

# Inclusive and grassroots innovations in Malaysia

## Malaysian Foundation for Innovation, Malaysia

<https://www.yim.my/>

By trailblazing an innovation and science-driven path for grassroots-centric innovations, Yayasan Inovasi Malaysia (YIM), or the Malaysian Foundation for Innovation, has played an integral role in leading Malaysia's towards enhanced growth, competitiveness and prosperity.

Our supportive awareness, development and financing environments help innovations come to life with both economic potential and social impact to grassroots communities. From ground events to grants to commercialisation and market diffusion programmes, YIM's programmes has generated continuous and sustainable impact nationwide.

### High Impact Project 6 – Inclusive Innovation

Specifically designed to empower the bottom 40% of the income group to leverage on innovations to promote the transformation of communities including microenterprises in the rural areas through handholding and technical and management support, the High Impact Project 6 – Inclusive Innovation (HIP6) programme is part of the SME Masterplan 2012-2020 organised by SME Corp and managed by YIM as appointed Lead Agency.

HIP6 promotes public-private partnership to share responsibility and accountability in creating drivers of change that can empower the bottom 40% of the income pyramid to leverage on innovations created for the benefit and wellbeing of the communities.

Since the programme was inception, almost 23,000 people have participated in the HIP6 Inclusive Innovation Challenges which is organised to identify deserving innovations for support and funding.

### Mainstreaming grassroots innovations

YIM's Mainstreaming Grassroots Innovation (MaGRIs) programme is a project that focuses on upscaling and accelerating the development and diffusion of potential grassroots innovations in Malaysia via collaboration with various parties from government, industry, grassroots community and youth.

The MaGRIs programme provides an environment to develop grassroots innovators with potential innovations and groom them to become community role models. New methods to stimulate grassroots commercial activities into mainstream commercial activities are often uncovered while grassroots innovators leverage through opportunities to mainstream their innovations into mainstream commercial activities. Often, academic and industry collaborators are roped in to support the MaGRIs programme activities.

From innovation development to commercialisation with market diffusion to inclusive communities, the programme even has its

own MaGRIs Ambassador originating from the same communities, sharing community success stories and creating engagement with this targeted community. Since MaGRIs was inception in 2016, more than 13,000 people have engaged with the programme.

### MOSTI Social Innovation (MSI) FUND

The MOSTI Social Innovation (MSI) project was launched with the objective of improving the well-being of the society through the implementation of project, services, capacity and skill building or innovation output using the existing technology that can be implemented sustainably.

As a start, the implementation of MSI involves outreach programmes to the grassroots level and scaling up innovative ideas from the outreach programme with the objective of "humanising innovation".

Innovators can submit their project ideas to MESTECC for the MSI grant. MESTECC functions as a one-stop centre for innovators to submit their innovations with proof-of-concept. The innovation projects will be matched with its agencies and collaborators to facilitate and monitor the projects.

### Lifelong Learning Initiative

Grassroots innovators (GRIs) have benefited the community by innovating products and services that are useful and of values to their community. However, their contributions are often neglected, not brought to proper authorities for their development and advancement. GRIs are national assets contributing to social and economic growth. GRIs need proper recognition, capacity building initiative to motivate, sustain them to innovate better solutions, provide leaderships at grassroots level.

This project was funded by The Boeing Company under Boeing Global Corporate Citizenship (BGCC). In the first sequel, the project has successfully accredited 20 grassroots innovators in 2016 and with the BGCC support again an additional 20 grassroots innovators are selected for APE in the second sequel, 2017.

Through Lifelong Learning Initiative – Accreditation of Prior Experience (APE) platform, an individual's expertise, skills and experiences officially recognized based on National Occupational Skills Standards (NOSS) into Malaysian Skills Certificate qualifications: Certificate of Competency, MSC levels 1 to 3, Diploma Malaysian Skills or Advanced Diploma Malaysian Skills; awarded by the Government.

The program will be implemented throughout Malaysia, segmented into six (6) zones which are North, South, Central, East Coast, Sabah and Sarawak.

# Promoting grassroots innovations in India

**National Innovation Foundation, India**

<http://nif.org.in>

The National Innovation Foundation (NIF) is India's national initiative to strengthen the grassroots technological innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge. Its mission is to help India become a creative and knowledge-based society by expanding policy and institutional space for grassroots technological innovators.

NIF scouts, supports and spawns' grassroots innovations developed by individuals and local communities in any technological field, helping in human survival without any help from formal sector. NIF helps grassroots innovators and outstanding traditional knowledge holders get due recognition, respect and reward for their innovations. It also tries to ensure that such innovations diffuse widely through commercial and/or non-commercial channels, generating material or non-material incentives for them and others involved in the value chain.

NIF has pooled a database of over 310,000 technological ideas, innovations and traditional knowledge practices (not all unique, not all distinct) from over 608 districts of the country. NIF has till date recognised 847 grassroots innovators and school students at the national level in its various National Biennial Grassroots Innovation Award Functions and annual Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Ignite Children Award functions. In collaboration with various research & development (R&D) and academic institutions, agricultural & veterinary universities and others institutions, NIF has helped in getting several hundred grassroots technologies validated and/or value added.

NIF has also set up an augmented Fabrication Laboratory (Fab Lab) for product development and strengthening in-house research. Pro bono arrangement with intellectual property firms has helped NIF file over 1040 patents, including eight filed in the USA and 28 Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) applications, on behalf of the innovators and outstanding traditional knowledge holders. Of these, 72 patents have been granted in India and 5 in the USA. In the same time period NIF has filed 21 Design registrations for innovations of the grassroots and student innovators. In addition to this 10 trade mark applications have also been filed.

Key initiatives launched by NIF are summarized below:

## Grassroots Innovations Design Studio (GRIDS)

Grassroots Innovation Design Studio (GRIDS) facilitates formal design inputs to the grassroots innovations at premier institutes viz National Institute of Design (NID) - Ahmedabad, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Gandhinagar, National Institute of Technology (NIT) - Srinagar and Srishti School of Arts, Design & Technology, Bengaluru.

## Students' Club for Augmenting Innovations (SCAI)

A nationwide student movement, comprising students from India's best management and technology institutes, SCAI provides product development, mentoring and monitoring support to innovators and traditional knowledge holders at the grassroots.

## Micro Venture Innovation Fund (MVIF)

One of its kind of dedicated risk fund in the world, setup with the support of SIDBI in October 2003 and operationalised in January 2004, MVIF provides financial support to grassroots innovators. It is extended under a single signature on a simple agreement of understanding without any collateral or a guarantor.

## Grassroots Technological Innovations Acquisition Fund (GTIAF)

Sanctioned in 2011 and operationalised in 2012, GTIAF obtains the rights of technologies from innovators after compensating them for the same, with the purpose of disseminating and diffusing them at low or no cost for the larger benefit of the society.

## Gandhian Inclusive Innovation Challenge Awards

The Award aim towards developing new solutions for three challenges -- paddy transplanter, wood stove and tea leaf-plucking machine.

## Grassroots to Global (G2G)

NIF has proved that Indian innovators can match anyone in the world when it comes to solving problems creatively. They perform better than others in generating greater sustainable alternatives by using local resources frugally. Those who see poor only as the consumers of cheap goods, miss the richness of knowledge at grassroots level. The G2G model propagated by NIF is all set to change the way the world looks at creativity and innovations at grassroots.

## In situ incubation

NIF provides in situ incubation of grassroots technologies to the innovator at his/her place. All incubation facilities (financial or technical support, mentoring, etc.) are extended to the innovator at his place where he continues to work on his/her ideas or innovations.