Xavier’s Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged
Breaking Barriers
Achieving Access
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 support and advocacy centre for persons with disabilities. The XRCVC not only provides direct support and training to persons with disabilities, but also works at creating an accessible and inclusive environment for them through its national awareness and advocacy programmes.
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 people with disabilities
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 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 model

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

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

Key Achievements

• Founding members of DAISY Forum of India and Sugamya Pustakalaya
• Authors of Guidelines for Making E Content Accessible for Children with Disabilities, Ministry of Education
• Training Partners for Maharashtra State Faculty Development Academy 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

100+ products tested
250+ Assistive Technologies available in-house

Key Achievements

• Accessible Physiotherapy machine for Visually Impaired practitioners
• 30000+ Accessible ATMs Deployed across India for Visually Impaired users
• Provided inputs for low-cost local Assistive Technologies such as BrailleMe, Smart Cane and KIBO
• First Audio Tactile restaurant menu for Bombay Blue Restaurant listed in Limca Book of Records
• Accessibility testing and user feedback for websites and apps like MyJio, Amazon.in, Jet Airways, PayTM, etc.
Awareness & Advocacy

Our Awareness and Advocacy programme focuses on building an inclusive world, one mind 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
- Course on Inclusivity; Diversity Discourse – a structured learning programme designed to develop an inclusive mindset
Impact

1,000+ persons reached through 30+ Diversity Discourse Courses across various institutes
41,000+ persons reached through 500+ Antarchakshu® events and workshops
10,000+ persons reached through Assistive Technology Awareness Exhibitions

Key Achievements

- Providing print access to 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 Visually Impaired persons
- Changed the CBSE, HSC, Physiotherapy and Psychology education rules for visually impaired students.
Our Global Reach

- India
- United Kingdom
- Germany
- Kenya
- 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

- Off to School VI Go - A Report on XRCVC’s Inclusive Education Project (2022)
- Accessible E-Content Creation - Standards and Guidelines (2022)
- Banking On Accessibility - A case for accessible banking for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) (2022)
- ABC of Inclusive Publishing (2016)
- Numbers and Reactions, a report on how Maths and Science can be made accessible for the Visually Challenged (2014)
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

- **2018**
  Expanded work to other disabilities

- **2022**
  Scaling through Consultancies and Trainings (TOTs)
Our services are open for 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.