



## **Sayomdeb Mukherjee**

***Experienced Project Specialist with a demonstrated history of working in the non-profit organization management industry. Skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Management, Business Analysis, Leadership, and Team Management. Strong program and project management professional with a Bachelor's degree focused in English Language and Literature/Letters from Indira Gandhi National Open University.***

***E-mail: [sayomdeb@enableindia.org](mailto:sayomdeb@enableindia.org)***

# **Project Discovery, Share Solutions, and Create Impact**

***Sayomdeb Mukherjee (Den). Senior Manager for EnAble India – EILabs***

## ***Abstract***

The meaning of the word 'Solution" is to find an alternative method of overcoming a challenge by working around the problem to live a life of dignity and independence. It could be a product, workflow, or a unique way of doing something that enables a person to perform the task they normally would have difficulty in accomplishing.

Many of us use such simple yet innovative solutions daily, sometimes without realizing their importance. Persons with disabilities and their caregivers or family members are no exemption from this. However, such solutions mostly remain undocumented.

Project Discovery is a platform aimed at collating different solutions in the form of short videos and making them available to ALL.

***Keywords: Solution, People with Disabilities, Awards, dignity, independence, community, approach, inclusion, innovations, Impact, Grassroot.***

## **Project Discovery, Share Solutions, and Create Impact**

### **Introduction**

***"Necessity, as they say, is the mother of inventions".***

Whenever faced with a challenge, our innate curiosity pushes us to find solutions. Innovations come about as a result of our natural need to find solutions to all problems that confront us. The main idea of '*Project Discovery*' is to find thousands of such innovations, which emerge organically and continuously in the disability sector and create a repository.

Overcoming barriers by finding path-breaking innovations is a crucial need for all human beings. However, the humungous amount of information about useful innovations is scattered, not easy to discover, and often lost. It was imperative to collect and collate all this data so that it was easily available to all those who needed it. To enable easy discovery and dissemination of information about these vital and useful innovations, Project Discovery initiated the process of documenting and cataloguing them in a scientific manner.

For this project, the definition of the word 'solution' is an alternative method to overcoming challenges by working around a problem to *live a life of dignity and independence*. It could be a product, workflow, or a unique way of doing something that enables a person to perform or contribute to a task they normally would have difficulty accomplishing.

Project Discovery aims to collect the maximum number of solution videos from the community, store them systematically in an open-access repository, and publicise them for everyone around the world to see, *while also giving all innovators with disability and stakeholders their due credit!*

## **Formation**

**While working on this project, the back-end team realized that by giving credit to the grassroots innovators, the process of restoring agency is happening. Integrating all forms of disability into a single platform helps to develop a grassroots connection between the organization and stakeholders, to interchange their expertise and knowledge.**

**The story behind developing every assistive solution is unique. Despite the uniqueness, the same solution has the potential to help and empower or inspire someone on the other side of the world. The development of a solution-centric mindset in the entire ecosystem of disability should include parents, caregivers, and professionals.**

***Bringing in every stakeholder in the process of inclusion was important. It is beautiful to see the existence of an ecosystem with the absolute include-ability of each person with a disability, whose life changed with a solution, and the person who empathized to make or curate that solution.***

## **Community First Approach**

**When we talk about assistive solutions for persons with disabilities, we often think of high-tech solutions. In daily life, a person with a disability may use many low-tech, simple, non-tech, or even self-invented solutions to break or bypass barriers and become productive. The world over, we have seen that people with disabilities (PwDs) and people in their support networks, regularly come up with new solutions to effectively contribute in promoting accessibility and inclusion. The solution-centric mindset in the**

disability sector has the potential to help scale the factors of empowerment for persons with disabilities.

We bring you **Project Discovery/Discovery Awards**, with its novel idea of having a competition of assistive solution videos. We aim to develop the community beyond the barriers of international boundaries. The idea is to unite one billion persons with disabilities and all stakeholders, to understand the value of solutions in the lives of people with disabilities. With the help of this competition, **Team Project Discovery** intends to *crowdsource* assistive solutions for the upliftment of persons with disabilities and bring productivity in various forms including economic empowerment.

To repeat the adage that 'necessity' is the mother of all inventions,' the solution-centric mindset is rooted in the belief, that '*Everyone is an innovator*', and has the potential to scale up the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

*Discovery Awards is an international platform which recognizes innovative solutions and showcases the stories of grassroots innovators around the world!*

Project Discovery from its inception has been a community-driven, volunteer-led project. There is no one individual or organization at the centre, community directs the show in every season.

The conceptualization, structuring and branding of the project were done keeping in mind the core concept of the community first! Even though EnAble India has ideated the project, this project capacity is replicable anywhere in the world.

**Integrating all forms of sociocultural diversity of disability, various economic backgrounds and stakeholders gives this project *the flavour of inclusion in the "backyard" in the disability sector.***

## **Conclusion**

**Project Discovery has touched the lives of people with disabilities and stakeholders, by bridging the silos and integrating the sector. The platform of *Zero Project* has the potential to recognise inventors and innovators and to bring in the mindset of always *thinking of solutions*. Every identifiable problem has its own solution in the sector which needs to be identified by the grassroots innovators.**

**Keeping the problem in the centre and co-creating with the person and the stakeholder, helps to develop functional and acceptable solutions. Person centric approach to identifying Solutions is the way forward which needs to be accepted both in and outside the sector.**