

Axis Bank Foundation launches Enterprise Development Programme for NextGen Artisans

June 24, 2024

- *The Foundation launched its first artisan-focused, nation-wide skill development initiative in partnership with Creative Dignity, as part of its Sustainable Livelihood Programme*
- *The programme aims to build the design, digital, business and marketing skills of over 100 artisan entrepreneurs and 200 artisans over a period of three years*

Axis Bank Foundation (ABF) announced the launch of “**Enterprise Development Programme for NextGen Artisans**”, that aims to help over 300 rural artisans develop their entrepreneurial capabilities and skills. The programme was launched on June 24th in the Indian Institute of Craft Design, Jaipur. The inaugural workshop was launched by **Dhruvi Shah, Executive Trustee and CEO of Axis Bank Foundation; Dr. Toolika Gupta, Director of IICD Jaipur & Creative Dignity Advisory Council Member; and Meera Goradia, Chairperson of Creative Dignity** and attended by artisan entrepreneurs, students, and faculty from the Indian Institute of Craft Design (IICD). The Enterprise Development Programme for NextGen Artisans is a step towards uplifting artisan entrepreneurs’ nationwide and foster sustainable growth and economic empowerment within India's artisan community.

Under ‘Sustainable Livelihood Programme’, ABF has partnered with Creative Dignity to train and prepare the next generation of artisans in developing their digital, business and marketing skills, familiarise them with business management and market development; thereby empowering them to expand their business on online and offline platforms. This programme will address the persistent issue of informality in the artisan sector, inadequate and fragmented information, and an unequal playing field for micro-entrepreneurs. Over the next three years, the programme will strive to bridge these gaps and achieve incremental improvements in the income levels of participating artisans and artisan entrepreneurs. The programme aligns with ABF’s vision of fostering sustainable livelihoods and creating equitable opportunities for vulnerable rural communities in India.

The workshop will focus on three key areas, over the next three years:

- **Digital Skills and Marketing:** Enhancing artisans' ability to utilize social media and digital platforms to boost their businesses.

- **Business and Market Development:** Providing insights into business planning, production management, and market linkages.
- **Supply Chain Management:** Focusing on production planning, inventory management, quality control, and operational best practices.

Speaking on the launch, **Dhruvi Shah, Executive Trustee and CEO of Axis Bank Foundation** said, “Artisans represents our rich cultural heritage and it’s a critical livelihood for many families in the country. In partnership with Creative Dignity, we are embarking on mission to expand the potential of the creative economy by building on to the foundational skill of creativity and design. The Enterprise Development Programme for NextGen Artisans aims to bridge the skill gap of traditional artisans to engage fluently with modern market. It’s also an attempt to address the aspirations of youth from artisan families to create future ready business models.”

The programme will include physical workshop followed by online support and training on various skills to familiarize the artisans that will help them grow their businesses in a competitive market. It is open to all artisans specialized in handmade crafts, aspiring artisan entrepreneurs, women-led social enterprises, and specifically artisans based in the remote and rural areas. Artisans from any parts of India, engaged in diverse crafts such as handloom weaving, block printing, embroidery, metal crafts, leather crafts, hand painting, and stone art, can participate in this programme.

The artisan entrepreneurs can apply for the programme through,

Online registration at <https://bit.ly/CDArtisanOutreach> , or

Reach Creative Dignity through WhatsApp/Call on +91 79894 14263, or

Email Creative Dignity at aefacilitation@createdignity.org

Speaking on the launch, **Meera Goradia, Chairperson of Creative Dignity** said, “Enterprise Development Programme for NextGen Artisans with Axis Bank Foundation is a step further for Creative Dignity as a network to take its vision in building a nimble entrepreneurship development programme accessible across India through its partners and members that addresses key areas like digital marketing, design, entrepreneurship, supply chain management, value addition and infrastructure. This will be supported by mentorship and market access. The programme will comprise a series of related training modules and value addition at the cluster level along with appropriate capital and market access.”

India's rich crafts are integral to rural life. The Enterprise Development Programme for NextGen Artisans represents a significant step towards empowering these artisan communities. This initiative not only supports artisans in enhancing their skills and income but also reinforces ABF's commitment to its mission of improving the livelihoods of rural communities and fostering dignity within these communities.