVIEW COMES FROM OUR PARTNER FROM GLASGOW, GCU, WHO TALKED TO GIRAFFE HEALTHCARE. BETWEEN SIOBHAN DOYLE – RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROJECT MANAGER - AND LORNA PAUL, CO-FOUNDER OF GIRAFFE HEALTHCARE.

Q) Can you tell me a little bit about Giraffe Healthcare?

A) Giraffe Healthcare is a Social Enterprise founded in 2018, borne out of the research into providing physiotherapy services remotely to those unable to attend a clinic in person. It is a digital platform which initially focused on providing a personalized physiotherapy program for patients, following an in-person assessment from a physiotherapist. Patients are able to fill in an exercise diary that their physiotherapist has access to and both parties can interact via a chat function. Instead of interacting directly with patients to offer the service, Giraffe Healthcare sells licences to physiotherapist and healthcare providers. It has grown from there and is a very personalized, interactive and progressive service.

Q) How did the lockdown and/or economic slowdown impact their business and development?

A) Unlike lots of businesses and social enterprises, the current situation has actually been a huge opportunity for Giraffe Healthcare. Before COVID-19, they had started to sell some licenses, but when in person physiotherapy suddenly became impossible, Giraffe Healthcare made the decision to offer their platform for free to the NHS, Third Sector and Hospice Sector during the early part of the pandemic. Due to this, there was a lot of interest, lots of new users across the UK and they were busier than ever before. It is only now that they things have calmed down for them slightly!

Q) What kind of support have you been able to access over the last few months?

A) Giraffe Healthcare were able to access a small amount of funds from the 'Glasgow Social Enterprise Network' to develop their additional content but due to the fact that they are a small, new company, they were not concerned with large salary costs and did not need to access government funding to furlough staff members. They have also been taking part in the Social Investment Scotland Ambitions Program which is for Social Enterprise Leaders.

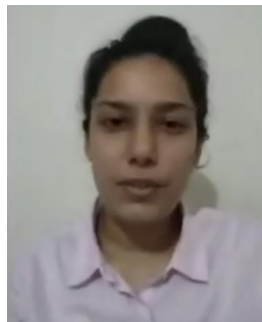
Q) What is the future of Giraffe Healthcare?

A) In the short term, Giraffe Healthcare's main priority is to convert their free trial users into paying customers in order to generate some cash flow, as well as building their core team. Longer term, they are looking into expanding their online platform into other areas such as podiatry and paediatric physiotherapy and so are currently working on content for that.

They have also had international interest and are involved in the early stages of projects based in Australia & New Zealand and Saudi Arabia. Lastly, there are always lots of Research and Development opportunities associated with the platform. As they look internationally, they are already looking at translating their content into other languages such as Arabic and Urdu. They also like to ensure that there are a range of ethnicities and ages represented and so will continue to develop this. It is clear that this is just the beginning for Giraffe Healthcare and that despite the current situation, they have and will continue to be able to thrive.

OUR SECOND AND THIRD INTERVIEWS COME FROM LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY

MS. LAVIBACHCHIS - KALAKARI



Q) I would like to request Lavi to kindly introduce herself and her business.

A) Thank you Nitish for giving me this opportunity, I am laviBachchis, currently pursuing MBA Honours from Lovely Professional University and coming to my venture I have created this platform kalakari, wherein I'm supporting background artists to gain recognition and reach out to the masses, showcase their talents, not just in one platform not just in one skill but in many skills and also we are looking forward to providing free training and development for all of these artists.

Q) Thank you, Lavi, now I would like to ask you that what planning you were doing when the COVID-19 situation hit the market?

A) So, being an MBA student, we were already knowing these facts that digitalization would be a new normal in the coming days. So yes, we were prepared already and setting of physical stores for training and development was our second priority. Initially, we started with an online platform itself where we were providing portals for the artists to showcase their talents and their masterpieces so that they can start reaching out to consumers well in advance.

Q) Thank you Lavi, my next question to you is how lockdown and the economic slowdown impacted your business?

A) Since a lot of ground duty, to set up an online perform a lot of ground duty is required and the physical presence is always required. And yes, the process slows down due to the sudden impact of the pandemic, and we were not able to reach out to the customers since we were planning to organize various exhibitions for all forms of art and craft and travel to places but we were unable to do that. It has affected us in our operations but not on an overall basis because we were already looking forward to different alternatives to cope up with the situation.

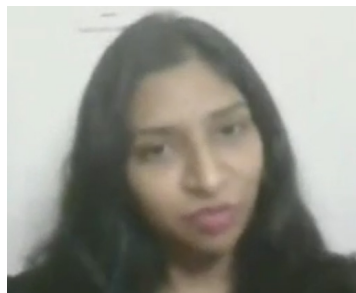
Q) Thank you, Lavi, now my question to you is that what solution did you find to overcome all your difficulties?

A) As I already mentioned that we were prepared for all forms of risks as risk management is a priority before starting any venture. So, what we started is instead of meeting personally with artists and traveling to places, we started online competitions as people these days are mostly busy on social media and they are very much attracted and addicted to it. So, We created a page along with the website. And so we started reaching out to people and we mainly focused on the artists who were Showcasing their talents, who were having their pages, and we asked them to participate in the contest and so that we were able to filter out the real ones and not based on any other factors but based on real talents, based on the passion that they have and that's how we were able to select our first base of artists for us. As the process is really slow on online and social media. So, instead of only focusing on other people we, our team members, we started working on our skills. As I am a writer, so we included writers and literature as well to support background poets to reach out to more people and to give them a platform so that they can share their words and express their poems and emotions. So, that's how we started and currently, I am glad to share with you that yes, we're getting orders from all over the globe right now.

Q) Thank you so much, Lavi, now my last question to you is that, what kind of support you are looking for your business?

A) First and foremost, the thing is we needed a place to start with and Lovely Professional University has provided us with that and they have shown us an immense and beautiful path to materialize our venture in reality. And yes, for right now, we're just looking forward to more and more feedback because we need to improve and this is a zero-investment venture. So, we are just looking for honest feedback so that we can improve and do much better and help out many other artists with whom we are not able to reach right now.

MS. SNEHA CHAND – SLOW FASHION



Q) I would like to ask Sneha to kindly introduce herself and her business.

A) Thank you, Nitish for the question. My name is Sneha Chand and I am a second-year Masters of Business Administration student at Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University. I would like to talk about my venture and I would rather call it a concept which we started working on since December 2019, and it was mainly related to the sustainability concept. And especially in the journey of distress to our planet due to climate change, carbon emission, plastic production we came up in the market with the concept of costume rental with the amount of wastage piled up in various cities and land pollution are subsequently results of fast fashion in today's world. However, we want people to be more aware and adapt alternatives rather than unnecessarily spending on the least quality products mainly in the name of fashion.

So, as we already know that there are some costume rental giants in a few major cities in India that is why we need which we are catering to tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and initially we have started our project to children's costume rental segment where we have conducted our fancy dress event with our backward integration strategy where we inculcated our event management skills as well. While going ahead with our entrepreneurship journey in the way we are generating and incorporating new ideas as well. And eventually, we will be taking this venture into many more verticals which would help us to achieve our sustainability goals. Thank you, Nitish.

Q) Thank you Sneha, now I would like to ask you what kind of planning you were doing at that point in time when the Covid-19 situation hit the market?

A) Sure Nitish, that is a very good question and I would say the event which we conducted held on 15th March and that was the time when actually lockdown happened here in Punjab. During that time, itself, we were facing this challenge of whether people will join us or would not join us but with their support and with their participation spirit we were able to conduct that event during that time and we took the feedback also which people really liked and the services which we provided to them. And after lockdown, we actually moved ourselves to the digital platform that time and we took the feedback also which people really liked and the services which we provided to them. And after lockdown, we actually moved ourselves to the digital platform. Even before the lockdown, we were on the digital platform but we have incubated ourselves on this digital platform in a much active manner where we were spreading the awareness of sustainability and how we are relating it with our concept and with our venture which we have started. And we can see how much people have involved, people are on social media and digital platforms and this is helping us to have their attention more because people were much busier before the lockdown and now, they are much more active on digital platforms. So, this is helping us nowadays to create more awareness about our products and services, also with the awareness of the sustainability concept. This is what I would like to say.

Q) Thank you Sneha for your answer, now I would like to ask you how did the lockdown and the economic slowdown impact your business and your development?

A) Sure Nitish, first of all, I would say physical presence is very much required when we are mainly into this textile business where people want their products to feel and they want to touch it and then only they consider those products. But I would say especially in lockdown the things have been tougher because we are not present on a physical platform, but we have found new ideas where we can actually make them feel the way they sense themselves on a real basis. We are doing it with the team and we are actually taking the help of our engineer students where they are able to create all those platforms where people can upload their pictures and then they can see themselves on those attires and all those costumes which they prefer to buy. And this is what we are up to till now in this lockdown times.

Q) Thank you Sneha, now my next question to you is what solutions did you find to overcome all those difficulties that you have faced?

A) Initially, I would say we were actually very nervous when we have seen the situation as we have just started our venture and the things have been tougher for us because of this lockdown situation I would say, so actually our faculty and our guides as our mentors, they helped us a lot and the incubation staff and incubation managers which we have at Division of Student Welfare helped us a lot to survive in this pandemic situation. They actually gave us multiple strategies and all those multiple platforms where are able to take our venture online. Those were the initial solution which we implemented. Now, recently we have come up with this venture about the event management strategy. Conducting much more events especially through the UMS that is University Management System which we have at Lovely Professional University. We are creating more awareness through that and we are spreading the news of all those events through the University Management System. This is how LPU is playing a much bigger role in promoting our venture during this lockdown time. Where if I say, if I would have been outside the LPU premises then the things would have been much tougher for me to reach out to the particular consumer base, now if I see where I am linked to Lovely Professional University here I am already having the base of around fifty thousand plus people where I can spread my voice out and I can spread the awareness of my concept which I am following, over to you Nitish.

Q) Thank you, Sneha for your answer. Now, my last question is what kind of support you are looking for your business right now?

A) Currently, if I say the support which we are looking forward to is mainly the collaboration from people. If more and more people will come with us and collaborate with us then the more awareness we can create and especially we can connect with more people and we can reach out to a much more consumer base. And I would need much more amount of feedback especially in this lockdown time because I am unable to have my physical presence in the market, so I would need much more feedback from people and I would like to have much more collaboration from multiple or diverse cultural people whether they are going ahead or liking our products and whether they would like to collaborate with us in future or not. This is the thing the kind of support which I need right now instead of only sustaining with financial support, thank you Nitish.

OUR FOURTH AND FIFTH INTERVIEW COME FROM “THE MAHARAJA
SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY” IN BARODA

ADITI JOSHI - AMBROSIA

Q) How has COVID-19 affected your startup ‘Ambrosia Health and Nutrition Services’?

A) COVID and the sudden lockdown that followed, has been the most challenging times ever for everyone right from workers to CEO, infants to geriatrics! We, at Ambrosia, too had our own set of predicaments! We run a School Health Promotion Program in which we provide healthy brunches to the children along with educating children and parents on Nutrition and Healthy Living. Since the lockdown announcement was impetuous and unforeseen, we had about a week’s food ration left, unused! A crunch in the economies didn’t spare us too! A lot of payments for last academic/financial quarter of 2019-20 are still outstanding and since the schools haven’t begun physically, our new academic year’s income is nil; against which our fixed expenses such as staff salaries, rent, electricity and maintenance, taxes, pending payments to the vendors etc. are to be fully borne.

Q) How are you coping?

A) As Albert Einstein rightly quoted, ‘in the middle of every difficulty, lies opportunity’, we are only trying to cope up positively over the shortcomings of the situation. The leftover food ration was distributed amongst poor and needy people. Staff salaries and overheads are taken care of by companies and now our personal savings. However, we didn’t let that deter our spirits and these gloomy testing times motivated us to work on launching consumer products that are totally guiltfree and take care of the hunger pangs, the healthiest way while people are locked-down at home, working or otherwise. After umpteen product studies and baking trails, we arrived at Granolas and Granola Bars that do not contain any palm oil, butter, saturated fats, maida, rice crispies, cornflakes, artificial color or preservatives. We used minimally processed, wholesome nutritious ingredients that also help with immunity such as oats, almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, flaxseeds, oil blends (ricebran and sunflower) to make the products totally healthy. We now plan on taking this forward and propagate the products in population at large, thus looking at the silver lining on the clouds amidst COVID-19 lockdown. We do face challenges such as unavailability/delayed delivery of ingredients, but looking at the bigger picture, our products are well accepted and we enjoy baking!

ASKHA SHAH – FRESHPIQ

Q) How did COVID-19 affect your startup FreshPiQ?

A) In fact!, FreshPiQ, a healthy Meal replacer start-up brand started in the times of COVID.

It started from our home kitchen, where we tried to make and deliver food with utmost care and hygiene. We believe that all the nutrients from fresh veggies are good enough to give all the necessary nutrients to the body to keep good immunity of a person in these testing times.

It was challenging as there was a sudden drop in the hospitality industry. People stopped ordering from outside and preferred homemade food for the safety and less risk of coming in contact with someone from outside.

FreshPiQ got a reasonable response, people were willing to opt for healthy food, But at the

Q) Did we have Problems running FreshPiQ due to covid?

A) Definitely Yes! The biggest problem we faced was to convince customers about the safe production and delivery practices followed by us. We received messages and inquiries from customers saying they would love to order the meals but will order once things get normal. And considering no surety of the time it will take for the things to get normal, we always had fluctuations in demand.

Another big problem was the limitation of lockdown timings. Our delivery partners had great difficulty delivering meals safely in permissible time slot following safe and contactless delivery.

But there are some customers who trusted our brand and ordered consistently. The FreshPiQ Team believes that if our business will do well in these tough times, they will do excellent in the normal coming time.

This is a story of our MSUB Alumni Ms. Ashka Shah Asher and her husband Mr. Shaishav Asher who are a passionate Food Technologist and a Chef by Profession.



KIIT IS PROVIDING OUR SIXTH AND SEVENTH INTERVIEW
MS. JAYANTI MAHAPATRA - MANIKSTU AGRO PVT.LTD



Q) A brief about her organization and how she dealt with the COVID-19 situation?

A) Basically a social enterprise working together with marginal farmers on goat farming. Initially they found drop in the sales and revenue because of the scare. They decided to tweak a little bit by selling basic agriculture stuffs also rather than only meat which helped to balance during that situation.

Q) Were they able to adapt to the new changes like new logistic pattern, new reporting pattern that was inculcated?

A) Yes they were able to adjust themselves according to the new system because they tried to deal with the stuffs which was already produced with low shelf life.

Q) 2 advices to suggest for the rising female entrepreneurs.

A) To focus on core business and find out new flexible ways to cope up with the problems.

To do innovation and find out solution to a problem in different ways.



Q) How you dealt with the COVID-19 situation?

A) As COVID-19 was a complete shocking event that hit the world very hard, her production system had to stop complete . Both her manufacturing units near Delhi and Bhubaneswar were not able to communication or transport the necessary required stuffs. The only mode of networking was virtual so they had to shut down everything with very little supply but no demand at all. Various mode of new ways of manufacturing, packaging and all was researched and collated again. They started working on digital marketing and came out with better end product. They also got funding support from Government of Odisha to create a manufacturing ,marketing and product development unit in Bhubaneswar.

Q) Were you able to adapt the changes and new system inculcated in the system?

A) Initially it was difficult to adjust but gradually it became an ease . It was accepted by most of the people to rejuvenate and boost as the mass were working from home ,so they were able to focus on work rather than loosing time to make tea.

Q)Tips to share with the emerging entrepreneurs.

A)To focus on what they are doing ,to remain patient while working and in any situation. To segregate the time accordingly ,to keep a balance between personal and professional life. To be dedicated towards their work . To hand hold each other and move together in patience, commitment and dedication.

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