

## Innovative ventures being groomed by BIF to enhance Digital Connectivity

*Launch of the BIF Connectivity Accelerator Program with the top 10 (shortlisted) Ventures. Program to facilitate Startups and Ventures to develop novel and innovative services & applications for broadband proliferation.*

**New Delhi, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022:** Broadband India Forum, the leading independent Think-Tank and Policy Forum for Digital Communications in the country, organised the official Launch Event of the BIF Connectivity Accelerator Program with the shortlisted top 10 Ventures. Chief Guest Shri Harwesh Bhatiya, Director General (Telecom), DoT, and Special Guest Shri Vivek Narayan, DDG (DS), DoT, graced the occasion with their presence. BIF has partnered with Headstart Network Foundation and Meta, for this initiative.

The BIF Connectivity Accelerator Program for awareness, facilitation and proliferation of the Digital Connectivity ecosystem in the country with special emphasis on leveraging the PM-WANI Public Wi-Fi Scheme was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chairperson - Digital Communication Commission (DCC) and Secretary, Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Shri K. Rajaraman on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2022, at the Wi-Fi India 2022 Summit.

This event focused on announcing the top 10 Ventures, which got selected for the accelerator program after competing with numerous (80+) other applicants in three arduous selection rounds, and to update the Ventures on what is to be expected in the coming months. The top 10 Ventures who attended and presented their solution/product at the session were – Wiom; XiFi Networks; Digigaon Job Factory; Matrecomm Technologies Pvt. Ltd.; Aagile Business Associates; LM Energy & Software; Antrix Networks Pvt. Ltd.; Infonet Comm Ventures Pvt Ltd; M2M Cybernetics; and Tess and Tera Techno Solutions.

**Shri Harwesh Bhatiya, Director General (Telecom), DoT,** commented on the occasion, *“PM WANI is an important initiative of the Government in terms of enhancing the digital connectivity landscape of India, especially in rural areas. Besides facilitating education, healthcare and livelihood, the growth of Public Wi-Fi Hotspots would also lead to greater job opportunities, thereby driving socio-economic growth in the regions. There is immense growth potential for Public Wi-Fi in providing affordable and reliable internet and digital services to the citizens. I am pleased to note the efforts of BIF through the Connectivity Accelerator program, towards helping develop a robust and effective Public Wi-Fi ecosystem, and especially in leveraging PM WANI to help achieve the NDCP objective of 10 million Wi-Fi hotspots in the country.”*

The top 10 Ventures will be going through an intensive, fast paced program, to exponentially scale their businesses. The accelerator program offers the ventures various elements of engagements to support them in their journey. It offers Masterclasses by experts in Business, technology, investment, marketing, etc.; Mentorship by industry experts to not only guide them during the

course of the program, but also to connect them with opportunities beyond; Networking opportunities with Corporates, and other partners; and finally Demo Day (end of July) with eminent panellist to determine whether the ventures are eligible for investments, or collaboration.

**Mr. T.V. Ramachandran, BIF President**, shared, *“These startups and ventures are helping us resolve the Internet Connectivity challenges both in business and technology, for urban and rural India; while also bringing in new innovation into the PM-WANI ecosystem. This will further ensure more sustainable business opportunities for all the stakeholders, especially the PDOs and PDOAs. We are extending all possible support and guidance to these promising entities through the BIF Connectivity Accelerator program, and are confident that there will be significant and inspiring outcomes from it.”*

One of the important objectives in the upcoming months is to enhance the PM WANI ecosystem by exploring, and supporting to pilot a plethora of innovative, and in some cases, disruptive business models and Proof of Concepts, designed by the shortlisted ventures; and by bringing in the existing top ventures in the internet connectivity domain to extend their services to the players of this ecosystem. This accelerated approach towards the execution, in a short time, will not only scale up the Ventures, but also will promote consequential augmentations to the quality of the Internet in the rural and remote parts of our country, thereby improving the lives of the locals.

With this program, BIF is taking a big step towards achieving the objectives of the PM WANI initiative. The use-cases and the lucrative opportunities displayed in this program will encourage more such ventures to take part in this mission to help realise the true ‘Digital India’.

Visit [www.bifconnectivityaccelerator.headstart.in](http://www.bifconnectivityaccelerator.headstart.in) for more information on the BIF Connectivity Accelerator Program.

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### **About Broadband India Forum**

Broadband India Forum (BIF) functions as an independent policy forum and knowledge-based think-tank that works for the development and enhancement of the entire broadband ecosystem in a holistic, technology-neutral and service-neutral manner. BIF has established itself as a thought leader and a credible and effective voice, to help propel the nation to achieve the country’s ambitious vision of creating a Digital India. To achieve this, BIF works to promote the rapid development of policies, so as to facilitate affordable and high-speed ubiquitous broadband throughout the country.

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