



## TISS AESDII – Conclaves for Building CSR Partnerships

### About TISS AESDII

TISS Assessment and Empanelment Standards for Development Institutions in India (TISS AESDII) is an initiative to create a model to evaluate, assess, accredit and build capacities of Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) and Social Sector Organisations (SSOs) through robust multi-layered processes that stress adherence to several parameters, a combination of financial and programmatic. By participating in these processes, organisations also reflect and introspect on both successes and shortcomings of their work. The intent of the TISS AESDII framework/template is to serve as a means of capacity building of organisations for transforming the everyday business of NPOs, and preferably members of the community through participatory decision-making processes.

*TISS AESDII promotes collective, inclusive and participatory discussions among all organisational members. TISS AESDII has inter-linked activities namely a project proposal bank, training and capacity building vertical and knowledge sharing network which develops through both knowledge creation & dissemination and research & consultation.*

Inspired by a vision to reform and transform the development sector in India through 'reimagining futures', the TISS AESDII emphasises on greater convergence and collaboration, heightened professionalism, transparency & accountability and outcome oriented work of NPOs in the development sector. As a significant partner for both corporations and NPOs, TISS AESDII aspires to become a thinking doer, thought leader and enabler in the achievement of social impact. In repositioning TISS AESDII, the priorities of the mandate are on training & capacity building and research. The conclaves are a step in that direction.

### Concept Note on "TISS AESDII – Conclaves for Building CSR Partnerships"

As one of the foundational think tanks on CSR and one of the leading universities in the social sciences in India, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) is organising a series of conclaves. The "TISS AESDII – Conclaves for Building CSR Partnerships" seek to be platform for action and forum which apart from providing ways of thinking and doing, will connect the dots between donors and implementing agencies. Different stakeholders involved in the business of CSR will come together and build partnerships that create social impact.

Entailing a comprehensive schedule that includes takeaways for all partners, the Southern Conclave is the first in a series of regional consultations cum workshops to be held this year.



The Conclaves are an opportunity to explore synergies between funders and non-profits, for strengthening their respective internal capacities, and building partnerships to make the world a better place. The five Ws how questions pertaining to the Conclaves are addressed in the following paragraphs.

In a world of disruptive technology, information and an increasingly aspiring civil society – inequalities are becoming further perceptible. Addressing the world's biggest problems then requires participation from multiple stakeholders. And therefore, Goal 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in the year 2016 is defined as 'Partnerships for the Goals'. The SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Businesses worldwide have begun thinking about including a triple bottom line approach as routine practice. Accounting for profit, people and planet is becoming the way forward to build solutions in the development space. In India, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is mandated by legislation. However, four years after the legislation, enterprises are looking at CSR as serious business and not just an obligation. Funding to the non-profit sector is now being subjected to accountability mechanisms borrowed from the management disciplines. Metrics for social impact are becoming increasingly relevant. Setting of milestones, delivering outputs within timeframes, defining outcome indicators and further undertaking impact assessments are basic requisites demanded by funders. Enterprises are conducting Social Return on Investment (SROI) analyses to deliver and quantify social impact with utmost rigour.

Amidst such a milieu that is competitive and complex, the non-profit sector must be willing to adapt with the needs of the funders while retaining the essence of their programmes and accountability to their core vision as well as stakeholders. When social impact is retained over a long course of time, attribution to an external entity becomes questionable. A community's uptake of the programme or project is a key causal factor. Nevertheless social impact is a journey that needs to be tracked and documented throughout its course. It is critical that non-profits focus on good governance, financial due diligence, robust monitoring, evaluation, learning and documentation. While NPOs are acknowledging these due processes, it is a challenge for some to deliver on these premises.

Enterprises must also contribute in establishing accountability. Purpose driven initiatives that focus on thematic concerns for creating long term social impact are a need of the hour. Erratic fund flow is a challenge for the non-profit sector. Largely dependent on aid for the running of their programmes, NPOs ought to have financial security. Corpus grants and financial commitment to causes are resolutions to ensure stability.

Packed with a schedule that addresses all the above mentioned subjects with a holistic approach, the Conclaves approach every aspect in a systematic manner that benefits participants from across sectors. The sessions comprise of masterclasses, workshops and presentations. The first day begins with a 101 session that sets a contextual framework for the forthcoming days and ends with a masterclass on theory of change, and the fundamentals of results based management. The subsequent day begins with the masterclass on good governance and financial management. Post lunch, the focus is streamlined towards mentoring of flagship project proposals for CSR funding. The third day begins with a learning session on CSR, designed especially for managers from private and public sector enterprises. The Conclaves end with presentations of high impact proposals by NPOs at the TISS AESDII Bazaar.

A detailed schedule is attached.

\*\*\*