

Media Information  
27 November 2024

## **Intercultural Innovation Hub 2024.**

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group honor **India's** Grassroots Initiative **"Football and Beyond"** during the 10<sup>th</sup> UNAOC Global Forum.

**Munich/Cascais.** The India-based organization **"Shreeja India"** is one of the ten grassroots initiatives, which were honored yesterday as recipient of the **Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH)**, a joint initiative of the **United Nations of Civilizations (UNAOC)** and the **BMW Group**, implemented with the support of **Accenture**.

The ceremony was held in the framework of the **10th UNAOC Global Forum** in Cascais, Portugal under the theme "United in Peace: Restoring Trust, Reshaping the Future – Reflecting on Two Decades of Dialogue for Humanity". The Forum convened prominent figures, political leaders, UN officials including the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, as well as representatives from civil society, academia, and the private sector, to share insights and reflect on the 20 years of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations' impactful work.

### **The organization "Shreeja India" and its initiative "Football and Beyond"**

**"Shreeja India"** was recognized for its project, Football and Beyond, which leverages the unifying power of football to bridge divides across diverse backgrounds while promoting inclusivity and empowerment. By using football as a development tool, the initiative integrates sports with education, mental wellness, social awareness, and skills development. This holistic approach empowers girls and uplifts communities that lack access to essential services such as basic education, nutrition, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities, paving the way for sustainable growth and social cohesion.

"Shreeja India's inclusive tactic to empower underprivileged girls and children with a sports-based endeavor is producing powerful narratives in the grassroots of rural India. With the recognition of the Intercultural Innovation Hub, we feel more driven to connect, collaborate and contribute towards breaking barriers and building cohesive societies," said **Somasree Basu, Program Manager at Shreeja India**.

## Media Information

Date 27 November 2024

Subject Intercultural Innovation Hub 2024.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group honor India's Grassroots Initiative "Football and Beyond" during the 10th UNAOC Global Forum.

Page 2

"With the Intercultural Innovation Hub, we celebrate outstanding initiatives implemented by extraordinary individuals working to bridge intercultural divisions in innovative and impactful ways," said Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG People and Real Estate, Labour Relations Director. "At the BMW Group, we believe that diversity not only enhances our company but is crucial for social unity and global progress. That is why we are deeply thankful for our strong partnership with the UNAOC. This collaboration allows us to support remarkable initiatives like Shreeja India's work in empowering underprivileged children, making a tangible difference in their communities and contributing to a better and more inclusive Indian society."

"We are committed to advancing inclusive, global communities by empowering grassroots initiatives that champion diversity and social cohesion. The Intercultural Innovation Hub showcases innovative projects that directly address these goals, and we are immensely proud of the collaboration between UNAOC and the private sector. Together, we continue to amplify the transformative work of social innovators globally, whose dedication and forward-thinking approaches are driving lasting positive change toward a more united and inclusive world," said Miguel Ángel Moratinos, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for UNAOC.

Through the Intercultural Innovation Hub, Shreeja India will receive a financial grant, as well as one year of capacity-building and mentorship support from UNAOC, the BMW Group, and Accenture, to help strengthen the "Football and Beyond" project and its contribution towards a more inclusive society. This model of collaboration between the United Nations and the private sector creates a more profound impact, as partners provide their respective expertise to ensure the sustainable growth of each supported project.

Learn more about the project: <https://www.shreeja.org/beyond-football>

Further information and an overview of the recipients can be found at: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/>

## Media Information

Date 27 November 2024

Subject

Intercultural Innovation Hub 2024.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group honor India's Grassroots Initiative "Football and Beyond" during the 10th UNAOC Global Forum.

Page

3

If you have any questions, please contact:

**BMW Group Corporate Communications**

Milena Pighi

Corporate and Governmental Affairs

Spokesperson Corporate Citizenship

Email: [milena.pa.pighi@bmw.de](mailto:milena.pa.pighi@bmw.de)

Telephone: +49-89-382-66563

Media website: [www.press.bmwgroup.com](http://www.press.bmwgroup.com)Email: [presse@bmwgroup.com](mailto:presse@bmwgroup.com)**United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**

Alessandro Girola

Chief, Programming and Projects Unit

Email: [alessandro.girola@un.org](mailto:alessandro.girola@un.org)**The BMW Group**

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2023, the BMW Group sold over 2.55 million passenger vehicles and more than 209,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2023 was € 17.1 billion on revenues amounting to € 155.5 billion. As of 31 December 2023, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,950 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

[www.bmwgroup.com](http://www.bmwgroup.com)LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/bmw-group/>YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/bmwgroup>Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bmwgroup>Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bmwgroup>X: <https://www.x.com/bmwgroup>**United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) is an initiative of the UN Secretary-General which aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions and to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism.

## Media Information

Date 27 November 2024

Subject Intercultural Innovation Hub 2024.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group honor India's Grassroots Initiative "Football and Beyond" during the 10th UNAOC Global Forum.

Page 4

UNAOC was established in 2005, at the initiative of the Governments of Spain and Turkey, under the auspices of the United Nations. In January 2019, H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos assumed the position of High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, succeeding H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, who succeeded H.E. Mr. Jorge Sampaio. The Alliance maintains a global network of partners including states, international and regional organizations, civil society groups, foundations, and the private sector to improve cross-cultural relations between diverse nations and communities. For more information, visit

[www.unaoc.org](http://www.unaoc.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unaoc.org>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/unaoc>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/unaoc/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/unaocvideos>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/unaoc/>