

3M-CII Young Innovator Awards 2018

SBI Foundation is proud to announce that four of our SBI Youth for India fellows have won the eminent 3M-CII Young Innovator awards this year. Out of 19 exemplary ideas, four fellows and their projects emerged as winners in all three categories of the awards – social innovation, rural innovation and tech innovation. We are happy that the ideas of our young innovators have been recognised on a prominent platform.

Following are the details of the fellows who made us proud:

1. Prayag Ichangimath (SBI YFI fellow 2016-17)

Won the first prize in Tech Innovation at the 3M-CII for his project titled, enabling Children from Rural India to Demystify Environment and Develop Scientific Temper through Portable Science Laboratories

Prayag worked in the education theme area with our partner NGO during his fellowship. In these 13 months, the engineer who also had conventional plans of doing masters and working in MNCs, he changed his plans to staying with Barefoot even after his fellowship. He is working on setting up science laboratory designed in a way that it enables children to demystify science and environment through hands on activities and experiments.

“In the remote locations I worked in during the fellowship program, I noticed students opt out of going to day schools to help in livelihood generation activities. The science laboratories established along with the night schools, run by Barefoot College, gives an opportunity for these children to see the possibilities when they learn science.” said Prayag. The hands on activities are designed to ensure that they are contextual to their environment and depend on locally sourced materials to ensure sustainability. The learning modules also ensure that the students learn to voice their opinions and findings and develop strong leadership and communication skills that shall ensure better aspirations and success.

2. Annu Shree Tiwari (SBI YFI fellow 2017-18)

Won the first prize in the Rural Innovation category at the 3M-CII for her project titled, Connecting Local Self Governance to Education.

Annu Shree is a 22-year-old commerce graduate who is working with our partner NGO, AKRSP-(I). 'Panchayat Sikshan Kendra' is a collaborative Ecosystem of learning and career building at village level itself run and monitored by the Panchayats to instill a conviction in students that with quality learning and guidance, career possibilities are endless. The project is currently running in 6 different Panchayats with the funds I want to scale up the idea to 10 more Panchayats and inculcate reading habit in the community book libraries are to be established in all these Panchayats.

“To attract more kids and keep them interested I wish to establish 'Board Game' libraries in the already running classes. Science and Math kits for secondary level education are established in all

the classes to make the boring subjects more fun and understand the concepts better. Other activities like outdoor classroom programs and exposure visits to Panchayat members, teachers and Students for allowing them to view practical/real life situations of successful integration of sustainable ongoing practices,” added Annu explaining her project and the future goals.

3. Shalmali Ghasias (SBI YFI fellow 2017-18)

Runner up in the Social Innovation category at the 3M-CII for her project titled, Optimum utilization of soybean at each tribal household level.

Her rural intervention aimed at supplementing the diet of a tribal farmer and meeting their nutritional security by teaching them previously unknown methods of consuming the one crop they all grow in abundant quantity – soybean.

Current training includes - allocation of electric mixers on a cost sharing basis and house to house demonstration of soy milk, okara, tofu and whey. Eight out of twenty are showing visible behavioral change.

“The SBI YFI fellowship landed me the 'once in a lifetime opportunity' of single handedly deciding project rationale, prototype and implementation. Right from identifying the possible solution to interacting with the tribal farmer,” added Shalmali.

4. Saloni Sacheti (SBI YFI fellow 2017-18)

Runner up in the Rural Innovation category at the 3M-CII for her project titles, Baansuli-Bamboo Artisan Socio Economic Upliftment Initiative.

The artisans of Dangs were struggling to make a living and keep the culture alive by making jewelry and bamboo products. It was SBI YFI Fellow Shruti Namboodiri who had conceptualized the project. She roped in artisans who could design bamboo jewelry. During her stint along with helping them with design inputs, she also inculcated an entrepreneurial spirit in them. Saloni’s task was to pick up the project where Shruti left it and expand it. Saloni did the same as she introduced improvisations in the designs and also worked on marketing and increased the number of artisans. She increased the number of the artisans to nine, double the number (four) when she joined in.

She has increased marketing activities to an extent that the artist income has become three fold in a span of 10 months. Baansuli aims to get a national and international presence as a sustainable fashion brand providing sustainable livelihoods to tribal communities.

Currently, Baansuli is Saloni’s baby and she wishes to continue it as her social enterprise even after the fellowship. “The community has given me lot and supported me through out. Though an advocate and having practiced in High Court, I prefer continuing my enterprise. YFI has given us a good platform through this fellowship to work for the society,” said Saloni.