

India's "Football and Beyond" Receives Recognition from UNAOC-BMW Group's Intercultural Innovation Hub

Category: Business

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The India-based organization "**Shreeja India**" is one of ten grassroots initiatives recognized by the prestigious [Intercultural Innovation Hub](#), a joint initiative of the **United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)** and the **BMW Group**, implemented with the support of **Accenture**, during a Ceremony held in the framework of the 10th UNAOC Global Forum, in Cascais, Portugal under the theme "United in Peace: Restoring Trust, Reshaping the Future – Reflecting on Two Decades of Dialogue for Humanity". The Forum convened prominent figures, political leaders, UN officials including the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, as well as representatives from civil society, academia, and the private sector, to share insights and reflect on the 20 years of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations impactful work.



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Shreeja India was recognized for its project, **Football and Beyond**, which leverages the unifying power of football to bridge divides across diverse backgrounds while promoting inclusivity and empowerment. By using football as a development tool, the initiative integrates sports with education, mental wellness, social awareness, and skills development. This holistic approach empowers girls and uplifts communities that lack access to essential services such as basic education, nutrition, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities, paving the way for sustainable growth and social cohesion.

“Shreeja Indias inclusive tactic to empower underprivileged girls and children with a sports-based endeavor is producing powerful narratives in the grassroots of rural India. With the recognition of the Intercultural Innovation Hub, we feel more driven to connect, collaborate and contribute towards breaking barriers and building cohesive societies,” said **Somasree Basu, Program Manager at Shreeja India.**

The Intercultural Innovation Hub supports grassroots

initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue and understanding, thereby contributing to peace, cultural diversity, and more inclusive societies. This year's Ceremony was chaired by Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for UNAOC, and Ms. Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG People and Real Estate, Labour Relations Director.

Through the Intercultural Innovation Hub, Shreeja India will receive a financial grant, as well as one year of capacity-building and mentorship support from UNAOC, the BMW Group, and Accenture, to help strengthen the "Football and Beyond" project and its contribution towards a more inclusive society. This model of collaboration between the United Nations and the private sector creates a more profound impact, as partners provide their respective expertise to ensure the sustainable growth of each supported project.

Learn more about the project:
interculturalinnovation.org/shreeja-india-football-and-beyond.

