

NATIONAL INNOVATION FOUNDATION

To make India innovative

The National Innovation Foundation was set up in March 2000, by Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India (GOI), as an autonomous society under the chairpersonship of Dr R A Mashelkar, Secretary, Dept. Of Scientific and Industrial Research, GOI. The key purpose is to build upon Honey Bee philosophy, and provide a nurturant platform to unsung heroes/heroines of our society who have solved a technological problem through their own genius without any outside help. NIF is committed to make India innovative by documenting, adding value, protecting intellectual property rights, disseminating on commercial as well as non-commercial basis, the contemporary unaided technological innovations as well as outstanding examples of traditional knowledge. DST has provided a corpus fund support of Rs 20 crores, the interest on which is used to fund the activities of NIF. It has its head office in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

The NIF has eminent persons on its board: Dr R A Mashelkar, Chairperson of NIF and Director General, CSIR; Dr Anil K Gupta, Vice-Chairperson NIF, Coordinator *Honey Bee* Network, SRISTI and Prof. IIM-A; Mr Anand G. Mahindra, Managing Director, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd; Ms Elaben Bhat, founder of SEWA; Dr E.A.S. Sarma, Principal, ASCI, Hyderabad; Mr G. Subba Rao, Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat; Prof. Inderjit Khanna, Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan; Prof. Jahar Saha, Director, IIM-A; Prof. Kuldeep Mathur of JNU; Dr Vijay Kelkar, Executive Director, IMF; Ms Lalita D. Gupte, Joint Managing Director of ICICI Ltd; Dr Punjab Singh, Director General, ICAR; Dr V. S. Ramamurthy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology; Mr T. P. Vartak, President, Four Eyes Foundation. The ex-officio members are Financial Advisor, Department of Science & Technology and Finance Secretary, Government of India.



Dr. R A Mashelkar

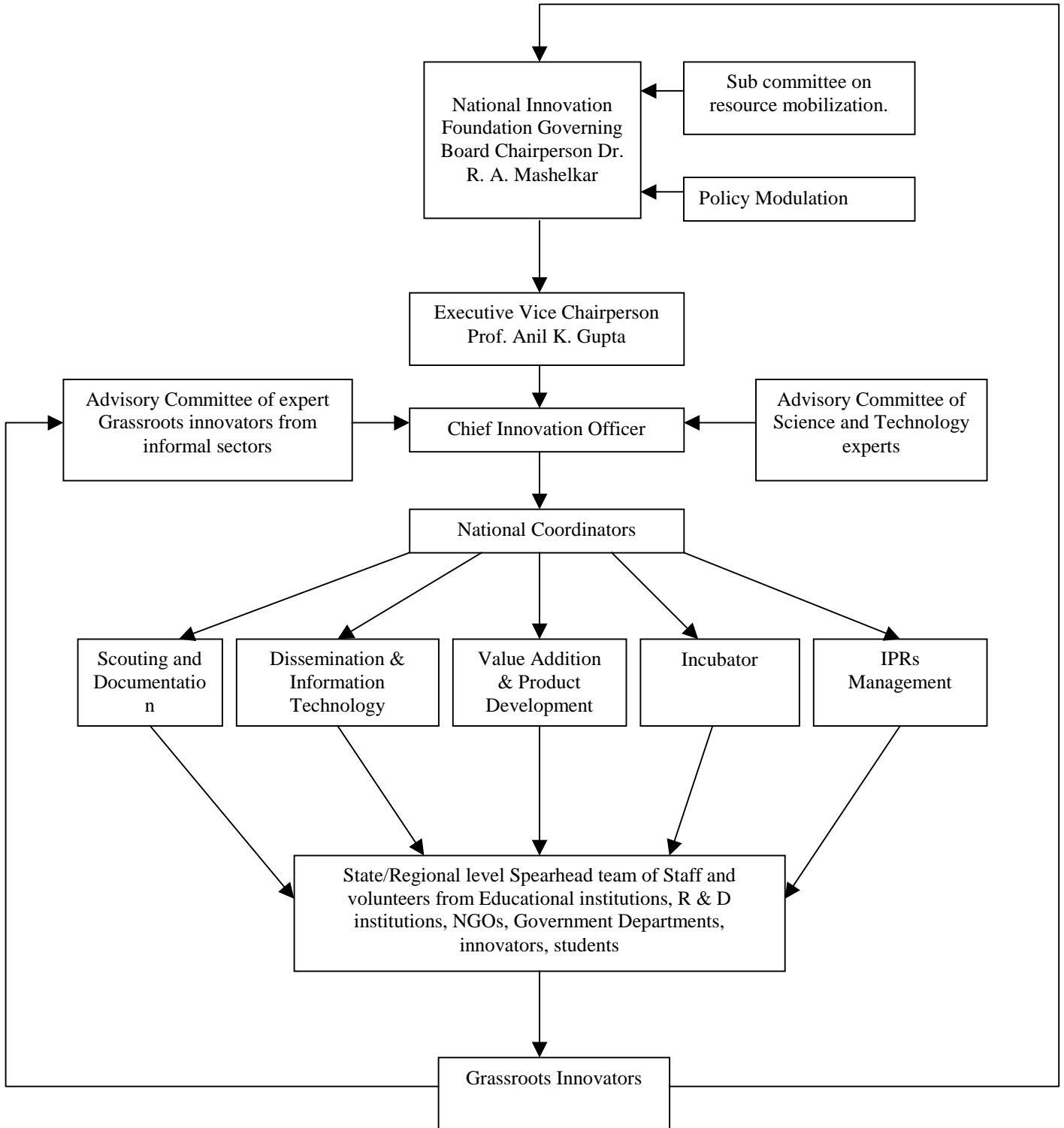
Objectives of NIF:

- To help India become an inventive and creative society and a global leader in sustainable technology by scouting, spawning and sustaining grassroots innovations,
- To ensure evolution and diffusion of green grassroots innovators in a selective, time-bound and mission-oriented basis so as to meet the socio-economic and environmental needs of our society,
- To provide institutional support in scouting, spawning, sustaining, and scaling up grassroots green innovations and helping their transition to self-supporting activities, seeking self-reliance through competitive advantage of innovation-based enterprises and/or application of people-generated sustainable technologies at grassroots level,
- To build linkages between excellence in formal scientific systems and informal knowledge systems and create a knowledge network to link various stakeholders through applications of information technologies and also otherwise,
- To promote wider social awareness, and possible commercial and non-commercial applications of the know-how generated as a result of above and encourage its incorporation in educational curriculum, developmental policies and programmes.

To understand and appreciate the context in which NIF has evolved, it might help to go back to 1989 and trace the path that Honey Bee network has traversed so far. Essentially NIF will try to replicate the basic philosophy of Honey Bee network to support scouting and augmentation of grassroots innovations and expand the space for the creative people of our society.

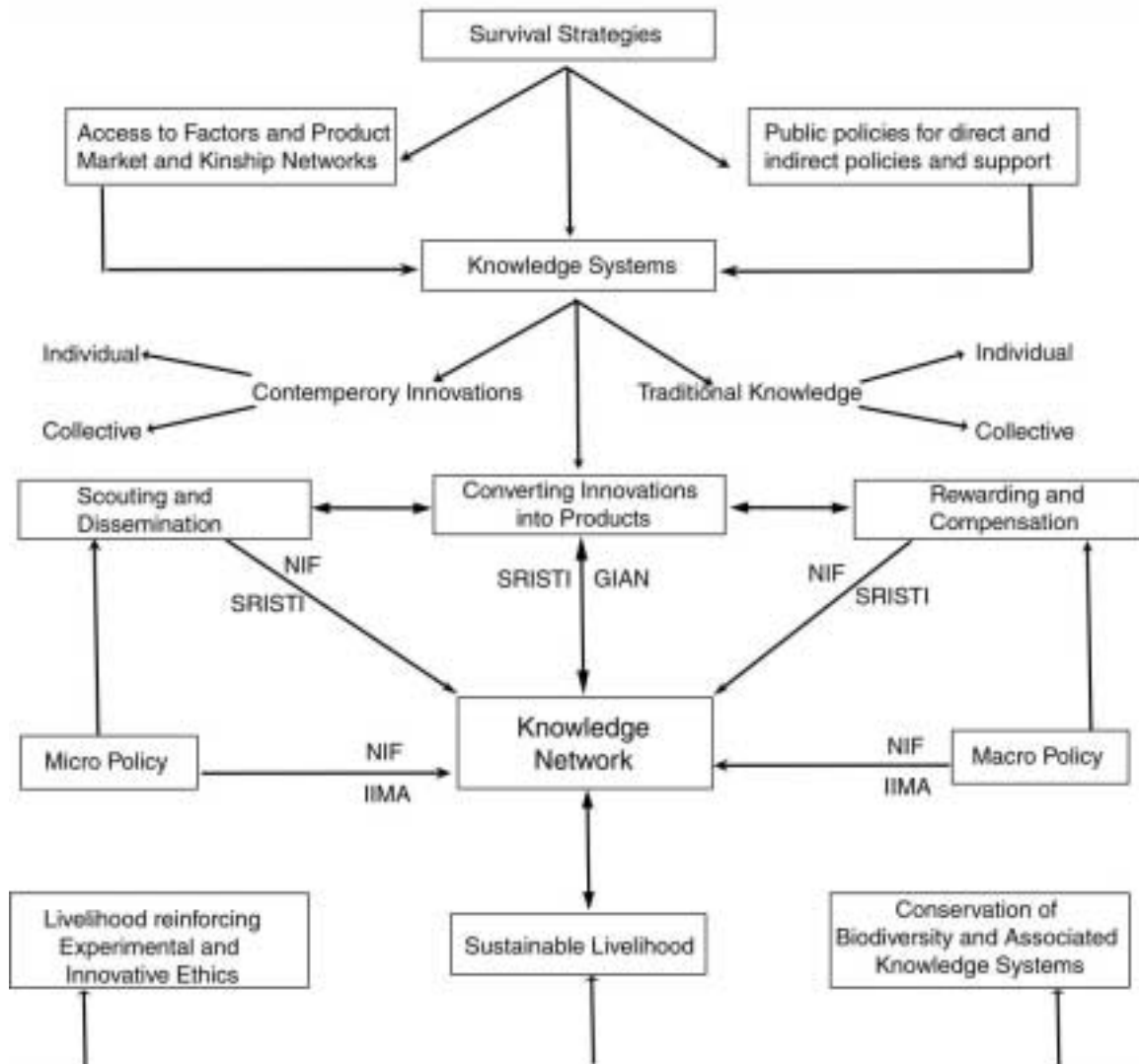
National Innovation Foundation

Organizational Framework



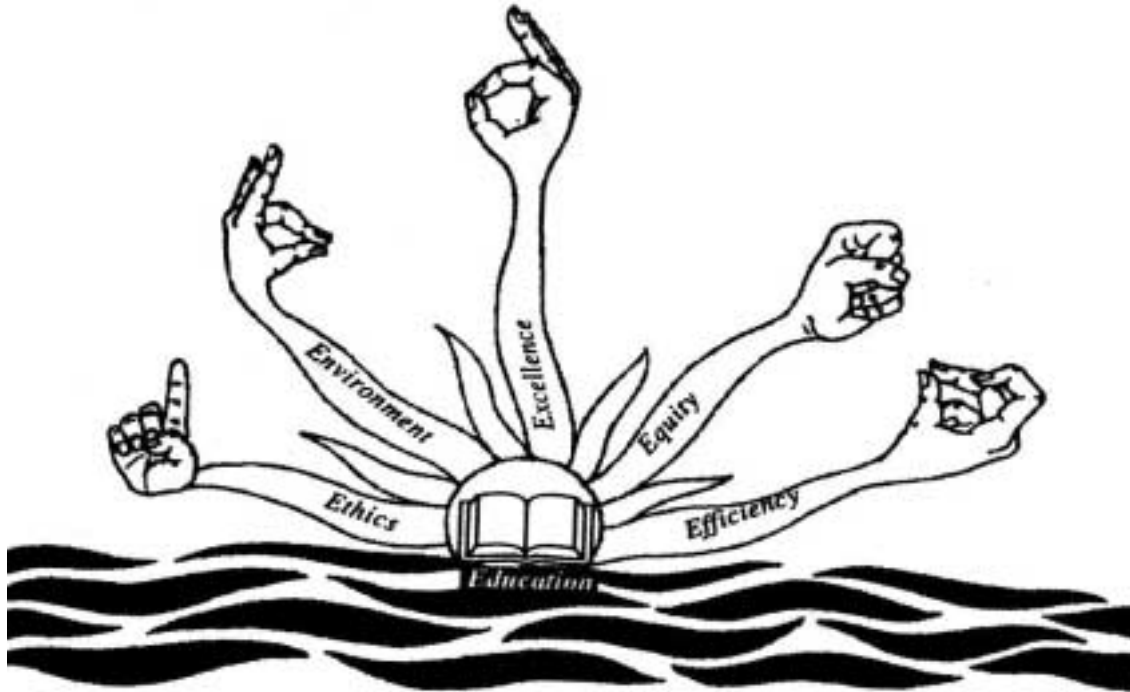
Genesis: from Grassroots to global

Honey Bee Network is like a knowledge center/network that pools solutions developed by people without outside help in different sectors throughout the country (and also outside). Honey Bee is committed to stem the erosion of the vibrant knowledge system (both traditional as well as contemporary) at the grassroots where a great deal of experimentation takes place to generate these solutions. Most of such efforts by individuals and communities remain unacknowledged and unrecognized. Honey Bee tries to get them their due recognition and rewards for such attempts through various processes. Honey Bee thus proposes an alternative model of development, which can help build a self-reliant society of people, confident enough of solving its own problems through local genius and in cases necessary, by building bridges between excellence in formal and informal science.



The network was initiated about 12 years ago in 1989 and till date it has documented more than 12,000 contemporary innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge examples/practices its database. These innovations are shared with the local communities and individuals with in India and in 75 other countries through the Honey Bee newsletter, which is published in seven different languages (English, Spanish, Gujarati, Tamil, Kannada, Pahari, and Gujarati). In 1993, SRISTI

(Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions) was set-up as a development voluntary organization to provide institutional support to the Honey Bee Network of odd balls. SRISTI (www.sristi.org) supports the network by linking six “E”- *Ethics, equity, excellence, environment, education and efficiency* in enterprise.



Honey Bee
(English)



Sujh Bhuj Aas Pass Ki
(Hindi)



Loksarvani
(Gujarati)



Hittalgida
(Kannada)



Numvali Vilanmai
(Tamil)

Honey Bee Newsletters giving voice to the unsung heroes of the society

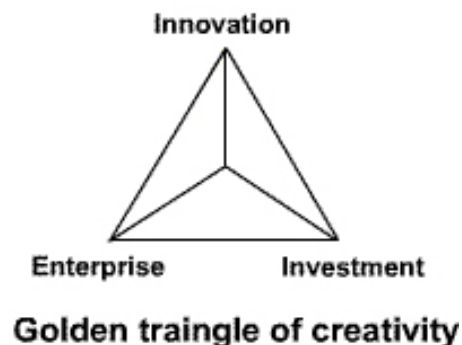
GIAN: an incubator to convert innovations into enterprises

In January 1997, the first International Conference on Creativity and Innovations at Grassroots (ICIG) was organized by Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. SRISTI being one of the co-sponsors discussed the need for a support system that could help the economically poor but knowledge rich communities and individuals convert an innovation into product and later into

enterprise to diffuse the same through commercial or non-commercial channels. We had written to all the state governments pleading for setting up micro venture promotion and financing fund. Our argument was that there was no point in documenting innovations, if we cannot make a difference to the lives of the innovators and communities around them. Without such a fund, difference was not going to be made. As a follow-up of the ICCIG conference, the then chief secretary, Gujarat government came forward to set up GIAN (Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network, Gujarat), in collaboration with SRISTI and IIMA by mobilizing a support of Rs one crore as a corpus aid to set up a venture promotion fund for small innovators. The GIAN was registered as an autonomous society/trust on March 1, 1997 with an institutional support from various stakeholders. Recently, Gujarat government has sanctioned and released an additional capital grant of Rs 1.00 crore.

GIAN has an interesting structure of governance. Three addl. Chief secretaries in charge of rural development, industry and agriculture are on the board, MDs of three cash rich state corporations, three professors from IIMA, representatives of three NGOs like SEWA, SRISTI, and Gopal Dham-a Gandhian NGO, and CEO of Gujarat Venture fund. Director NID, IIMA and former Chief Secty, Gujarat and advisor to CM, Chief Secretary, Gujarat Govt., are permanent invitees. In addition, whenever some experts advice is needed, they are invited to the board meeting. Several of the founding board members have been requested to continue on the board even if their designations have changed to keep continuity in the board and ensure that basic philosophy is sustained. It is true that the board has too many members from state government but the most encouraging aspect has been total absence of any interference in the day-to-day working of GIAN. Prof Gupta acts as Honorary secretary of GIAN and one of his function is to insulate GAIN from any interference from any functionary at any level, should such an eventuality arise. State government has always helped in solving various policy and procedural problems affecting innovators. The idea was that the board should provide for feed back from grassroots to be resolved and acted upon at the highest level in the state and thus obviate the delays, which often happen in acting upon such learnings in government. At the same time experience of innovators at grassroots can also illuminate the policy options at state level.

The GIAN (www.gian.org) picks up innovations from Honey Bee Network database, does market research, builds linkages with design and research and development institutions for improving technological efficiency of the innovation, helps in testing the product, develops business plans and market launch strategy. GIAN also helps in filing patents and licensing technologies of the innovators. Building upon the philosophy of Honey Bee Network, NIF has already concluded it's first national campaign for scouting unaided grassroots green technological innovations. The prizes are being given on November 29th in Delhi. The national register of inventions, innovations, and outstanding traditional knowledge has been built. The second campaign is on and the last date of entries is 31st December. NIF has recently decided to set-up four more GIANS in four different regions of the country and expand the scope of GIAN Gujarat into GIAN-west.





Groups discussing Innovators problems at GRIDS 2001 at NID, Ahmedabad



Innovators at GRIDS 2001

Establishment of Grassroots Rural Innovations Design Studio (GRIDS) at NID



Innovator Mr. Amrut Agrawat at RTI Workshop



Innovator Mr. Manshuk Jagani at GRIDS 2001 workshop

Innovators voicing their experiences and concerns in different fora's



Mr. Manshuk Patel returning the loan taken from Sristi



Technology transfer agreement for Natural water cooler

Creating a value chain of innovation, enterprise and investment

Launch of first Campaign by NIF:

NIF worked through volunteers from SRISTI and Honey Bee network during its first and a half year and organized the First National contest for scouting grassroots innovations. The campaign was launched by Honorable Shri K C Pant, Dy. Chair, Planning Commission on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti on Oct 3, 2000 in Delhi. Shri. Pant also wrote letters to all the Chief Ministers requesting them to appoint nodal officers to coordinate NIF's activities in their respective states and also give boost to NIF's mission of recognizing, respecting and rewarding grassroots innovators.



Mr. K C Pant

The NIF has thus not only scaled up the *Honey Bee* initiative but institutionalized a national determination to develop a

National Register and a database of innovators and link local innovators with science and technological experts in formal and informal public as well as private sector to blend excellence in both sectors. It will also access existing databases such as Honey Bee database created by SRISTI with the support of Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and other collaborating institutions and networks, and try to incorporate the same in the national register (MoU, NIF, 2000).



Launch of First Competition for Scouting Grassroots Technological Innovation 2000, in Delhi by Mr. K C Pant



Campaign Poster First Competition

Scouting Grassroots Innovation – Launch of First Campaign in Delhi

A meeting was held on December 10, 2000 for developing a format of the national register for Biodiversity-based innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge, at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. The meeting was attended by 22 members including technical experts, senior policy makers, representatives of central and state government, NGOs, members of Honey Bee network and colleagues from IIMA. Dr.M S Swaminathan, Chairperson of Dr MS Swaminathan Research Foundation and an eminent scientist who pioneered the green revolution movement in country presided over the function.

Prior Informed Consent of Innovators: Dissemination of Innovations

Once an entry is found to fulfill the initial criteria of inclusion in the database, NIF sends a declaration/consent form to all the innovators specifically to seek their written consent and choice of conditions for dissemination of their product/process/idea. NIF strictly abides by the condition imposed by the innovator. They decide whether they would like to disclose their innovations to others or not, and if so whether with any restriction or without restrictions. The declaration/consent form (see annexure 1) has been prepared to facilitate this process. An innovator may decide among various options for scaling up of technology through commercial, or non-commercial means as well as other preferred modes of benefit-sharing norms. The form also provides model terms of benefit sharing so that while providing consent for dissemination of innovations, the innovators can also indicate their agreement with the stated terms or indicate preference for alternatives terms.

This is a major experiment on a countrywide scale for getting prior informed consent from every knowledge provider. Such an experiment has never been tried at this scale anywhere in the country or outside.

Some key achievements of NIF in the last one year:

- a) National Campaign: NIF in collaboration with *Honey Bee Network* & Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad announced the first annual national competition for scouting grassroots technological innovations. Entries were solicited from farmers, slum dwellers, local communities in managing natural resources, construction of low-cost environmentally benign houses or small machines, products, or any other technological aspects of survival in urban and rural areas. NIF made extensive efforts to popularize the campaign through personal involvement of Honey Bee network members as well as advertisements in media. During the first annual contest in 2000, NIF received 998 entries with 1660 innovations as well as outstanding traditional knowledge. Apart from Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Assam, entries were received from 24 states and UTs. The second annual campaign has already begun. Maximum entries were received from the states where Honey Bee network was strongest.
- b) These entries were scrutinized and prizes were announced totaling about 14.5 lacs in six categories such as plant varieties, farm and other implements, energy saving technologies, agricultural practices etc.. The biodiversity based innovations involving herbal remedies could not be awarded along with the earlier entries. However, an expert group headed by Dr Pushpangadan, Director, NBRI, Lucknow comprising members from CDRI, and CIMAP has adjudged the final awardees who will also be given awards along with other winners on Nov 29, 2001
- c) Nodal Officers have been appointed in nine states and we are trying to follow up with others states as well. They are being closely involved in the campaign this year.
- d) Prize money was enhanced to Rs 1 lakh, 50000 and 25000 besides special prizes for the state level best entries, special mention of scouts and prizes for maximum scouting of innovations and consolation prizes.
- e) NIF has recruited the team and two national coordinators have already joined and rest are likely to join by December end. For two positions, we might give advertisements afresh because selected candidates could not join.
- f) For two of the NIF awardees, patents are being filed in USA through Pro bono help of a Boston law firm (THT), which has offered this help to SRISTI as a good will measure. They are trying to mobilize other law firms in USA to extend similar help to grassroots

innovators and inventors in India. SRISTI had in the meanwhile transferred one small technology to a firm in USA and the amount of license fee was shared completely with the innovator. In future, however, a proper benefits sharing system is being discussed with various stakeholders.

- g) National Register of Grassroots Unaided Technological Innovations and Outstanding Traditional knowledge has already been built. Written consent forms have been requested from each of the entrant about the conditions under which his/her innovation should be shared with outsiders.
- h) CII-NIF partnership for innovations called as HII (Help India Innovate) is being launched shortly to involve private sector in this mammoth task of converting innovations into products and enterprises.
- i) Incubator for Innovation: NIF board has taken decision to set up four more GIANS in four regions of the country and also expand the scope of Gujarat GIAN to include Maharashtra and Goa. Team for the first such GIAN in North East and East has already been selected and will be in place by November first week. While we have requested state governments to contribute at least Rs two crores to the corpus of each GIAN and extend other facilities for locating it there. But for North East we are not awaiting this commitment before starting GIAN. We hope that such a support might materialize from some central or state government. Rajasthan government has taken decision to host GIAN (North) and we will be shortly formalizing the MOU with the state government. The location for each GIAN would depend upon the nature and degree of support extended by state government.
- j) One of the major policy gaps in the value chain which remains unmet is the fund for incubating innovations into products and later providing micro venture finance for converting products into enterprises. NIF can provide only small support and that too to only few of the awardees. Similarly, there is a need for a special fund for filing patents in India and abroad.
- k) Research and development linkages with NID and IIT Delhi have already been forged. GIAN Gujarat has set up a GRIDS (Grassroots Design and Innovation Studio) at NID which has had workshop supported by NIF and IIT Delhi to improve designs of seven innovations. More such workshops are planned at IITs. Students at MIT Boston have taken up projects to develop a global business plan for one of the awardees (motorcycle based ploughing equipment). This innovator has also been a small grant to expand his workshop to develop better prototypes. Students at NID and IIT Delhi are trying to improve the design as well as mechanical efficiency and THT, the Law firm in Boston is filing the patent in USA. Global value chain is being built around such innovations to harness the potential of global markets for grassroots innovators.
- l) Knownet-Grin: a multi media data base developed by SRISTI and Honey bee network has been contributed to NIF to illustrate how eventually all of this will be available in Indian languages and help even the illiterate people learn by using Multi-media and multi language technologies.
- m) There are many more initiatives such as increasing the share of women based innovations in the national database which are in the process, and we will be able to report some outstanding achievements by early next year.
- n) The second annual competition of NIF is on, it has received more than 450 entries so far. SRISTI, Honey Bee Network and IIM, Ahmedabad are sponsoring the competition.

To send entries for competition or procuring further information on Honey Bee Network, SRISTI, GIAN and NIF, please email: campaign@nifindia.org or write to: National Innovation Foundation, PO Box no: 15051, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad-380015, Gujarat



National Innovation Foundation

DECLARATION FORM

Participants in National competition for scouting grassroots technological innovations and Outstanding traditional knowledge



Honey Bee Network

Dear innovators/outstanding Traditional Knowledge experts

National Innovation Foundation (NIF) was established by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India in March, 2000 to recognize and promote grassroots innovations that are often ignored by mainstream society. This will prevent the erosion of knowledge, increase the social esteem of the grassroots innovators and help make India an innovative society. NIF attempts to identify and recognize through publicity and/or reward grassroots innovators such as outstanding folk healers, agrobiodiversity conservers, artisans, workshop mechanics, etc. The first round of National Contest for scouting unaided technological innovations during 2000, received 998 entries and recognized 1660 innovations and outstanding examples of traditional knowledge. These were included in the national Register and 87 of these were rewarded as outstanding contributions. We are trying to add value to these so that benefits can be shared with the innovators and new products and services become available for the larger social good.

We are very keen to have your written consent for sharing the innovation/or traditional knowledge that you have shared with us by submitting your entry in Second Annual Competition for scouting grassroots Innovations-2001.

We will appreciate if you could tick one or more boxes which apply in your case:

Subject of your innovation/idea

A: Can we share your address with those interested ?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. My innovation/idea/TK/can be put on the web for others to read

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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C: NIF can share my idea/innovation with

(a) no restriction imposed

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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(b) only on commercial basis

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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(c) no cost for individual use but on commercial basis for larger users

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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(d) with further research on it

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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(e) any other ? Please specify _____

D: I want to assign the technology to NIF so that it can mediate on my behalf for technology transfer

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I will do it on my own

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, do you agree that benefits could be shared in following proportion with different stakeholders: Innovator, 35 per cent, innovator's community /village 15 per cent, innovation promotion fund 20 per cent, researchers who may add value to the innovations 15 per cent, and institutional over heads 15 per cent ;

If you want to propose an alternative benefit sharing system, please so advise:

Innovator	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Community/Village	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Innovation promotion fund	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Researchers or those who add value	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Institutional overheads	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Correct if any inadequacy exists in following address:

Name of the innovator :

Signature

Address for communication :

(Please Post it to NIF, Post Box 15051, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad 380015 email: info@nifindia.org)