Innovator Factor Foundation:
An Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF) Alumni Case Study

Introduction

Apurv Mishra has been called a child prodigy. The 19 year-old inventor from Orissa, India patented his first invention when he was only eleven. In 2006, Apurv caught the world's attention at the Intel ISEF. His invention, called a "Glabenator", which uses movements of the forehead to control a computer allowing those suffering from paralysis a way to communicate, earned him a finalist slot and the opportunity to travel to the United States to compete in the Intel ISEF. As the world's largest pre-college science competition, Intel ISEF brings together more than 1,500 young scientists from over 51 countries to share ideas, showcase cutting-edge projects and find innovative solutions. Apurv took that opportunity to heart. Together with other ISEF finalists, he created the Innovator Factor Foundation (IFF), a global incubator for innovators.

An Idea is Born

The concept behind the non-profit IFF is to create an ecosystem of freelance innovators, corporations and universities that can help inventors nurture good ideas into products with a compelling market value. Today, IFF has partnered with the European Centre for Open Innovation in Belgium and with KIIT University in India to enable thousands of innovators from around the world to turn their dreams into reality.

Intel ISEF and Innovator Factor Foundation: The Sum of the Parts

In 2006, when Apurv arrived in Indianapolis for Intel ISEF, he was deeply impressed by the number of other young, talented people from around the world who would have the opportunity to network and collaborate. "Everyone had a similar vision of changing the world through innovation there," he said. "Something clicked." In Apurv's mind a platform for innovators from around the world to collaborate, share ideas and move their inventions forward with an open innovation model was taking shape. Before the weeklong event was over, Apurv had more than 400 Intel ISEF participants signed up to participate in his new concept. The group was beginning to spark. The problem with conventional innovation, they believed, was that it had a limited scope. An organization like IFF could give innovators from all industries a chance to interact and create truly new ideas and thus the concept of "open innovation" was born.

Apurv's efforts at Intel ISEF impressed Intel Chairman Craig Barrett. "The most interesting thing about this guy," Barrett said, "was that he started a network of innovators right during the event."

"Collaboration is key to the best innovation, and I believe OpenScientificNetwork has tremendous potential to bring together people from around the world to promote and enable open innovation." says Ashish Bakshi who is an Intel ISEF alumni actively involved with IFF and the President of Yale University's Engineering Design Team.

More than 3000 freelance innovators, many of whom are Intel ISEF alumni, are now registered with IFF. "Collaboration is key to the best innovation, and I believe OpenScientificNetwork has tremendous potential to bring together people from around the world to promote and enable open innovation." says Ashish Bakshi who is an Intel ISEF alumni actively involved with IFF and the President of Yale University's Engineering Design Team. "Since my involvement as IFF managing member, I am in process to implement it in my current university (MIT & Harvard)" says Asad Moten , President of MIT Student Research Association & Editor-in-Chief of MIT Harvard Research Journal.

"The best thing about the Intel ISEF," Apurv reported, "is that each of the alumni comes with unique skills. All of them are technology superstars who come from diverse communities and locations. With each other's help, we can do anything."

About the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair

The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair is about nurturing, celebrating and launching the next generation of innovators, which we believe is critical to Intel's success, to global competitiveness, and to opening up the world of opportunity for youth around the world. It is the world's largest pre-college science competition, bringing together thousands of young scientists to share ideas, showcase cutting-edge science, and compete for scholarships. The competition encourages students to solve problems and tackle challenging scientific questions through authentic research.

For more information about Intel ISEF, visit: www.intel.com/education/isef