

"Non-profit organization providing assistance on education, vocational training and income generation to rural and physically challenged children and youth in India since 1991

May 27th 2019

ASHRAYA Project Terra Firma Funding Proposal for 2019-20 to Open INDIA

We thank the management of Open INDIA for partially funding operations of Project Terra Firma from 2014-15 to 2018-19, which has been fueled our program growth and success year on year. This document provides the program synopsis for the 2018-19 school year, which we completed on April 10th 2019; and also makes a proposal for continued funding from Open INDIA for our planned operations in 2019-20.

1. 2018-19 Synopsis

a) Main Changes from 2017-18

- O We added 2 more schools (from 6 to 8) to the art program
- We added 2 more schools (from 6 to 8) to the science club program
- We piloted the science club program at one high school (Kempayyana Hatti) for 6 students who had already participated and been the top performers in our science club program in their higher primary school years
- We doubled the scope of the computer club program from 3 to 6 schools
- We pruned the library program which had a lot of activities without a single focus (MLL activities, quizzes, speed-reading, board games and changed the story competitions) whose utility and efficacy could not easily tracked. So, mid-year we decided to eliminate many of these activities (except for speed-reading and quizzes) and placed a primary focus on MLL activity-based learning
- Our teachers (Savukar Raj and Shweta Shetty) developed content for our MLL activity-based learning program → creating activities for 12 story books that they wrote and developed on their own
- We developed detailed content for the computer club program (module syllabus, module-ending exams and projects)
- Since our book of the month club revolved around Shakespeare plays last year, we decided to add a play enacting component to the book of the month club, in which students enacted the plays from their own scripts at the end of each book of the month session
- We hired a dedicated computer club teacher (Ms. Vishalakshi) to run our computer club program; and our project coordinator (Mr. Ravishankar) focused solely on project coordination (he did both project coordination and pilot the computer club program in 3 schools during the prior year)
- We added one more school to our roster Shagya HPS where we introduced the computer club program

b) Links to Videos from Key Events in 2018-19

- Dec 4th 2018: Mid-year competitions at Gundal Dam https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHnWMADQ6JQ
- Dec 22nd 2018: First parent-teacher meeting at Ramapura HPS https://youtu.be/d6mZRkuKWkQ

- Jan 2nd 2019: Student profile on best all-rounder student of the year: https://youtu.be/MTAgnzcMzEA
- Jan 15th 2019: Mural Painting at Mangala Higher Primary School https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-ELp4Pxw10
- Feb 20th 2019: Annual day (Leonardo Da Vinci day) at Ajjipura HPS https://youtu.be/A-ATxOCLBxE
 ATxOCLBxE
- March 27th to April 7th 2019 Year-ending certification exams and award ceremonies: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uh8hcwrmWM8&t=3s
- April 6th 2019: Second parent-teacher meeting at Lokkanahalli HPS (combined with certificate award ceremony at that school) - https://youtu.be/TWhUsWe3Nyw
- o April 8th 2019: Mural painting at Hanur HPS https://youtu.be/u-_PCgOzbUc
- April 11th 2019: Enactment of the Shakespearean play Hamlet by the top performing team (Hanur HPS) - https://youtu.be/K_BC72KVOHg

c) Main Accomplishments and Highlights in 2018-19

- o Our program was bigger than last year in scope as described in section 1a above
- The introduction of the play enactment component to the book of the month club was a great and surprising success; in which students wrote their own scripts and enacted the plays with very little supervision; bringing a rural flavor to Shakespearean drama. This initiative culminated with the enactment of the best plays during the annual day
- Even though we try to limit overlaps (i.e. same students participating in multiple programs, we do come across students who exhibit interest and skills in multiple programs. This year, we had about 20% of students who participated in multiple programs across all schools. We also had about 5% of students who participated in ALL the above programs. We evaluated the performance to date on these 5% students (we called them All-Rounders) and placed special importance to the overall development of these students; culminating in a special booth we had during the annual day in which the all-rounders displayed their diverse talents to the judges. Ms. Rakshita and Ms. Pushpavathi from Lokkanahalli HPS and Ms. Nagamma from Mangala HPS were judged the best all-rounders for the year.
- We completed certification exams (both theory and practicals) for all programs (art, science, book of the month club, story writing, computer club and library MLLs) in all nine schools. 1,400 students participated in these exams, which were conducted over a span of 5 days. We then graded the exams and assigned A, B and C grades to all students. We finally conducted certificate award ceremonies all schools during which we awarded certificates to all students who got A or B grade.
- We conducted two parent-teacher meetings during the school year (at Ramapura and Lokkanahalli HPS) in which students displayed their talents and projects to their own parents
- We conducted three mural paintings (at Mangala, Hanur and Ramapura HPS), up from 2 painting last year
- Our high school extension pilot program in the science club for a few select students at Kempayyana Hatti high school was a great success, with students conducting projects throughout the school year around the theme of agriculture and agriculture-related technologies (e.g. drip irrigation, aquaponics, effect of soil pH on plant growth)
- In the science program, we completed four rounds of science projects this year (up from three rounds last year). The last round was around the solar theme, in which students build devises related to the harnessing of solar energy (e.g. solar cooker, solar oven, solar panel efficiency measurement, solar water heater, solar purifier and solar power motor). These projects along with charts around the benefits of solar power were displayed by the students in a separate booth during the annual day

- o In the computer program, students conducted projects during which they prepared power point presentations around special themes (e.g. water, tourism) and presented them to teachers like real life pitches. They were given a project to build a project plan around starting a restaurant using MS Excel, MS Word and MS Power Point, which they presented during the annual day.
- The special focus in the library program around MLLs using previously available content and new content developed by our teachers was well received by students. In the this program, the students created mind maps around various themes some of which were presented during the annual day
- Videos sent by teachers every week through our WhatsApp group were highly effective in tracking program progress and providing active feedback. These videos also enhanced the communications skills of students as they vied with each other to participate in these videos
- Our annual day was bigger in scope than last year with more students participating in more competitions, with new competitions and booths around mind maps, MLL activities, Shakespearean plays, solar projects and high school projects
- Yours truly conducted a remote year-ending live "town hall" meeting with close to 500 students in all nine schools attending in each of their schools, using the power of Skype. I talked to them about curiosity, learning and the power of exploration. I also motivated them to continue scientific and creative explorations beyond their 8th grade and make sure that they all complete their college degrees and stay razor-focused on their dreams and aspirations. I fielded questions from the students who were wildly enthusiastic in an interaction audio session that lasted 2 hours. It was really a gratifying and humbling experience to use the power to technology to reach out to so many kids in these villages thousands of miles away from my home office in Seattle, WA.
- Our staff retention continued to very high (100% amongst our teachers and 90% amongst our librarians)

d) Main Misses and Issues Highlighted in 2018-19

- During the year-ending audit, our auditor provided feedback that even through this year the program achieved a much higher success and performance rate than previous years with very good participation in all events; there was room for improvement in two areas for next year. He felt that we needed to actively track attendance of teachers using location-tracking apps rather than passive tracking using self-signed attendance sheets. He also felt that we needed to audit work completed by all students at a more detailed level than has been done in the past to ensure better efficacy and impact down to the last and lowest performing student. He felt that too much focus on video creation and events had left gaps in completed work (e.g. all projects not recorded in record books in the science program, irregularities in grading work by teachers)
- We continue to see decline in student strength in many schools due to the RTE act as students in small schools were moving to private schools that have been mandated by the government to carry some "free" seats. This has significantly reduced student strength in smaller schools (e.g. Mangala, Bandalli and Managalli) to a point where we have not been able to find enough students for all our programs in these schools leading to 20% student overlap
- Even though we develop very rich and broad content in all our programs this year, we got feedback from our own teachers that some of the content was overwhelming and posing risk on program completion towards year-end (e.g. science club)
- There are a few program components that keep being left out every year e.g. taking kids out to see museums in nearby cities; getting top students to participate in local external competitions and integrating our programs with school curriculums. The first one has been impacted by risk that Ashraya needs to take on student safety.

- During the book inventory audit conducted by our auditors at the outset of the program year, we found that some schools had as much as 30% of the books missing. Reasons cited included worn out books, books not returned by students and/or books returned by students in very bad condition. We however let go of two librarians in libraries where the percentage of missing books was found to be too high.
- While our pilot high school science program was deemed to be a success, our pilot high school art program was a failure that had to be aborted mid-year as we were not able to acquire allotted time by the school principal for our classes.

e) Key Statistics (2018-19 vs. 2017-18)

Key Statistic	2018	2019	Comments
Number of Schools	9	9	
Number of Ashraya Employees	14	14	
Number of Students	1,648	1,884	We still continue to see reduction in size of a few schools due to RTE act
Number of Students who use Libraries	1,397	1,362	
Number of Programs	7	8	Added MLL based activities as a separate program
Number of students by program			
Library Activity based Program	1,386	1,362	
Art Program	119	160	Added 2 schools
Science Club	119	166	Added 2 schools + one high school
Book of the Month Club	179	180	
Story Writing	179	180	Same students as in book of the month club
Remedial Program	511	539	
Computer Club	59	122	Added 3 schools
Total Students across all Programs	2,373	2,529	
GROWBY Performance of Students in Remedial Programs			
Improved and Graduated across 3 Batches	77%	82%	
Not Improved and Eliminated across 3 Batches	23%	18%	
Number of Books read per Student across Program Year	21.6	21.0	
Total Number of Books read in Program Year	30,204	28,547	
Number of Activities by Program across Program Year (across All Schools)			
Library Activity based Program	243	299	Eliminated less value-added activities such as board games and dramas Focused solely on 20 MLL based activities and converted to trackable program
Art Program	140	196	2 more schools
Science Club	141	245	2 more schools + high school program + solar projects at year-end
Book of the Month Club	186	264	Added sessions on plays
Story Writing	27	45	Increased story writing sessions per year
Remedial Program	468	355	
Computer Club	42	131	Doubled the number of schools
Total Activities across all Programs in Program Year	1,247	1,535	
Program Completion (based on Scorecard Module Tracking)	74%	70%	Changed focus mid year to concentrate mainly on MLLs
Art Program	90%	95%	
Science Club	100%	107%	
Book of the Month Club, Story Writing & Remedial Programs	99%	100%	
Computer Club	82%	98%	First program Year - started only in late July
Program Operations	96%	90%	
Total Activities across all Programs in Program Year	90%	93%	

f) Budget Performance

• We spent Rs. 13.98 Lakhs by year-end (Rs. 1.45 Lakhs on events, Rs. 2.05 Lakhs on materials and Rs. 10.48 Lakhs on Salaries) compared to the budget of Rs. 13.87 Lakhs i.e. 100.7% of budget.

2. Plan for 2019-20

a) What are We Doing Differently this Year?

- Given that we increased program scope significantly last year as well as developed content across all programs; and also given that we ended the year with the highest program levels since project initiation, we would like to focus on program stability, increased efficiency and efficacy during 2019-20
- We will maintain program scope status quo with no changes in number of schools covered in each program; and also keep the number of programs status quo as well

- We plan to shut down operations in two schools where we have seen very high declines in school strength (Mangala and Bandalli) and replace them with schools with much higher student strength (Shagya with 250 students and Channalinganahalli with 130 students, compared to 50 students in Mangala and 70 students in Bandalli). This will need replacement of two librarians since librarians are for the most part hired from local villages.
- We plan to use the Life360 location-tracking app (paid version) to actively track attendance of all teachers. We have tested this app already during the school break and found it extremely valuable. This app allows us to define all the nine schools on the map as "places" and add all our teachers as "people", and will provide a 30-day history of "people" visiting "places".
- We will track and score program module competition at a more detailed level than last year. Our audit team will have the final say in stating whether a particular module has been completed, rather than just relying on videos sent by teachers. To facilitate this, the auditor has defined detailed templates that all teachers need to use to "submit" work completed by students in each school to the auditor during the monthly audits
- We will prune program content in some programs where we have received feedback from teachers that program content was too overwhelming (e.g. science)
- We will discontinue the high school program since we have found it difficult to get time commitment from school principals (unlike what we have been able to guarantee in primary schools)
- Based on feedback from school principals during our year-ending meeting, we plan to more tightly integrate our programs with the school curriculums with our program modules being synchronized with what is taught in the classroom through the school year (especially in the science program)
- We have started research projects as part of the library program, in which every month, the librarians will work with the schoolteachers to identify projects that students can research on and write essays. This will help us integrate the libraries with the school curriculum.
- We have purchased new books worth Rs. 40,000 already and added them to the 9 libraries
- We plan to provide official certificates to the students who pass the final exams and do well during the school year in each program (science, art, book of the month club)
- We have started an active feedback process with the school principals and teachers through a bi-monthly conference call
- We will seek contributions from school teachers for our newsletter and also print the best stories from the book of the month program in the newsletter. We intend to carry out 4 editions of the ASHRAYA newsletter this year
- We have gotten the school principals to sign off on all program descriptions along with the student selection in each school so that they are held accountable. The school principals will also sign off on all program certifications at the end of the year
- We will have special focus on "all-rounders" by identifying at least 5 students in each school right
 at the outset of the school year to participate in all our programs, and grooming them
 throughout the school year with better mentoring and encouragement

b) Budget and Sought Funding for 2019-20

Please see below our budget and funding sought for 2019-20 along with the bridge to 2018-19 actuals. Please see Appendix 1 for the expenditure details by program. Please note that OPEN India can chose to fund a portion of this years' funding requirements as they deem fit. Our total budget for 2019-20 is Rs. 14.69 Lakhs vs. Rs. 13.87 Lakhs in 2018-19. The Rs.80K (5.8%) increase is due to the following:

• 5% salary raises across the board (compared to 10% we have been giving in the past few years) since we feel that we are above benchmarks of salaries for teachers in nearby private schools

- 5% increase in event costs due to inflation
- More audits this year than in earlier years due to more detailed program audit to ensure program completions, as well two planned book audits during the year
- Migration of programs to two new schools (Shagya and Channalinganahalli) that necessitate new library paintings and material costs

Please note that the 5.8% increase in rupee costs will lead to only a 1.1% increase in \$ costs (from \$21.87K to \$21.93K) due to the YoY increase of the rupee rate from 64 to 67.

ASHRAYA Project Level Funding Requirements 2019-20								
Rupee to Dollar Conversion Rate			67.0					
Program	Expenditure Items		Per School Rs \$		of Rs \$			
I Month Club and GROWRY	Books and other material, librarian salaries, infrastructure maintenance. Kannada teachers salaries, book copies for club meetings, learning kits for mentoring program	90,104	1,345	9	810,932	12,103		
Art Programs	Art kits and sketch books, art teacher salary, field trips, participation in local competitions	36,015	538	8	288,119	4,300		
Science Clubs	Science kits and lab books, science teacher salary, field trips, participation in local competitions	29,193	436	8	233,540	3,486		
Computer Clubs	Note books, computer teacher salary, field trips, participation in local competitions	22,823	341	6	136,939	2,044		
Total Funding Sought Across All Projects					1,469,530	21,933		

Bridge to 2018-19 Budget		
Expenditure Items	Rs	\$
	1,387,	989 21,687
t Increase from 2018-19 to 2019-20	80,9	6 1,209
Increase in Salaries for Existing Employees (5% Avg Raise)	43,6	652
More Audits to track Programs at next Level of Detail + 2 Book Audits per Year	15,24	6 228
Migration of Programs to 2 New Schools	6,00	0 90
Expected Increase in Event Costs due to Inflation	16,0	0 240
	Increase from 2018-19 to 2019-20 Increase in Salaries for Existing Employees (5% Avg Raise) More Audits to track Programs at next Level of Detail + 2 Book Audits per Year Migration of Programs to 2 New Schools	Expenditure Items Rs 1,387,5

We thank you all for your continued support and look forward to a great year ahead.

Sincerely Yours,

Vasuki Subbarao, President, ASHRAYA

Appendices:

- 1. Program Level Expenditure Budgets for 2019-20
- 2. 2019-20 Year-End Scorecard

Appendix 1: Program Level Expenditure Budgets for 2019-20

Project Terra Firma 20:	18-19 Budget					
	Salary Increase No. of Salary Months	5% 10.5				
			Per School		Total ac	ross Schools
Expense Parameter	Unit	Units per School	Unit Rate	Costs (Rs)	No. of Schools	Costs (Rs)
Operate Existing Libraries + Book of the Month Clubs + GROWBY Mentoring Programs in 9 Sch	nols	SCHOOL	(Rs)	(RS)	SCHOOLS	
	1	100		2.500		21 500
1.1 Incremental Books	Per Book	100 10.5	50	3,500 43,610		31,500
1.2 Librarian Salaries (Direct) ¹ 1.3 Kannada Teachers for Book of the Month Club & GROWBY Mentoring Program (Direct) ⁶	Per Month Per Month	10.5	4,153 1,412	14,823	9	392,490 133,403
1.4 Project Coordinator, Advisor & Monitor Salary & Travel Allocations	Per Month	10.5	1,719	18,054	,	162,487
1.5 Year End Lenoardo Da Vinci Day (across all Schools)	Lump Sum	1	10,117	10,117		91,052
	In Rupees]	10,117	90,104		810,932
Total Project 1 Expenditure	In \$			1,345		12,103
1 - Need 1 Librarian per School 6- Need one Full-Time Kannada Teacher to run Book of the Month Club & GROWBY Meontoring	Program					
2. Operate Art Programs in 9 Schools						
2.1 Art Materials ²	Per Kit	20	100	3,000		24,000
2.2 Art Teacher Salaries (Direct) ³	Per Month	10.5	1,794	18,838		150,704
2.2 Project Coordinator, Advisor & Monitor Salary & Travel Allocations	Per Month	10.5	687	7,216	8	57,731
2.3 Art Project Field Trips & External Competitions	Per Trip	1	2,917	2,917		23,333
2.5 Year End Lenoardo Da Vinci Day (across all Schools)	Lump Sum	1	4,044	4,044		32,350
	In Rupees			36,015		288,119
Total Project 2 Expenditure	In \$			538		4,300
2 - 20 Students per Art Program per School 3 - Need one Art Teacher						
3. Operate Science Clubs in 9 Schools						
3.1.Equipment & Materials ⁴	Lump Sum	20	100	3,000		24,000
3.2 Field Trips & External Competitions	Per Trip	1	2,917	2,917		23,333
3.3 Science Club Teacher Salaries ⁵	Per Month	10.5	1,348	14,149	8	113,190
3.4 Project Coordinator, Advisor & Monitor Salary & Travel Allocations	Per Month	10.5	557	5,849		46,795
3.5 Year End Lenoardo Da Vinci Day (across all Schools)	Lump Sum	1	3,278	3,278		26,222
Total Project 3 Expenditure	In Rupees			29,193		233,540
4 - 20 Students per Science Club Per School	In \$			436		3,486
5 - Need one Science Club Teacher						
4. Operate Computer Clubs in 6 Schools						
4.1 Facility and 9. Markarial of	Lump Sum	20	50	3,000		18,000
4.1.Equipment & Materials ⁶ 4.2 Educational Videos	Per Video	20	50	3,000		16,000
4.4 Training	Lump Sum	0	0	0		0
4.4 Field Trips	Per Trip	0	0	0	6	0
4.5 Computer Club Teacher Salaries	Per Month	10.5	1,208	12,688		76,125
4.5 Project Coordinator, Advisor & Monitor Salary & Travel Allocations	Per Month	10.5	436	4,573		27,439
4.6 Year End Lenoardo Da Vinci Day (across all Schools)	Lump Sum	1	2,563	2,563		15,376
	In Rupees		•	22,823		136,939
Total Project 3 Expenditure	In \$			341		2,044
6 - 20 Students per Computer Club Per School						
5. Personnel and Travel Expenditure - Amortized Across All Projects	I	11		1	ı	
5.1 Project Area Coordinator (Full Time)	Per Month	10.5	10,000			105,000
5.2 Auditor from Bangalore (Part Time)	Per Month	12.0	7,623			91,476
5.3 Librarians (Full Time)	Per Month	10.5	37,380			392,490
5.5 Project Area Advisor	Per Month	10.5	4,891			51,360
	Per Month	10.5	14,353			150,704
	Per Month	10.5	10,780			113,190
5.6 Science Club Teacher (Part Time)	Des Marth		12,705	ì		133,403
5.6 Science Club Teacher (Part Time) 5.7 Kannada Teachers for Mentoring Program	Per Month	10.5				70 40-
5.6 Science Club Teacher (Part Time) 5.7 Kannada Teachers for Mentoring Program 5.8 Computer Teacher	Per Month	10.5	7,250			76,125
5.6 Science Club Teacher (Part Time) 5.7 Kannada Teachers for Mentoring Program 5.8 Computer Teacher 5.9 New Library Paintings and other Material (Shagya and Channalinganahalli)	Per Month Per Month	10.5 2.0	7,250 12,000			24,000
5.6 Science Club Teacher (Part Time) 5.7 Kannada Teachers for Mentoring Program 5.8 Computer Teacher 5.9 New Library Paintings and other Material (Shagya and Channalinganahalli) 5.10 Leonardo Da Vinci Day & Gundal Dam Day	Per Month Per Month Lump Sum	10.5 2.0 1	7,250 12,000 165,000			24,000 165,000
5.6 Science Club Teacher (Part Time) 5.7 Kannada Teachers for Mentoring Program 5.8 Computer Teacher 5.9 New Library Paintings and other Material (Shagya and Channalinganahalli) 5.10 Leonardo Da Vinci Day & Gundal Dam Day	Per Month Per Month	10.5 2.0	7,250 12,000			24,000
5.6 Science Club Teacher (Part Time) 5.7 Kannada Teachers for Mentoring Program 5.8 Computer Teacher 5.9 New Library Paintings and other Material (Shagya and Channalinganahalli) 5.10 Leonardo Da Vinci Day & Gundal Dam Day	Per Month Per Month Lump Sum	10.5 2.0 1	7,250 12,000 165,000			24,000 165,000
5.7 Kannada Teachers for Mentoring Program 5.8 Computer Teacher 5.9 New Library Paintings and other Material (Shagya and Channalinganahalli) 5.10 Leonardo Da Vinci Day & Gundal Dam Day 5.11 Local Trips by Project Coordinators and Advisors	Per Month Per Month Lump Sum Per Month	10.5 2.0 1	7,250 12,000 165,000			24,000 165,000 22,050 1,324,798

Appendix 2: 2019-20 Year-End Scorecard

