

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

For

**Impact Assessment of the HDFC Ergo
Neurodivergent Skilling Program**

NASSCOM Foundation

June 26

Request for Proposal

About Nasscom Foundation

Established in 2001, Nasscom Foundation has been witness to the transformative power of technology for over two decades. Part of the Nasscom ecosystem, we are the only neutral not-for-profit organization representing the Indian tech industry. We remain rooted to our core philosophy of TechForGood, where our efforts are focused on unlocking the power of technology by creating access and opportunity for those who need it the most. We work on helping people and institutions transform the way they tackle social and economic challenges through technology. We have five key areas of intervention - Digital Literacy, Skilling and Employability, Women Entrepreneurship, Scaling Social Innovation and Empowering NGO Ecosystem.

About the Project

The Tech Skilling for Neurodivergents is an in-person skilling and livelihood initiative for 42 neurodivergent persons with intellectual disabilities and autism. The project offers 100 hours per month of inclusive training in technical skills such as data management, UI/UX, cybersecurity, and AI tools, along with soft skills like communication and workplace readiness. It aims to ensure 25 participants secure sustainable jobs through mentorship, mental health support, and workplace sensitization.

1. Project Details:

- **Project Duration:** 1st December 2025 to 30th November 2026
- **Geographical Coverage:** Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **Target Group:** 42 neurodivergent persons with intellectual disabilities and autism
- **Training Components:** 100 hours per month of inclusive training in technical skills such as data management, UI/UX, cybersecurity, and AI tools, along with soft skills like communication and workplace readiness.

Project Implementation Model

The program will follow a structured training-to-employment pathway to skill and support 42 neurodivergent persons with intellectual disabilities and autism in Mumbai.

1. Outreach and Mobilization

The project commenced with outreach, mobilization, and identification of eligible neurodivergent individuals for participation. Beneficiary profiling and onboarding have been completed, and participants are actively engaged in programme activities. Community awareness and engagement efforts continue to strengthen understanding of neurodiversity, encourage family participation, and foster supportive environments for employment and livelihood opportunities.

2. Skills Development and Training

Participants are undergoing structured training in digital skills, UI/UX design, cyber security, data management, communication skills, and workplace readiness. Training delivery combines classroom instruction, practical exercises, hands-on assignments, and periodic assessments to track learning progress and strengthen both technical and soft skills required for employment in the digital economy.

3. Mentoring and Job Readiness Support

Individual mentoring and handholding support are being provided to participants to enhance confidence, learning retention, and workplace preparedness. The programme includes coaching on professional behaviour, communication, interview preparation, task management, and adaptation to workplace environments. Families and caregivers continue to be engaged through counselling and support sessions to reinforce participant motivation and long-term retention.

4. Livelihood Linkages and Employer Engagement

The project is actively facilitating livelihood opportunities for trained participants through employer partnerships, internships, and job placement efforts. Employer sensitization sessions are being conducted to increase awareness of neurodivergent talent, reduce stigma, and promote inclusive hiring practices. Ongoing market linkage activities focus on matching participant competencies with industry requirements and creating sustainable pathways to employment.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

The programme is documenting implementation experiences, outcomes, lessons learned, and emerging good practices to demonstrate the social and economic value of neuro-inclusive workforce development. Continuous monitoring tracks participant progress, training completion, employment outcomes, and employer engagement. Insights generated through implementation are informing the development of a replicable and scalable model for inclusive workforce participation. Robust monitoring, quarterly reporting, and end-line evaluation anchor the implementation, ensuring evidence-driven insights and accountability throughout the project cycle.

Purpose of the RFP

Nasscom Foundation seeks to engage a qualified and experienced research agency, institution, or evaluation firm to undertake a comprehensive baseline and endline study for the HDFC Ergo Neurodivergent Skilling Programme.

The evaluation aims to generate robust evidence on programme effectiveness, implementation quality, participant outcomes, employment readiness, livelihood achievements, and sustainability of results for neurodivergent persons with intellectual disabilities and autism. The study will assess the extent to which the programme has enhanced participants' digital and employability skills, confidence, workplace

readiness, and access to livelihood opportunities within the digital economy. The study should help Nasscom Foundation, HDFC Ergo and other stakeholders to understand the outcomes achieved through the programme, identify the most effective components of the training-to-employment model, examine barriers and enablers to workforce participation for neurodivergent individuals, and assess the effectiveness of employer sensitization and inclusive hiring efforts.

Further, the study should document lessons learned, promising practices, and participant experiences to inform future programme design, scale-up strategies, and broader efforts to promote inclusive employment ecosystems. The findings should provide actionable recommendations to strengthen neuro-inclusive skilling, workforce development, employer engagement, and long-term livelihood outcomes for persons with intellectual disabilities and autism.

Scope of Work

The selected agency will undertake a Impact Assessment of the HDFC ERGO-supported Neurodiversity Inclusion Programme implemented by Nasscom Foundation in Mumbai. The assessment will evaluate the extent to which the programme has achieved its intended outcomes in enhancing employability, digital skills, workplace readiness, and livelihood opportunities for neurodivergent persons with intellectual disabilities and autism.

The study should generate robust evidence on programme effectiveness, participant outcomes, employment achievements, and sustainability of results, while providing actionable recommendations for strengthening future neuro-inclusive skilling and employment initiatives.\

Evaluation Questions

A. Skill Development and Employability

- To what extent has the programme improved participants' digital, technical, communication, and workplace readiness skills?
- Which training components (technical training, mentoring, workplace readiness, soft skills) contributed most significantly to participant learning outcomes?
- To what extent do participants feel prepared to perform tasks in a professional work environment?
- What changes have occurred in participants' confidence, self-efficacy, and independence following programme participation?

B. Employment and Livelihood Outcomes

- To what extent has the programme enabled neurodivergent participants to access internships, employment, or other livelihood opportunities?
- What factors contributed to successful placement outcomes?

- What barriers continue to affect employment access and retention among neurodivergent participants?
- To what extent are participants able to sustain employment and adapt to workplace expectations?

C. Family and Caregiver Outcomes

- How has the programme influenced caregiver perceptions regarding the capabilities and employability of neurodivergent individuals?
- What social and economic benefits have been experienced by families as a result of participant engagement in the programme?
- To what extent has caregiver engagement contributed to participant success?

D. Employer Engagement and Inclusion

- To what extent have employer sensitization efforts improved awareness and acceptance of neurodivergent talent?
- What workplace accommodations and inclusive practices have employers adopted?
- How do employers perceive the performance and contribution of programme participants?
- What factors influence successful workplace integration of neurodivergent employees?

E. Inclusion and Quality of Life

16. How has participation influenced participants' aspirations, self-advocacy, and future career goals?
17. To what extent has the programme contributed to reducing stigma and increasing awareness about neurodiversity among families, employers, and communities?

F. Programme Effectiveness and Sustainability

- Which components of the programme implementation model were most effective in achieving intended outcomes?
- What challenges were encountered during programme implementation and how were they addressed?
- To what extent are programme outcomes likely to be sustained beyond the project period?
- What lessons and recommendations can inform the scale-up of neuro-inclusive skilling and employment programmes?

II. Process Evaluation

Disability-Inclusive and Neurodiversity-Affirming Framework¹

This framework ensures that every stage of the project—from recruitment to placement—is accessible, supportive, and tailored to the diverse needs of neurodivergent adults. It promotes inclusive recruitment processes, individualized training accommodations, and teaching methods grounded in neurodiversity-affirming principles such as predictable routines, multi-sensory instruction, and task chunking. The framework also strengthens employer readiness through sensitization, structured workplace accommodations, and ongoing post-placement support. Safeguarding, accessible consent, and data protection remain central throughout the evaluation. By integrating continuous monitoring of inclusion, learner experience, and retention outcomes, the framework creates an enabling ecosystem that enhances skill acquisition, confidence, employability, and long-term workplace success for neurodivergent participants.

Framework Component	Detailed Description	Evaluation Questions (EQs)
1. Inclusive Recruitment & Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible application and onboarding processes • Alternatives to traditional verbal interviews (typed, visual, asynchronous) • Strength-based screening (what the participant <i>can do</i>) • Caregiver involvement allowed if preferred by participant • Screening captures sensory, communication, and learning needs 	<p>EQ 1: Were recruitment and screening processes accessible, inclusive, and easy to navigate?</p> <p>EQ 2: Did the screening accurately identify learner strengths and accommodation needs?</p> <p>EQ 3: Did participants and caregivers feel supported during screening?</p>
2. Individualized Training Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible pacing and adaptive timelines • Visual schedules, step-by-step task breakdowns 	<p>EQ 4: Were accommodations provided consistently and appropriately to all learners who needed them?</p>

¹ Lerner, M. D., Gurba, A. N., & Gassner, D. L. (2023). A framework for neurodiversity-affirming interventions for autistic individuals. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 91*(9), 503–504. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000839>

Framework Component	Detailed Description	Evaluation Questions (EQs)
	<p>Modified assessments (extra time, breaks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet classrooms and sensory-friendly environments • One-on-one coaching for complex modules (e.g., segmentation) 	<p>EQ 5: Did individualized accommodations positively impact learner comprehension and skill progress?</p> <p>EQ 6: What proportion of learners received effective accommodations?</p>
<p>3. Neurodiversity-Affirming Teaching Methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-sensory teaching (visual + hands-on + simplified text) • Predictable routines and structured agendas • Chunking tasks into manageable steps • Positive reinforcement, specific feedback • Facilitators trained on ASD/ADHD characteristics 	<p>EQ 7: To what extent were ND-affirming teaching strategies implemented consistently?</p> <p>EQ 8: Did these methods enhance task comprehension, participation, and performance?</p> <p>EQ 9: Were trainers adequately sensitized and equipped to teach neurodivergent adults?</p>
<p>4. Workplace Sensitization & Employer Readiness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-placement workshops for HR, managers • Accommodation checklists adopted by companies • Awareness of sensory and communication needs • Supervisor training for inclusive onboarding 	<p>EQ 10: Were employers adequately sensitized to ND inclusion and communication requirements?</p> <p>EQ 11: Did employers adopt recommended workplace accommodations and practices?</p> <p>EQ 12: Did employer readiness influence job placement quality and retention?</p>
<p>5. Reasonable Accommodations in Placement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible hours and gradual ramp-up 	<p>EQ 13: Were workplace accommodations provided</p>

Framework Component	Detailed Description	Evaluation Questions (EQs)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise-free workspace or headphones • Written instructions, SOPs, visual workflows • Buddy/mentor support in the workplace • Adjusted expectations during onboarding 	<p>and sustained during onboarding?</p> <p>EQ 14: How did accommodations affect participants' performance and comfort at work?</p> <p>EQ 15: What gaps existed in accommodation provision across employers?</p>
6. Ongoing Support & Retention Pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular check-ins at 1, 3, 6 months • Problem-solving support for workplace challenges • Optional caregiver engagement • Escalation pathways for employer concerns 	<p>EQ 16: Were follow-up mechanisms implemented consistently and effectively?</p> <p>EQ 17: Did ongoing support help participants overcome workplace challenges?</p> <p>EQ 18: Which factors most influenced retention among ND participants?</p>
7. Safeguarding, Consent & Data Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain-language consent with visual aids • Trauma-informed interactions • Confidential handling of disability information • Safe & anonymous reporting channels 	<p>EQ 19: Were consent processes accessible and well-understood by participants?</p> <p>EQ 20: Did participants feel respected, safe, and free from discrimination?</p> <p>EQ 21: Were confidentiality and data protection protocols followed consistently?</p>
8. Monitoring Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking accommodations, satisfaction, inclusion • Monitoring confidence, independence, and employability changes 	<p>EQ 22: What % of participants received accommodations and found them effective?</p> <p>EQ 23: How satisfied were participants, caregivers, and</p>

Framework Component	Detailed Description	Evaluation Questions (EQs)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulating participant, caregiver, and employer views 	<p>employers with the program's inclusivity?</p> <p>EQ 24: To what extent did the program improve confidence, independence, and employability among ND learners?</p>

Suggested Research Design

The evaluation will adopt a mixed-method to assess changes in skills, inclusion, confidence, and employability among neurodivergent learners participating in the program. The qualitative component will identify the key factors responsible for improved learning outcomes, successful placements, along with inclusion and accommodation effectiveness.

The evaluation agency will be required to develop and submit a conceptual framework that clearly outlines the pathway through which trained neurodivergent (ND) participants progress toward the program's overall goal of empowering them for successful transition into the workforce. This framework should map how key program inputs—such as accessible recruitment, individualized accommodations, technical training in digital skills, UI/UX Design, cyber security, data management, industry specific software, Communication skills—contribute to intermediate outcomes including enhanced competency, improved confidence, increased independence, workplace readiness, and job-role alignment. The model should depict how these changes ultimately lead to meaningful employment, onboarding, and sustained retention.

Agencies are encouraged to propose a theory-driven pathway capturing the influence of program activities on learning, behavioral, and employment outcomes for ND participants, while integrating the disability-inclusive and neurodiversity-affirming principles central to this project.

The agency will conduct impact assessment. The assessment will use quantitative methods (skill tests, surveys, performance rubrics, placement data) and qualitative methods (in-depth interviews with learners, caregivers, trainers, and employers) to capture learner-level outcomes, inclusion experiences, and transition-to-work pathways.

The assessment will also document the transformational journeys of selected beneficiaries through detailed case studies, highlighting how individualized

accommodations, neurodiversity-affirming teaching methods, and workplace support influenced their growth.

The evaluation agency is expected to weigh alternative methodological approaches and recommend the most credible, ethical, and neurodiversity-affirming design for addressing the key evaluation questions of the project.

Key Deliverables

In due course of assignment, the agency is expected to deliver

- Inception report including methodology and draft tools
- Finalized data collection tools and translated versions
- Field operational plan, progress reports,
- Analysis framework and dummy tables
- Raw data set; both quantitative and qualitative
- Top-line presentations for baseline and endline
- Impact Assessment Report

Study Timelines

Activity	Impact Assessment (October 26)
Field activities	Tool development + Tool pre-testing (endline) + Finalized translated / accessible tools + Survey with beneficiaries +Qualitative interviews (learners + caregivers + employers) + Case study documentation
Deliverables	Final Tools + Topline Findings (PPT) + Report (inclusion analysis, placement & retention findings, and case studies) + Success Stories (3–5)

Budget

Agencies are requested to submit a detailed financial proposal covering:

- Professional fees
- Staffing costs
- Field operations
- Travel and logistics

- Data processing and analysis
- Taxes and applicable overheads

Provide a detailed breakdown of your estimated costs for study, including travel costs, and any additional fees.

Financial Proposal Format

	Cost Head	Particulars (indicative)	Cost (INR)	Cost (INR) + GST
1.				
2.				
	Total Study Cost (inclusive of all applicable taxes)			

10. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The competitive bids will be evaluated in terms of 70% technical and 30% financial weightage., Proposals costing more than the donor budget amount (more than 4 lakhs rupees) will not be considered for the study. The following criteria will be primarily used for proposal evaluation -

- The experience of the agency in undertaking similar assignments in the past.
- The proposal should detail the personnel and their credentials, demonstrating their capability to handle the assignment effectively.
- The consultant's understanding of the project objectives and requirements of the study.
- The proposed strategy for collecting data through surveys, including measures to ensure high data quality.
- Methodology and Study Plan: Including the study strategy, data collection plan, reporting framework, and research methods.
- Timeline: A detailed timeline with Gantt chart for the study, showcasing the feasibility and appropriateness of the proposed schedule.
- Financial Proposal: The financial proposal will be evaluated for its comprehensiveness and feasibility. It should provide a clear budget breakdown and demonstrate cost-effectiveness.

Submission Instructions

Your proposal should include the following:

- A brief outline of the study framework
- A detailed breakdown of your proposed timeline.
- Your team's qualifications and experience.
- Cost breakdown for Baseline and Endline Study – overheads, staff costs, field operations costs, etc.
- Your CV/ Work Profile

Documents to be Submitted: Work Profile, Financial Proposal, Technical Proposal including key staff profiles, Some references of past work/case studies.

- Last Date for Proposal Submission: 10th July 2026.
- A 30-minute call can be scheduled for any clarification.

All proposals should be mailed to rfp@nasscomfoundation.org with the **subject line:** “<Impact Assessment_HDFC Ergo_D&I _ MEL>” in a single PDF file by 5:00pm. **Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.**