**Venture Center’s Philosophy and Initiatives for Social Enterprises**

(Source website: <http://www.venturecenter.co.in/include/> )

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* Venture Center’s philosophy on Social Enterprises:
  + All business enterprises – whether social or commercial – need to gather and deploy resources (funds, people, infrastructure, knowhow etc) towards delivering solutions to problems and unmet needs. All business enterprises need to have models of sustainable operation and growth.
  + Social enterprises distinguish themselves by a) focusing on social impact and addressing society’s pressing problems and needs, b) by leveraging good will in resourcing the enterprises. So for example,
    - A social enterprise may find dedicated employees willing to work for the company and its cause at a discount
    - A social enterprise may find investors with modest return expectations and less aggressive time lines.
    - A social enterprise may get the support of the government via funding schemes, national missions, regulations and policy etc.
    - A social enterprise may get access to knowhow on concessional terms.
    - A social enterprise may get endorsements, visibility and word-of-mouth publicity due to good will.
  + Venture Center believes that while Social Enterprises need a similar and equally rich eco-system as commercial enterprises, they also need access to additional fund raising and business management skill sets, branding and marketing skills, access to early stage soft funding options, networks, visibility and access to thought leaders and champions. This is the focus of Venture Center’s social enterprise initiatives.
* Venture Center contributes to supporting Social Enterprises by:
  + Business planning, technology sourcing and pre-incubation support: Example – Alleger (Company focused on assisted living solutions)
  + Visibility, credibility and access to networks: Example -- Proactive Technical Orthopedics Pvt Ltd (Company producing products for improving the quality of life of the disabled)
  + Discounted, high quality services: Example – Gram Oorja Pvt Ltd (Company focused on energy solutions for rural India)
  + Funding support via seed funding and grant schemes: Example – Shashwat Oorja Pvt Ltd (Company focused on bottling biogas technology); Example – Brightstar Electronics Pvt Ltd (Company develops solar powered irrigators for small Indian farms)
  + Advising on collaborative arrangements and guiding fund raising efforts: Example – BOPEEI (Company focused on human powered devices and energy)
  + Collaborative projects and mentoring support: Example – SSP Group (Organization focused on women-led micro-enterprises in rural Maharashtra
* Key initiatives of Venture Center of interest to Social Enterprises:
  + Pre-incubation and business planning support
  + Training programs and networking opportunities
  + Referrals and networks
  + Funding advisory and in-house seed fund
  + Subsidized infrastructure (25% discount on all services)
  + Intellectual property advisory and technology sourcing/ commercialization support
  + Library and social entrepreneurship collection
* Future initiatives planned by Venture for Social Enterprises:
  + Venture Center is raising a corpus fund for supporting fellowships for budding social entrepreneurs through their first year of developing their business idea.
  + Venture Center is planning to initiate a Social Enterprise Lecture Series and build a networking of mentors focusing on social enterprises.
  + Venture Center is working with NCL Innovations to try and build a database of technology offerings available to social enterprises.