Xavier’s Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged

St. Xavier’s College, Mumbai
Launch of the accessible canteen menu of the St. Xavier’s College Mumbai

Training on Inclusive Education for professors of IIT Madras

Advanced MS Excel training for persons with visual impairment at XRCVC-Viviana Extension centre
Students participating in a cricket match for the visually impaired

Achieving Access

A video magnifier being lent to a student as a part of our Assistive Technology Lending Scheme

Our youngest students with visual impairment being trained to use the Brailler
About Us

The Xavier’s Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged (XRCVC), a department of St. Xavier’s College, Mumbai, was set up in 2003 as an Assistive Technology support centre for students with visual impairment in higher education. Through its various initiatives over the years, it has grown into a national-level direct support and training centre as well as an advocacy and awareness cell for persons with disabilities (PwDs).
Our Vision
A diverse and inclusive world where all, irrespective of disability, can thrive.

Our Mission
Engage with diverse stakeholders to accelerate inclusion in education, products, services, and mindsets through replicable models, research, technology, and advocacy-based interventions.
Our Work

XRCVC’s interventions are three-pronged:

**Inclusive Education & Learning** – aims to provide access to quality education to lay the foundation of dignified and independent living for persons with disabilities

**Accessible Products & Services** – aims to make Assistive Technology and Services as well as mainstream inaccessible products and services more accessible and affordable

**Awareness & Advocacy** – aims at building an inclusive world by transforming mindsets about persons with disabilities
The Abacus being demonstrated as an AT as a part of an Antarchakshu® awareness event

Laboratory Skills training for high school students with visual impairment
Inclusive Education & Learning

Our Inclusive Education & Learning programme improves access to and quality of inclusive education to enable independent living for persons with disabilities. It addresses the challenges of lack of trained teachers, special educators, lack of training services and accessible teaching-learning resources.

This is achieved through:

- Training programmes for persons with disabilities, both needs-based and standardised, designed to facilitate their inclusion in educational institutions, workplaces and the larger community

- Trainings for special educators and general teachers to create more inclusive educational institutions

- Consultancy services through our SHAMIL (Services Harnessing Accessibility Models to Inclusive Learning) Programme to educational institutes to help replicate our 360-degree approach to inclusion

- Creation of accessible books and teaching-learning aids as well as research into the fields of accessibility of educational content and educational aids
**Impact**

- 6,300+ persons with disabilities (PwDs) reached
- 5,000+ stakeholders reached through 150+ stakeholder trainings
- 2,000+ teaching-learning aids (TLAs) available for lending from our TLA library
- 1,400+ trainings conducted
- 700+ books created in accessible format

**Key Achievements**

- Primary member of DAISY Forum of India (DFI) and Sugamya Pustakalaya
- Training Partners for Maharashtra State Faculty Development Academy (MSFDA) for training on Inclusion in higher education
- Consultants for premier institutes across the country like IIT Delhi and IIT Madras for setting up systems, processes and policies for inclusive education through our Services Harnessing Accessibility Models to Inclusive Learning (SHAMIL) programme
Accessible Products & Services

Our Accessible Products and Services programme aims to improve accessibility of mainstream inaccessible products, services and infrastructure as well as affordability and availability of effective Assistive Technologies for persons with disabilities.

This is through:

- Accessibility Testing of products and services; and User Feedback for website and mobile applications development
- Testing for Assistive Technology companies for developing affordable user technologies
- Providing consultancy services to organizations to make their services and infrastructure accessible
**Impact**

250+ Assistive Technology available in-house

100+ products tested

**Key Achievements**

- Designed an accessible Air Safety Manual and In-flight menu for Akasa Air
- Actively contributed to deployment of 30,000+ accessible ATMs across India for persons with visual impairment in collaboration with Indian Banking Association (IBA’s), NCR Corporation India and Diebold India
- Designed and developed first audio-tactile restaurant menu for Bombay Blue Restaurant – listed in the Limca Book of Records
- Accessibility testing and user feedback for websites and apps like MyJio, Amazon.in, Jet Airways, PayTM, etc.
- Provided inputs for low-cost local Assistive Technologies such as BrailleMe, Smart Cane and KIBO
- Supported end-to-end development of Accessible Physiotherapy machine for practitioners with visual impairment
Awareness & Advocacy

Our Awareness and Advocacy programme focuses on building an inclusive world, one mindset at a time, by addressing myths and misconceptions about lives of persons with disabilities.

We achieve this through:

- Antarchakshu® – a simulation-based sensitisation and awareness workshop

- Workshops and demonstrations on Assistive Technologies for stakeholders

- Diversity Discourse – a structured learning programme designed to develop an inclusive mindset
**Impact**

- **42,000+** persons reached through **600+** Antarchakshu® awareness events and workshops
- **11,000+** persons reached through Assistive Technology Awareness Exhibitions
- **1,100+** persons reached through **40+** Diversity Discourse Courses across various institutes

**Key Achievements**

- Providing print access to the print disabled through Copyright (Amendment) Act 2012 through our advocacy efforts
- Change in RBI and NSDL rules and regulations for independent operation of bank accounts and Demat accounts for persons visual impairment
- Changed the CBSE, HSC, Physiotherapy and Psychology education rules for students with visual impairment
Orientation and Mobility training for students with visual impairment

A person with visual impairment using an Accessible ATM machine

An Assistive Technology demonstration for educators at the XRCVC to enable them make their classrooms more inclusive
Our Global Reach

- India
- United Kingdom
- Germany
- Kenya
- Nigeria
- Ghana
- Oman
- Bangladesh
- Malaysia
- Philippines
Testimonials

“From a very young age, I had a dream of becoming a doctor and it seemed impossible after I became visually impaired at the age of 8. However, XRCVC showed me that I could take up physiotherapy. By doing this, it has helped me make my dream come true. I am a successful professional today and I owe it to XRCVC.”

- Dr Kritika Purohit, Physiotherapist

“Initially, I had a limited understanding about the use of the computer, participating in the computer training, my knowledge about computer usage has now improved to a reasonable degree of confidence.

As indicated, the computer training had a tremendous significant impact on my knowledge about the use of the computer. I can now use the computer with ease without any major impediment.”

- Mohammed Salifu, XRCVC Computer Training student, Ghana
What XRCVC meant to me goes beyond words and expression in any form. The computer skills I gained at XRCVC have infused confidence, sense of independence and evergrowing ambitions in me. It opened up the limitless horizon of knowledge before me. Proficiency (to some extent) acquired because of XRCVC is still serving me in all areas of my studies, profession and social life. Moral support by XRCVC at all time and of all kind has stabilized me from within. I could have the idea of pursuing civil service as a career option because of support system provided by XRCVC. I have achieved the success in Civil Services Examination because I transformed greatly in XRCVC as a confident person. The personality of Prof. Sam Taraporevala always serves as a role model for me on how a leader should be.

- Pranjal Patil, IAS Batch of 2018
“XRCVC is a resource centre which along with all the resources provides us a way to use those resources in the most efficient way possible. Any service without proper guidance to use it is useless, and XRCVC totally eliminates such instances. I have always wanted to become an IT professional, though the world tries to dissuade me. Each time it does, XRCVC helps me break the barriers. XRCVC is like my best friend, whom I trust to hold me if I fall, to hold my hand if I can’t find a way, and hence my driving force to live my life just like any other person without disability.”

- Ronak Shah, PhD candidate, Cybersecurity department, Technical University of Delft in the Netherlands

“The Faculty Development Programme (FDP) really helped me enhance my knowledge about students with disabilities and how we as teachers can play a very important role in making the college more inclusive. Please continue to organize such programmes. Looking forward to more such events.”

- Suraj Agarwal, Assistant Professor, Gargi College, Delhi (FDP Participant)
I thank XRCVC for helping me during my Graduation...I also came to know about the college fest Antarchakshu and I volunteered in the fest. XRCVC also helped me by allotting a buddy to help me. I also wish to thank Xavier’s college as I learnt the basics of stone painting during ECC hours and I’m following my passion of making and selling stone arts.

- Nehal Tiwari, Associate Consultant – Technology Consulting, E&Y India

Antarchakshu... changes your outlook completely and helps remove barriers in terms of limiting [persons with disabilities] to certain jobs and roles only”.

- Angelica Desiree Pinto, Manager – Talent Acquisition, Hindustan Unilever

When I was a student at St. Xavier’s, XRCVC extended all kind of support and assistance to me. They arranged a motorised wheelchair for me to use within the college premises.

- Ibrahim Parkar, Associate Software Engineer, Deloitte
Our Publications

2020-2023

✦ Building Blocks of Inclusion: Policy Paper for Physiotherapy Education and Practice for Persons with Blindness and Low Vision in India
✦ Off to School VI Go - A Report on XRCVC's Inclusive Education Project
✦ Accessible E-Content Creation - Standards and Guidelines
✦ Banking On Accessibility - A Case for Accessible Banking for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)

2015-2020

✦ Degrees of Accessibility - A 360° User Perspective Report on Existing Accessible Geometry Construction Kits for Students with Blindness with Disabilities (PwDs)
✦ ABC of Inclusive Publishing

2010-2015

✦ Equip Your World – A Synoptic View of Access Technologies for the Visually Challenged
✦ ‘I’ for Inclusion - A Handbook on Mainstreaming Education for Students with Blindness and Low Vision
✦ Numbers and Reactions - A Report on How Maths and Science Can be Made Accessible for the Visually Challenged
✦ Bankers Guide to Inclusive Banking
✦ Limitations of the Licensing System to Create Accessible Copies for the Print Impaired: A Policy Paper
✦ Write-Right: Understanding Homonyms Better
Our Journey

2003
XRCVC is set up as an Assistive Technology Centre for students with visual impairment

2006
Started Advocacy Programs to build inclusion in wider systems and processes

2012
Started Inclusive STEM Research and intervention
Trademarked Antarchakshu®

2015
Set up our new facility at Viviana Mall, Thane XRCVC-Viviana Extension
Started school level intervention based on STEM learnings

2016
Expanded work to other disabilities

2022
Scaling through Consultancies and Trainings
Special skills training for special educators of Muskan Foundation

Antarchakshu® Workshop at a corporate office
Honourable CM of Goa at an Assistive Technology exhibition by XRCVC at Purple Fest, Goa 2023

Launch of the Accessible Menu created by XRCVC for Bombay Blue Restaurant which has found mention in the Limca Book of Records
Awards and Recognition

Sarojini Trilok Nath National Award of the National Association for the Blind, Delhi - Best Institution - 2023

Dr Sam Taraporevala, Executive Director – XRCVC awarded the "Angels of Mumbai" award by the Free Press Journal – 2023

Nipman Foundation Microsoft Equal Opportunity Award - Enabler Category (Inclusive Schools – Higher Education) to St. Xavier’s College, Mumbai recognising the work of the college and the XRCVC in creating an inclusive campus - 2018

Louis Braille Award by the Shree Pragna Chakshu Mahila Seva Kunj, Surendranagar, Gujarat to Dr. Sam Taraporevala - 2016
Dr. Sam Taraporevala conferred NCPEDP Mphasis Universal Design Awards 2010 for impact in the area of accessibility and universal design (For Banking and accessible ATMs)

Dr. Sam Taraporevala, Executive Director, XRCVC was awarded the 11th Shell Helen Keller Award by the NCPEDP - 2009

Dr. Sam Taraporevala, Executive Director, XRCVC was awarded CNN-IBN’s citizen journalist award - 2008

Dr. Sam Taraporevala, Executive Director, XRCVC was nominated and recognized by Hindustan Times as part of their ‘Spirit of Mumbai’ campaign - 2008
XRCVC at National and International Policy-Making Bodies

★ XRCVC, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai
  • XRCVC was granted observer status by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Geneva, Switzerland.

★ Dr. Sam Taraporevala (Executive Director – XRCVC) was
  • Member, Braille Council of India
  • Member, General Council of the National Institute of the Visually Handicapped (NIVH)
  • Member, Indian Banking Association's Sub-Committee on ATM systems for Visually Challenged Persons
  • Member of the Expert Committee to decide and list out modern Assistive devices for all categories of PWDs under revised ADIP Scheme, Department of Disability Affairs, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt of India.
• Member, Sub-group on Accessibility, Mobility, Research & Innovation to give inputs for the 12th Five-year Plan
• Vice president and Chair - Policy implementation for the Daisy Forum of India (DFI).
• Member of Sub-Committee of Experts constitute by the Ministry of Education for drafting Guidelines for the Development of e-Content for Children with Disabilities

姓名 Ketan Kothari (Managing Consultant – Programs, XRCVC) was

• Member, Rehabilitation Council of India Expert committee on revision of syllabi for Diploma in Education (Visual Impairment) and Diploma in Computer Education (Visual Impairment)
• Member, Rehabilitation Council of India Expert committee on revision of syllabi for graduate and post-graduate courses for special educators
Our services can be availed by all persons with disabilities.

We also provide services to educational institutions, financial institutions, corporates, any other service provider, group, organization interested in knowing more about inclusion and making their services and products accessible.

Please feel free to contact us for any support you may require.