



Tools and Ideas for Having a Successful India Giving Day in Your Community

Updated February 11, 2023

Summary and Overview

This toolkit is designed primarily for local chapters of national organizations focused on humanitarian work in India, and also for small organizations, informal groups of friends, and individuals who are involved in—or interested in getting involved in—philanthropy and volunteering benefitting India. We invite those groups and others to participate in the first-ever [INDIA GIVING DAY](#) being held on March 2, 2023. The campaign leading up to the national day of giving is [already underway](#) for giving to 20+ national organizations listed on the India Giving Day website. India Giving Day starts at 6pm ET on March 1 and continues till 11:59pm PT on March 2. Early giving to the 20+ organizations will commence on February 14. India Giving Day is an initiative of the [India Philanthropy Alliance](#). For quick facts about IGD, see Appendix 1 below.

The campaign organizers are hopeful that observances including in-person and online events will be held throughout the country. Events can be tiny, small, medium-sized or large. They can be private, invitation-only gatherings or open to the public. They can be exclusively educational or cultural in nature, or they can have a fund-raising component (or not), or they can involve giving an award to generous donors and unsung heroes. They can focus on the good work of one India-focused nonprofit, or on several such organizations.

We also hope that in all IGD related events, youth and young professionals are welcomed and meaningfully involved. We have only 3 requirements for affiliated events, which are described below—one of which is to take pictures of whatever you do and send them to the campaign leadership to document what happened in this inaugural year. Individuals working on their own can also participate in and advance the campaign.

In the pages that follow, we describe the campaign in more depth and then outline some options for how groups and individuals can participate. We conclude with 5 appendices. The outline is as follows:

1. Background on India Giving Day
2. Activities that can be undertaken by groups
3. Activities that can be undertaken by individuals
4. Appendix 1: India Giving Day Fact Sheet
5. Appendix 2: Suggested format to apply to be an IGD affiliated event
6. Appendix 3: Videos that Can be Shown at IGD-Affiliated In-Person and Online Events
7. Appendix 4: Resources about Philanthropy
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Background: Why India Giving Day & Our Simple Policies Related to Joining the Fun

India Giving Day (IGD) is a new annual tradition that will kick off in 2023 and be continued far into the future – as long as there are unmet needs in India that American philanthropy can help address.

Campaign oversight: We have put in place a Campaign Secretariat, a Steering Committee, and a group of National Co-Chairs with vast experience in philanthropy. The role of these groups is to enhance greater participation in the campaign, and support and augment the efforts to address urgent human and social needs in India.

The rationale behind India Giving Day: This is a national effort to recognize, celebrate, advance, and educate people about impactful and joyful giving that benefits India. There are abundant resources available for impactful nonprofits working in India which they can access if the case for them can be made in a compelling manner. It is a shift from a scarcity mentality to compete for a fixed “pie” of resources; rather it assumes that a bigger pie can be baked and shared in order to enhance the individual and collective impact of the organizations. Finally, it recognizes that Indian nonprofits, including many active in fundraising and constituency-building in the U.S., are exceptionally good at magnifying their impact by collaborating with the Indian government at the local level (as described in [this article](#)).

The timeline and the ecosystem: At the center of this campaign—which has already begun – are 20+ outstanding nonprofits that have come together in this effort and listed on the India Giving Day website and donation portal. India Giving Day starts at 6pm ET on March 1 and continues till 11:59pm PT on March 2. Early giving to the 20+ organizations will commence on February 14. A \$100,000 matching pool has been raised (thanks to our founding sponsor [Rural India Supporting Trust](#)) to incentivize giving to these organizations, and everyone is encouraged to generously support as many of them as they can, as generously as they can.

At the same time, India Giving Day is not limited to people who work for or are closely affiliated with these 20+ organizations. We invite and encourage people throughout the country, especially young people, to come together in ways that are meaningful to them to celebrate this historic day. Below we outline some ideas about how local groups can observe IGD, but please don’t feel limited to those. Come up with your own, hopefully much better ideas! In addition, individuals can participate on their own in a variety of ways that will also be described below.

As campaign organizers, we ask that people who hold events or undertake other actions in solidarity with the ideals and intentions of India Giving Day commit to a few simple rules:

1. Especially if you are going to use the IGD brand and logo, let us know what you are doing in advance (even if your plans are still evolving). If it is a private event, we will simply note what you are doing. If it is public event, we will help you promote it if you want us to do so. When you let us know what you are doing, commit to the principles below by using the template that appears in appendix 1.
2. In any IGD affiliated event or activity, do not invoke religion or politics inappropriately, or criticize any nonprofit organization. An inappropriate involvement of religion or politics is anything that would make a reasonable person holding different religious or political views

than the speaker/presenter/majority feel uncomfortable or excluded. IGD is above all meant to be an inclusive and welcoming process and campaign.

3. During the event, take photos and send us the best of them, as well as a summary of what happened, what you learned (that can be applied in future years), and the number of people involved.

Events need not be on March 2, though that is a great option. Having events anytime during the 2 weeks leading up to IGD, or the days immediately after it, can work well also.

Activities That Can Be Undertaken By Groups

Events of any size can be held in solidarity with India Giving Day. They can be focused on educating people about a single organization and the problem(s) it addresses, or multiple organizations. They can be held by a chapter of a national India-focused nonprofit, chapters of multiple organizations, or simply people who care about India and its humanitarian and environmental needs and support (or are open to supporting) multiple organizations that address them. They can be a 500-person conference or gala, or a dinner party attended by 4 couples—or anything in between!

The agenda for such events can be as varied as the community of Americans who love India. In terms of meeting the costs of such events, small ones can rely mainly on in-kind contributions from the main people involved, and hopefully a free or nearly free event space (a community center or a someone's home). For larger events, getting individual or institutional sponsors and a tax-exempt group to accept donations related to meeting those costs would be ideal. Examples of events or activities include the following (and many of these ideas could be combined in a single gathering, as they are not mutually exclusive):

- **LEARNING/ENRICHMENT EVENT (OPTION 1):** Have a panel discussion and/or keynote speaker about impactful and joyful philanthropy and how it can help people in India (local professors, people who have travelled to India and seen nonprofit work, staff of nonprofits, etc. can serve as speakers)
- **LEARNING/ENRICHMENT EVENT (OPTION 2):** Have a panel discussion and/or keynote speaker about good general practices in fundraising, or some other interesting topic.
- **CULTURAL AND/OR FOOD-THEMED EVENT.** Invite local youth (or others) to perform some kind of cultural program (dance, song, art, etc.). Or, you can have people come and present their favorite recipes for delicious Indian food. (You can send the best recipes to IPA and if we get enough, we can self-publish a short cookbook based on them.)
- **FUN ACTIVITY FOLLOWED BY “LUNCH AND LEARNING.”** Organize an enjoyable activity such as a cricket or soccer match, yoga class, or performance followed by a luncheon

that includes a short video (examples can be found in appendix 2) and a personal speech by someone who has been involved in philanthropy benefitting India.

- **INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION.** Organize a participatory discussion about a topic such as, “What will it take to end poverty and protect the environment in India?” or “What will it take for the Indian American community to realize its full potential as philanthropists?” In a small dinner party, this can be discussed during or after a meal. In a larger event, it may be best to break people into groups to allow for the broadest participation, and then aggregate the best ideas of the various groups.
- **CIRCULATE AN ARTICLE OR VIDEO AND COME TOGETHER TO DISCUSS IT.** Ask attendees to read an article or view a video (such as a TED Talk) about high-impact philanthropy and come to the meeting prepared to discuss it. (This will work best for small gatherings composed of people who know each other.) Examples of articles that can be shared in advance appear in appendix 3.
- **VIEWING AND DISCUSSION.** Watch one or more videos together as a group about the good work being done by India-focused nonprofits (see appendix 2 for links to some of the top videos we found that the 20+ listed IGD nonprofits have put online). After viewing one or more videos, have a discussion about them and what they call people to do, what people learned from them, and what feedback the group has for the organization that produced it.
- **MONITOR PROGRESS.** Track the IGD leader board (even if just in the background of your event) which will show how the 20+ organizations are doing in terms of attracting donors and other support on India Giving Day. (This can be a part of any in-person or virtual event.)
- **[NATIONAL ESSAY COMPETITION](#) THEMED EVENT.** Announce and discuss IPA’s national essay competition by, for example, discussing the winning essays from 2022, 2021 and 2020 (ideally involving local youth in the process) and/or having local youth describe the ideas they intend to write about in their 2023 competition submissions (which will be due July 1).
- **LEARN FROM YOUNG PEOPLE.** Identify some other way for local youth to discuss good work they are doing to help India or any other places where there are unmet needs.
- **RECOGNIZE PHILANTHROPIC LEADERSHIP.** Give an award or awards to model philanthropists in the community, unsung heroes working or volunteering for India-focused nonprofits, young people who have made a great start in being civic minded, writers or academics who have advanced scholarship related to humanitarian work, or others deserving of recognition.
- **HAVE FUN WITH SOCIAL MEDIA.** Engage participants in using social media creatively to promote IGD (using #IndiaGivingDay and a hashtag for your local event, such as

#IGDinCHICAGO) and having a panel of judges recognize the most creative use of social media during the event.

- **SHARE INSIGHTS.** Have participants share their most meaningful experiences in addressing, or helping others address, humanitarian and environmental needs in India, or elsewhere. They can also share some insight they have discovered about thoughtful, joyful, and impactful giving—ideas others could consider applying. (In a small event this can be a single discussion involving everyone, possibly with a facilitator, whereas in a larger event people can be initially broken up into groups.)
- **FORUM FOR NONPROFITS.** Have multiple India-focused nonprofits in your community present what they are doing and how their work complements the others who are presenting alongside them. In this way, nudge nonprofits from a competitive/scarcity worldview to a collaborative/abundance worldview.
- **GO ONLINE!** Organize an online meeting or webinar of any size focused on a topic relevant to India Giving Day. You can request the IGD Secretariat to supply you with a guest speaker, if desired. Show videos (see appendix 3) and/or the IGD leader board during your event.

Of course, you are highly encouraged to come up with your own, much better and locally relevant ideas and then tell the rest of the IGD community about what you did!

Activities That Can Be Undertaken By Individuals

It is not always practical for people to gather under one roof to observe something like India Giving Day. For those who prefer to operate on their own, here are some ideas:

- **EMAIL CAMPAIGN.** Write emails to as many friends, family, and associates as you can, to invite them to support your favorite nonprofit. One volunteer who took part in a giving day for the Miami community wrote 6,000 emails. Most of the emails were the same, but he customized each by writing a personal note at the top to each recipient. He was able to get to the point where he could send 60 emails per hour, and he was one of the most successful fundraisers in the Miami region for this giving day.
- **P2P CAMPAIGN.** Use the Peer-to-Peer fundraising tools on the IGD website to start a fundraising campaign in February for your favored nonprofit.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA.** Use social media to raise awareness of your favorite nonprofits and explain why you admire them. Promote articles about them to your followers and encourage them to support their IGD campaign if they are among the 20 listed organizations, or, if they

are not, to support their general fundraising efforts. Amplify content about IGD being put out by the India Philanthropy Alliance on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

- PARTICIPATE IN ONLINE OR IN-PERSON EVENTS. Join one or more of the online or in-person meetings and webinars being organized in the days leading up to March 2, 2023. (Check the [IGD website](#) for details and registration information.) Encourage others to join you in taking part.
- SUPPORT OR PARTICIPATE IN THE 2023 [NATIONAL ESSAY COMPETITION](#). If you are a middle school or high school student, start drafting your submission for IPA's 2023 national essay competition and circulate your draft to friends and family so they can give you feedback. If you are not a middle school or high school student, share the opportunity to be part of the competition with students or people who have access to them such as parents, teachers, librarians, coaches, etc. Details about the 2023 competition are on the India Philanthropy Alliance website.

*Prepared by the IGD Secretariat
February 2023*

Appendix 1: India Giving Day – At A Glance

Campaign Sponsor:	India Philanthropy Alliance
Start Time/Date:	March 1, 2023, at 6pm ET
End Time/Date:	March 2, 2023, at 11:59pm PT
Start of Early Giving:	On February 14, 2023
Minimum Gift:	\$5
Participating Organizations:	Click here .
Affiliated Events:	Granted upon request and assurance by local organizers that politics and religion will not be involved in divisive ways, and that no nonprofit will be criticized.
Campaign Donors:	Rural India Supporting Trust (founding sponsor), MasterCard (corporate sponsor), Raj Family Foundation, Wadhvani Impact Trust, & Sehgal Foundation (angel sponsors).
Matching Funds/Prizes:	\$100,000 (campaign-wide; individual organizations may have additional pools)
National Co-Chairs:	Click here .
Steering Committee:	Click here .
IPA Social Media:	Twitter , Facebook , Instagram , LinkedIn

Appendix 2: Suggested Format for Applying to Have an IGD Affiliated Event

Dear Friends at the India Giving Day Secretariat,

A group of people in [your city/metro area/state] interested in India-focused giving are planning on holding an event on [date] in solidarity with India Giving Day. [Include a few details about the event, if possible.]

We commit to not invoking politics or religion in a way that would make a reasonable person with differing views than those being expressed formally during the event feel excluded or uncomfortable. We also commit to not speaking ill of any nonprofit organization, and to ensure that our event is dignified and positive (while acknowledging that organizers do not have complete control of events they are involved in).

We will send the IGD Secretariat some photos and the approximate number of people who attend, and any lessons we learn from the process of hosting the event so these can be shared with others.

In support of our efforts, we would like the following from the Secretariat [list any requests here, such as guest speakers, assistance with promoting the event if it is open to the public, a high-resolution version of the IGD logo, etc.].

Sincerely,

[Name or names of the organizer(s), and contact information]

Appendix 3: Videos that Can be Shown at IGD-Affiliated In-Person and Online Events

The following is a brief list of visually distinctive & informative videos hosted online by IGD participant organizations showcasing their work in India. These can be used at IGD events to reinforce the importance and effectiveness of the work that the organizations involved in IGD do in India. Click [here](#) for a link to a spreadsheet featuring brief descriptions and runtimes for each video below.

Organization	Video 1	Video 2
Agastya USA	Jhunjhunwala Discovery Center	Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam visits Agastya campus...
Akanksha Education Fund	Stronger Together Campaign 2022	Visit the DN Nagar Akanksha School in India
Akhand Jyoti	About Akhand Jyoti Eye Hospital...	Football for a cause at Akhandjyoti Eye Hospital
Akshaya Patra Foundation	Mega Kitchen Serves Millions...	Delivering Hope
American India Foundation	AIF Corporate Film 2020	Deep Shaala: Diwali Celebration, Amreli, Gujarat
Antara International	Celebrating Mother's Day	
ARMANN	ARMMAN Dr. Aparna Hegde...	For Women by Women...
Arogya World	Arogya World Overview 2022	The Rise of Diabetes in India...
ATREE	Rearing Giants	Tamiraparani River
Children's Hope India	CH2 - Childrens Hope India	Children's Hope India - promo
Community Pure Water	Makta Madaram	
CRY America	Empowering Children in rural Orissa	Empowering Children in the Tribal Community
Foundation for Excellence	Tejaswini D. R,Ketan Govindbhai...	Documentary on FFE...
IDRF	IDRF and Arpana's Women Empowerment...	IDRF & Samerth's Water Harvesting...
Indiaspora	Introducing the 2021 Indiaspora...	
Lily Foundation	Lily Health Camp in West Bengal 2018	newsletter2021
MakerGhat	MakerGhat: a non-profit community...	
Miracle Foundation	Impossible - Miracle Foundation	Thrive India
Pratham USA	Pratham - Teaching at the Right Level	About Pratham
Project Echo	Project ECHO: Moving Knowledge...	
Sehgal Foundation	A Step towards Sustainable Farming	Together We Empower Rural India
SightLife	SightLife Impact on Corneal Blindness...	SightLife working in India

Teach For India U.S.	The Teach For India Movement...	Journey of a Fellow
Vibha	What Is Vibha?	Vibha's Impact Story
VisionSpring	Introduction to VisionSpring	Rajasthan Site Visit
WISH Foundation	WISH MP - Scale Madhya Pradesh Project	WISH and RELX partnership

There are also many videos, TED Talks, etc. on philanthropy, nonprofit work in India, and much more. In updated versions of this toolkit, we will share links to some. If you have some to suggest, send them to us at alex@indiaphilanthropyalliance.org

Appendix 4: Articles and Videos about High Impact Philanthropy

Below are a selection of articles and videos you can use in any way you see fit, including by sending one or more of them to participants in your India Giving Day event/dialogue in advance so that they can be discussed as part of your observance. Please suggest additions to this list that we can include in future versions.

Pieces of Thought Leadership by the India Philanthropy Alliance

[How Nonprofits Can Better Engage Young People](#), by Alex Counts, Sejal Desai, and Jay Sehgal, Chronicle of Philanthropy, December 15, 2022

[Nonprofit Success Strategies for Partnering with Government: Lessons from India](#), by Alex Counts and Nishant Pandey, Indiaspora Blog, October 2022

[The India Philanthropy Alliance Two Years On](#), by Alex Counts and Bala Venkatachalam, Indiaspora Blog, October 2021

Resources Regarding Indian American Philanthropy

[Indian American Philanthropy: Hitting the Big Time](#), Alex Counts, October 22, 2019

[Growing and Better Recognizing Indian-American Philanthropy: An Emerging Action Agenda](#), Alex Counts, Indiaspora Blog, September 16, 2018

[Are Indian Americans Good Givers?](#), Dahlberg/Indiaspora Report [a 13-minute video presentation of the report highlights by the primary author can be found [here](#)]

[Giving Back to India](#), Stanford Social Innovation Review

[Strengthening Philanthropic Giving and Impact Investing for Development in India](#), MacArthur Foundation, 2015

Award-Winning Essays by Indian American Youth

2022:

- Esha Gadi – “[A Women’s Strife; Transfiguring the Sexual Assault Justice System and Rape Culture in India](#)”.
- Riya Balaji – [2022 Winner \(Middle School Cohort\)](#).

2021:

- Rithani Saravanakumar – “[A Farmer’s Predicament; Revolutionizing the Agriculture Industry in India](#)”.
- Eisha Yadav – [2021 Winner \(Middle School Cohort\)](#).

2020:

- Maher Adoni – “[The Democratization of Rural Indian Education](#)”,
- Rohan Chalamalasetti – [2020 Winner \(Middle School Cohort\)](#).

Resources about Philanthropy In General

Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance Standards for Charities: <http://www.give.org/for-charities/How-We-Accredit-Charities/>

Susan Colby, Nan Stone, and Paul Carttar, “[Zeroing in on Impact: In an era of declining resources, nonprofits need to clarify their intended impact](#)”, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Fall 2004.

Heather McLeod Grant & Leslie R. Crutchfield. “[Creating High-Impact Nonprofits](#)”, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Fall 2007.

Dan Palotta TED Talk: “[The Way We Think About Philanthropy Is All Wrong](#)”

Appendix 5: Press Release Template

The following is a template for India Giving Day-related press releases. Organizations making use of the template should replace bracketed placeholders with the relevant information.

LOCAL “INDIA GIVING DAY” OBSERVANCES ANNOUNCED

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ON [insert date]

Contact: [Name of Local Contact]
[Insert something like, “Co-Lead, [City Name] Chapter, [Name of Organization]”]
mobile: [insert phone number]
email: [insert email address]

Press Release

[City Name, State, USA]—The local chapter(s) of [or volunteers associated with] [Name of organization] today announced that they will be observing a day of giving to aid India in achieving its humanitarian and development goals. [India Giving Day](#) (IGD), which will be held on March 2, 2023, will celebrate the gift of giving and the impact that philanthropy has already had and can have in India. India Giving Day starts at 6pm ET on March 1 and continues till 11:59pm PT on March 2. Early giving to the 20+ organizations will commence on February 14. The local observances will include [name and briefly describe the events and activities].

India Giving Day is a national campaign that was announced in October 2022, on Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday, by the India Philanthropy Alliance. The Alliance is a 16-member coalition of India-focused nonprofits active in the United States. The campaign grew to include 20+ nonprofits that collectively raised more than \$150 million in the United States in 2021 for use in advancing humanitarian and development in India.

[Insert quote from one or more local leaders here.]

The Alliance formed a national Steering Committee to manage most of the affairs of India Giving Day. This committee is co-chaired by Sejal Desai, the Executive Director of Akanksha Education Fund, and Manisha Bharti, Global Executive and CEO of Pratham USA.

“There is tremendous potential in having a special day of giving to benefit India,” says Sejal Desai, who is co-chairing the India Giving Day Steering Committee. Desai previously worked

with a community foundation whose giving day now raises more than \$62 million annually for over 3,000 nonprofit organizations in the Dallas, Texas metropolitan area. “The Indian diaspora has been an active beneficiary of and contributor to the United States economy,” said Desai. “As this population continues to thrive and grow, an energizing giving day that brings together the NGO and donor community in support of India would offer a meaningful way to make a difference.”

“The lifeblood of the inaugural year of India Giving Day will be local observances in community centers, schools, colleges, temples and other places of worship, and in people’s homes around the country. Our ‘Giving Tuesday for India’ seeks to make giving more impactful, enjoyable, public, youth-friendly, and fun. We value the leadership of [insert name of your community and/or community organization(s)] in this grassroots-driven national effort,” said Alex Counts, the director of the Alliance and of the Giving Day campaign.

India is the world’s largest democracy and has made significant progress on social and environmental issues over the past 25 years. However, India and its 1.3 billion people still have many urgent and unmet needs including quality and inclusive education, equitable access to health care, clean water, and more.

The campaign’s ten national co-chairs are Desh Deshpande, Sapphira Goradia, Lata Krishnan, Deepak Raj, MR Rangaswami, Raju Reddy, Dr. Suri Sehgal, Premal Shah, Ramesh Srinivasan, and Sunil Wadhwani.

Indian American philanthropy is expected to grow in the coming years from an estimated \$1 billion currently to \$3 billion annually. IPA seeks to influence how quickly this growth takes place and the quality of giving and the degree of impact that it translates into. “India has come a long way since our independence, just 75 years ago. But there is so much more that is possible, if each of us is willing to do our part,” said Deepak Raj, Chairman of the India Philanthropy Alliance.

The inaugural India Giving Day (IGD) will be held on March 2, 2023, and annually thereafter. It will include an emphasis on volunteerism and engaging youth, young professionals, and second and third generation members of this vibrant community. It will promote effective, thoughtful, and joyful giving to shape and accelerate the envisaged growth in Indian American philanthropy. Early giving and other related activities will start on Valentine’s Day: February 14, 2023.

About India Giving Day

India Giving Day, an initiative of the India Philanthropy Alliance, is an India-focused day of giving taking place for the first time on March 2nd, 2023. Bringing together the following 20 organizations who are already committed to addressing a variety of causes and needs in India, India Giving Day constitutes an effort to enhance and strengthen Indian American giving networks and social enterprises. The organizations accepting donations as part of India Giving Day are: Agastya USA, Akanksha Education Fund Inc., Akhand Jyoti USA, Akshaya Patra USA, American Friends of HelpAge India, American India Foundation (AIF), Antara International, ARMMAN, Arogya World, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology & the Environment (USA),

Child Rights and You (CRY) America, Children’s Hope India, Foundation for Excellence (FFE), India Development and Relief Fund, Inc., Kailash Satyarthi Children’s Foundation, Miracle Foundation, Pratham USA, Project ECHO, Sehgal Foundation, Teach for India-U.S., Vibha Inc., and VisionSpring.

About the Local Organizers

[Insert some information about the organization(s) coordinating the local efforts.]

About the India Philanthropy Alliance (IPA)

The India Philanthropy Alliance (<https://www.indiaphilanthropyalliance.org/>) is a coalition of nonprofit, philanthropic and charitable organizations that mobilize people and funding in the United States (and elsewhere) for development and poverty-reduction programs in India.

The sixteen [member organizations](#) include Agastya USA, Akanksha Education Fund, Akshaya Patra, American India Foundation (AIF), Antara International, Arogya World, Children’s Hope India, CRY America, Foundation for Excellence (FFE), Indiaspora, Pratham USA, Project ECHO, Sehgal Foundation, Teach for India-U.S., VisionSpring, and WISH Foundation. [This article](#) reviews first two years of the Alliance’s work.

For any questions about the local observance(s), please contact [insert name and title of local contact, and their contact information].

For any questions about the national effort, please contact Alex Counts, Director at India Philanthropy Alliance at alex@indiaphilanthropyalliance.org.

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