

LOYOLA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



Criteria 3- Research, Innovations and Extension

3.2- Innovation Ecosystem

3.2.1 Institution has created an ecosystem for innovations and has initiatives for creation and transfer of knowledge

3.2.1-2: Loyola Innovation Centre Report

LOYOLA INNOVATION CENTRE

Loyola college, an advanced institute for Social Sciences, has created an ecosystem for innovation and incubation among the students through its innovation centre. It has always promoted innovations and enterprises which are beneficial for the society. In order to develop innovative products or ventures of social relevance, Loyola Innovation Centre is giving awareness, exposure and technology skills for its students. Thus, the innovation centre encourages the students to come up with ideas and to turn it into ventures or products so that they may obtain gainful employment and can employ others as well.

I. BACKGROUND

Loyola innovation centre developed from the seeds sown by a voluntary and informal body in Loyola called 'Life'. 'Life' was a think-tank consisting of like-minded research scholars, students, alumnus and well-wishers of Loyola College, passionate about innovation, enterprise ultimately aimed at social change. This platform constituted serendipitously in 2009, was captained by Dr. Sonny Jose, HoD of Social Work Department. 'Life' convened meetings of members to assess issues, generate ideas, design paths and instruments for social change. Pencil Foundation (2010), Thanal Herbarium (Loyola, 2011; 2014) were the earliest activities of 'Life'. LiveLab, which was initiated by Life in 2013, was the most successful innovative project by 'Life'

'Life', represented by Dr. Sonny Jose, applied for a UGC-sponsored Innovation and Entrepreneurship conference. Loyola received the grants and organized an **"International Conclave on Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship"** in December 2015. Following this conclave, Life merged into the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Cell (IEDC) Cell in 2015 when it decided to constitute the cell as per Kerala Start-Up Mission (KSUM) mandates. The Loyola IEDC cell applied for start-up fund from KSUM, which was granted in March 2016. Ever since the IEDC Cell has been initiating a number of projects under Loyola Innovation Centre.

II. ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS OF LOYOLA INNOVATION CENTRE

1. LiveLab 2013 to Present

“LiveLab” was the first major initiative of Life-turned-IEDC Cell, which was started in 2013. LiveLab is an innovative mission of Loyola College for the fortification of Loyola outreach activities. “Life through life skills” forms the vision of LiveLab. In realizing this vision, the trained students of Loyola aim at imparting life skills education to children, adolescents, young adults and other needy people by building their capacity through strength-based practice and experiential learning and therefore equip them to negotiate life in a manner that aids their personal growth. Thus, LiveLab encourages personal augmentation and empowerment through life skills training. From 2013-2016, we had an alumnus, called Vijayalekshmi, who was a dedicated employee of LiveLab. LiveLab was not only an essential social service that benefitted many, it was also a profitable endeavour. After Vijayalekshmi left to join a government job, LiveLab was adopted by the Department of Social Work as a training initiative. Income generation from LiveLab has waned.



2. International Conclave on Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship 2015

Loyola College in association with University Grants Commission (UGC) and James Cook University, Queensland, Australia organised a “Three-day International Conclave on Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship” from 7th December to 9th December 2015. Participants and delegates from different parts of the country and the globe, a number of around 200 took part in the three-day program. The conclave hosted various sessions on innovation and social entrepreneurship by successful individuals in the field of social entrepreneurship as well as specialists representing different originations.

The conclave ensured a rich and vibrant interaction and discussion on various themes viz, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Social Enterprise, Capital, Technology GST-2016, Mentoring etc. A workshop on Ideation and Business Model designing was also conducted. Paper presentations were invited for ICISE and held at three different venues which enriched the academic content of the conclave. Thus, ISE Conference and Workshop endeavours to stimulate, equip and enable young professionals, academicians & aspiring entrepreneurs, to embark on social enterprises and beyond.



The successful conclave parallel led to the formation of IEDC and thus equipping the college to conceptualize and organize dozens of programmes to promote and propagate “Social entrepreneurship”.

2. Social Entrepreneurship Awards 2016

In connection with ICISE, an award night for social entrepreneurs which was first of its kind in Kerala was hosted at Loyola College of Social Sciences, Trivandrum on 9th, December 2015. Five awards were given away at the ceremony to the winners selected by an esteemed jury panel from the several nominations of social entrepreneurs for their contributions in various areas-Gender, IT, Environment, Water, Agriculture, Health, Education, Social Inclusion, Micro-finance, Livelihood, Waste Management, Capacity-building, Social Transformation, etc. The awards were given away by the chief guest of the ceremony, The Minister for Social Welfare and Panchayath, Dr. M.K. Muneer. The

Kerala State Youth Commission Chairman, Adv. R.V. Rajesh and C.P.Johnand other esteemed guests honoured the award ceremony.

The Award winners were as follows:

Social Catalyst Award: Mr. Sumesh Mangalasseri, KABANI - Community Tourism& Services.

Women Social Entrepreneur: Ms. Sobha Ashwin, Weaver's Village.

Social Change Maker: Mr. Ram Kamal, Chakshumathi.

Special Jury Awards: Mr. L. Pankajakshan, Shanthigram and Mr. G. Karthikeyan, Sristi Village Foundation.

3. Loyola- Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Cell (Loyola-IEDC)

To elevate the efforts for promoting social enterprise in Kerala, Kerala government has initiated Kerala Start-Up mission (KSUM). KSUM has put forward the concept of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IEDC) at college level in the year 2014 to promote innovation and entrepreneurial culture in educational institutions and to develop institutional mechanism to foster techno-entrepreneurs. Motivated by the success of the international conclave, Loyola 'Life' collaborated with Kerala Start-Up Mission (KSUM) to develop Loyola -IECD.

Loyola Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Cell has been able to set its wheel in motion since its inception in December 2015 through various initiatives in the field of social entrepreneurship- "the business of doing good".Social entrepreneurship, a relatively new concept has proved its success and practicality globally where ventures are designed and sustainably run to tackle a social problem or for a social cause. Global as well as regional issues such as poverty, gender issues, environmental degradation, waste management, lifestyle diseases etc. can be creatively tackled through the model of social entrepreneurship.

The arena of social entrepreneurship brings entrepreneurs, social workers and social change agents on the same plane, where creating a viable business model

results in a sustainable model of intervention of a bigger scale hence more than just individuals are benefited. Thus, Loyola IEDC with the support of Kerala Start-up Mission initiated the first social entrepreneurship incubator in Kerala. The incubator has always supported and facilitated start-up social entrepreneurs at the same time bridge technology entrepreneurs with social entrepreneurs.

Loyola- IEDC has organised various **idea pitching sessions** with leading social entrepreneurs and social educators. It also organised seminars and in-house programmes, for example, experience sharing of student entrepreneurs and so on.

- Loyola-IEDC collaborating with Kanthari hosted idea pitching sessions for 24 KaSocial Change Fellows from around the world at Loyola campus
- Discussion sessions with Mr. Vinod Subramaniam (CEO, SandeshOne) on Business Modefeasibility of IEDC member's entrepreneurship ideas.
- Interactive sessions on entrepreneurship with Dr. L. Radhakrishnan, (Chairman, Kerala State Innovation Council) and Dr. Thomas Joseph (IIT, Udaipur)

The office bearers of Loyola-IEDC took part in **various workshops, boot camps and other programmes.**

- **Startup i3** – a team of three delegates took part in the boot camp conducted by SNIT-TBI in association with KSUM and Openfuel on 7-9th April 2016.
- **IEDC Coordinators Meet-up-** The Loyola-IEDC office bearers took part in the IEDC Coordinators Meet-up of Trivandrum and Kollam Units at VKCET, Paripally organized with support of KSUM on 31st July 2016.
- **IEDC Summit 2016** – the Loyola IEDC team participated in the summit in August 2016 at Girideepam Convention Centre, Trivandrum.
- **BRICS 2016-** IEDC member attended the BRICS Summit in Goa in 2016.

The ideation sessions and discussions at Loyola- IEDC paved way for many **small entrepreneurial projects** by students of Loyola, for instance, Ekolife, Fishnet, SALT/ Spot fixing and Elevated Atlantis. Dance Movement Therapy Programme

by Krishnendu and The Centre for Life Skills Training and Research, an NGO by Praveen Varghese Thomas are off shoots from LiveLab, propelled by IEDC Cell Loyola.

4. Fishnet 2016

Fishnet was an on-call fish marketing service, started by few of our interested students. The programme went on well until the students were placed in other fields.

5. Eko-Life 2016-17

Eko-life was one of our most colourful projects. It was a programme where students would implement a number of eco-friendly profitable initiatives under the banner of Eko-life. One initiative was where students would collect artefacts from local artisans and sell them on various platforms. Another initiative was our students assisting a self-help group in Rajagi-nagar (an urban slum) to manufacture cloth bags out of used clothes. Collecting good-quality stuff from people who don't use it anymore and selling it for people who need them for a nominal price was another venture.



6. SALT Store 2018

Our college is set 2 kilometres away from the city. Students without their own transport facilities often found it cumbersome to when they found themselves needing stationary and eatables. Students decided to start a store within the

campus which would sell snacks and stationary. They also started selling snacks and meals, during programmes like seminars, student fests etc and during admissions, for applicants and their families who would be waiting in the campus.

7. Elevated Atlantis 2018-20

The innovative and entrepreneurial cultural of Loyola is such that the college has always encourages its students to come up with the best for themselves and for the society. One of the best examples for this is Elevated Atlantis, a business plan by a group of four students from Masters in Human Resource Management (2018-20 batch) of the college. The concept of the team was to make eco-friendly and sustainable housing for the flood-affected regions in and around Kerala. Many people lost their livelihood and many lost their home in the devastating flood in the state in 2018. The idea behind the project is to help the poor as well as the weaker sections of the society to build back from the rubble left behind by the floods.

8. The Centre for Life Skills Training and Research 2017 onwards

Mr. Praveen Varghese was a founder member of 'Life'. He was actively involved in Life, LiveLab and Ekolife. Loyola Innovation Centre gave him the opportunity to sharpen his skills and a platform to take off on his own. Praveen started his own NGO "The Centre for Life Skills Training and Research".

9. Dance Movement Therapy Programme 2018 onwards

One of our students, Krisnendu, was interested in dance and its possibilities in therapy. The Innovation centre supported her and gave her a platform to develop and refine her ideas and skills. Today Krinendu is a DMT practitioner offering trainings to a number of clients.

III. Publications Awards and Recognitions

-) Published compilation paper presentations of ICISE 2016
-) Articles in Destination Kerala Magazine.
-) Loyola- IEDC is the first social entrepreneurship incubator in Kerala.
-) Loyola - IEDC team member attended the 8th BRICS Summit in 15-16 October 2016, which was held in Goa, India.

-) Elevated Atlantis team of Loyola College became the winner of business plan competition organised by Monti International Institute of Management Studies, Angadipuram, Kerala.
-) Elevated Atlantis team of Loyola college became the winner of business plan competition organised by St. Berchmans College, Changanassery, Kerala.
-) Elevated Atlantis team of Loyola college became the winner of business plan competition organised by Saintgits Institute of Management Kottayam, Kerala.

IV. Present status and the way forward

The journey of Loyola Innovation Centre has been an exiting one. The centre was able to incubate and develop a number of initiatives/projects, which have been profitable or which have gained recognition. There have, however, been challenges to the sustainability of these projects. The projects depended primarily on the leadership of motivated students. After a few years, the students would move on to different callings and incoming students would not have the same interests. Nevertheless, these start-ups helped a handful of involved students to start their own entrepreneurship ventures.

We understand that in-built sustainability measures while designing ventures is key to perennial projects. We also realize that Loyola Innovation Centre has the possibility of collaboration with technical institutions. Our present IEDC Cell is attempting to develop projects on these lines.