UPAYA SOCIAL VENTURES
ACCELERATOR PROGRAM
2017 COHORT: FORMALIZING THE INFORMAL SECTOR
As per a survey of 187 jobholders, the overall increase in jobholder income after securing employment with Upaya’s partners is 91%.
ABOUT UPAYA

Upaya creates dignified jobs for the poorest of the poor by building scalable businesses with investment and consulting support. Since 2011, Upaya has supported 12 small and growing businesses in India with investments and expertise. As of December 2016, Upaya partners have created more than 4,000 jobs. With offices in Seattle, Washington and New Delhi, India, Upaya has committed to a goal of helping partners create 15,000 jobs by the end of 2019.
**ACCELERATOR PROGRAM**

**2017 COHORT: FORMALIZING THE INFORMAL SECTOR**

In 2017, Upaya is launching a focused accelerator program to support a larger number of entrepreneurs and their business ideas. Workshops will be held over a 6-month period, starting in April 2017. These will culminate in an Investor Showcase, which will put entrepreneurs directly in front of impact investors and other potential partners.

Our first program theme focuses on companies that provide job placement, particularly through formalizing the informal sector in India. In selecting participants for our first cohort, we have prioritized companies that demonstrate strong potential to create hundreds, if not thousands, of dignified and reliable jobs.

Meet the 8 companies working with Upaya Social Ventures from April to September 2017.

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**Helper4U**

**Headquarters:** Mumbai  
**Website:** www.helper4u.in

Helper4U is an online service that connects employers with semi-skilled and unskilled workers searching for jobs in roles such as housekeeping staff, cooks, child care workers, and other positions in the informal jobs sector.

They have used a simple phone to empower the job seeker at the Bottom of the Pyramid. In the process, they have minimised the jobseekers’ exploitation by middlemen and helped employers save the time and money spent on hiring.

They have been recognised at various forums as an innovative social as well as tech enterprise. They received an award from Internet.org in India in 2015, for helping migrants using technology, and were recently recognised as one of the top 100 social enterprises by Action For India.

Helper4U has facilitated 5,000 job placements so far. They plan to expand to more cities, with the goal of further penetrating the BoP and providing them with gainful employment opportunities.

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**Zero Waste Inc.**

**Headquarters:** Rishikesh  
**Website:** www.zerowasteuk.co.in

Zero Waste is a Solid Waste Management consultancy and service provider based in Muni ki reti, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India.

The company covers 20,000 households and 900 commercial properties in two municipalities of Uttarakhand, managing waste through the usage of proper segregation methods and technology.

They also engage in recycling of waste - compaction, shredding and extrusion of plastic to make granules for further recycling.

Zero Waste Inc.’s efforts have been recognized with various awards from the Indian government.

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**Amit Lingwal**  
Founder and Managing Director

Amit is the founder of Zero Waste Inc. and serves as its Managing Director. He has five years of experience in working in the automotive sector. He has completed his Bachelors in Automotive Design Engineering.

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**Meenakshi Gupta Jain**  
Founder and CEO

In 2014, Founder and CEO Meenakshi Gupta Jain started Helper4U after hearing stories of maids and domestic helpers that were exploited by job agents and abused by employers.

As an entrepreneur, her goal is to use technology to impact the lives of those at the “Bottom of the Pyramid”.

She received her Bachelor’s degree in English from JMC Delhi University and her Masters degree in Child Speech Development from Jawaharlal Nehru Vishvavidyalaya. She has 10+ years of experience as an instructional designer.

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JobNukkad offers an online portal for entry-level and blue collar employees seeking clerical, government, bank, data entry, and business process outsourcing jobs.

The company addresses the large and informal job market by allowing job seekers to view employers’ requirements before applying, instead of looking through newspaper advertisements or paying placement agencies without assurance of a job.

They bring together training institutes, placement agencies and employers on a single platform to provide an efficient service.

JobNukkad has been operational in Mumbai for the last 18 months and has clients such as Ola, CCD, Burger King, Hinduja BPO, Tata BSS, Care24, Big Stylist, Sodexo, Swiggy etc.

Kabadiwalla Connect uses the power of ICT to help urban residents in India send their recyclable waste to kabadiwallas ("local scrap dealers") and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills.

Their programs include Recykle, an app for urban residents that provides tips on segregating waste, allows sign-ups for local events (e.g. composting and rooftop gardening workshops), and connects them with kabadiwallas in their area.

Kabadiwalla Connect has won several international competitions, including the grand prize of the Global Shapers Community by the World Economic Forum. They were also one of the six winners of the LAUNCH Nordic Innovation Challenge.

In 2017, Kabadiwalla Connect was one of the 10 projects of the World Bank-funded Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.
KhanaGaDi delivers clean and delicious food from certified vendors to train passengers in over 300 stations in India. They empower micro entrepreneurs & woman household group to provide quality meals to train passengers via robust Tech Logistics framework. KhanaGaDi serves over 25k menu items through its powerful 400+ vendor network.

Passengers can place their orders through the KhanaGaDi’s website and mobile app, and then pay online or via cash on delivery. The 24/7 delivery service’s menu offers more than 25,000 food items, including food for passengers with special dietary preferences, such as Jains and people with diabetes.

The delivery system is working to cover more train stations and testing new delivery models. In 2017, KhanaGaDi’s goal is to serve more than 1,000 customers a day.

UpSkill Management Services is a social impact venture that provides vocational training for underprivileged youth to help them find sustainable jobs. The venture aims to build a practical education system linked directly to the requirements of industries.

They have been the implementation partner for the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the Ministry of Rural Development having trained close to 4400 students under their skill development schemes.

In 2016, UpSkill launched a mobile app called NARAD that enables all the relevant stakeholders in skill development to communicate with each other seamlessly and thereby optimize the skilling life-cycle.

More than 2,300 students have used the app for training and job placement. UpSkill aims to train close to 43.5 million youth in the next ten years.
THE SHOE MEN
Headquarters: Delhi
Website: www.theshoemen.com

The Shoe Men is a professional cleaning and repair service provider, for mid to high range footwear and other leather products in Delhi NCR.

Customers can request for a pick-up, or fill out an order form online.

They have been supported by the Indian Angel Network, and plan to develop a franchise model to expand to more cities.

By the year 2020, The Shoe Men aims to be a dominant player in the industry, employing hundreds of semi-skilled & unskilled workers in the country involved in the un-organized shoe & leather care ecosystem of India.

SMV GREEN SOLUTIONS
Headquarters: Varanasi
Website: www.smvwheels.org

SMV Green Solutions is a social venture that aims to bring dignity to rickshaw drivers through asset ownership and other value-added services.

Rickshaw ownership will put drivers in less risk of abuse and exploitation from rickshaw owners, who charge exorbitant daily rental fees. In addition, drivers are able to establish a credit history, which gives them access to more financial products.

The social venture provides insurance for life, disability, accident, and rickshaw theft, and it also assists them with procuring the appropriate government licenses.

They started this initiative in 2016 and till date have benefitted 152 drivers along with building the necessary eco-system in the way to scale this initiative at the national level. They intend to upgrade 10,000 manual cycle rickshaw pullers in coming 3 years and bring about an instrumental change in the scenario of last mile green transportation in India.

Naveen Krishna has 8 years of diverse experience in Community Development, Microfinance & Management of Social Enterprises

In 2016, Naveen Krishna started SMV Green Solutions to improve flaws in rickshaw distribution and help drivers buy their own vehicle without charitable help.

He was awarded the Social entrepreneur of the year by CNBC Awaaz & SONA Group 2014-15

He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Lucknow and a Masters in Social Work from Banaras Hindu University.
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