Flow INDIA

ACC-Tivate

ACTIVATING

ADVOCACY | CHAMPIONSHIP | CITIZENSHIP

IN 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS

PROGRAMME INTRODUCTION

Fostering development of a 21st Century, Empathic Learner:

Our world is full of complex challenges, where the actions of one person can have ripple effects through communities and cultures. Cultural and creative empathy gives us the will and the tools to be effective change-makers.

The Education system in India is ever evolving. Through the last 100 years, concepts of learning have undergone a series of paradigm shifts, and today, more than ever before, educators and pedagogues are leaning towards global models of socio-constructivism. There is growing awareness of the need for attention to shift from the teacher to the student. The student not only learns from a creative classroom that makes her or him develop into a self-aware citizen of the future, but also through social interactions and cultural consciousness.

Challenges and wicked problems come in all shapes and sizes and how we tackle these problems make us citizens of the 21st Century. By using the methodologies of Engaged Cultural Learning, Design Thinking, and Creative Enquiry, Flow India builds unique skills in learners, unlocking individual and collaborative creativity to critically examine our environments and innovate a more sustainable world of tomorrow.

The **ACC-TIVATE**™ programme is a series of projects Flow India implements in schools across India to connect learners with their local cultural communities through a series of hands-on projects and reflective activities. The programmes help students see that their participation is affecting change in their local community and realize that they are able to make useful contributions to society through service and social action.

Community Engagement in Teaching and Learning:

Empathy and a deep and interactive engagement with communities empowers us to:

Equip Students

In a time characterized by connectivity and change, students who learn to forge and navigate relationships in the classroom will thrive in tomorrow's workroom and boardroom. Empathizing with the feelings and perspectives of others is the foundation for good communication, teamwork, and strong leadership— no matter what path they take, or what jobs they undertake, in the future.
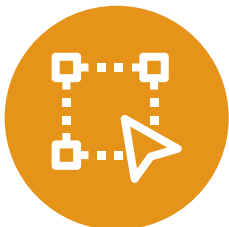
Transform Schools

Practicing empathy in the classroom aided by a deep understanding of the larger community fosters a learning environment that extends far beyond the classroom walls. Deep and purposeful connections between schools and communities influences and enhances the curriculum, removing the artificial separation between the classroom and the real world. Schools that are committed to empathetic teaching and community engagement practices enjoy improved teacher-student relationships and improve the emotional intelligence of students leading to a direct impact on their academic performance.

Change the World

Empathy means more than treating others better—it means doing better. Our world is full of complex challenges, where the decision of one person can have ripple effects through communities and cultures. Empathy gives us the will and the tools to be effective change makers. Community engagement and empathy motivates us to build something better together and helps us do so with imagination and respect— guided by a deep understanding for the people and the world around us.

PROGRAMME AIMS

- To be a beginner's guide to community engagement.
- To develop a deep understanding of social action and enterprise.
- Foster 21st century skills of critical-thinking, problem solving, leadership, decision-making, collaboration, and communication.
- Foster Value-based learning – focusing on skills of empathy and understanding of pluralism.
- Build a broad and diverse worldview through interaction with experiences in immediate urban context.
- Construct deeper understanding of self and empathy and respect for others.
- Provide opportunities to explore skills and interests and to network for future readiness.

PROGRAMME PROCESS

Through specially designed community-engagement projects, ACC-TIVATE™ uses local cultural stimuli like museums, heritage sites, environmental spaces, living skill communities like traditional markets and craftspeople, and more to build transferrable skills like leadership, empathy, communication, problem-solving, and self-confidence- skills crucial for a lifelong learner.

Each project is a 3-day engagement focusing on a Big Question about our society and environment, and encourages students to brainstorm solutions or opinions on the Big Question, taking inspiration from a visit to an existing project or organization where students directly interact with stakeholders.

The follow the process below through each project:

1. **Identification:** Students are introduced to service learning and guided to identify their interests, skills and talents to affect changes in the larger community. They are introduced to a core community challenge that they will work on during the ACC-Tivate project.

2. **Preparation:** Students research and understand what the challenge really means to them through games and activities. They then use critical thinking to identify and analyze community needs. The get ready to take action by gaining knowledge and skills aligned with the project.

3. **Exploration:** Visit and engage with community partners and organisations, and study how the core community challenge is being solved in the real world to take inspiration.

4. **Action:** Collaborate with peers and design a meaningful and creative service/solution to core community challenge that enhances learning and provides guided practice in social responsibility.

5. **Demonstration:** Showcase the service-learning experience, demonstrating insights and outcomes to the school community.

6. **Reflection:** Communicate feelings, experiences and learnings before, during and after the action phase.

7. **Evaluation:** Students self-assess learning and the service-learning experience as a whole to identify successes and areas for improvement.

CASE STUDY

Over the 2016-17 academic year, Flow India worked with the Welham Girls' School, Dehradun to facilitate ACC-Tivate with all students of classes VI, VII, and VIII in three parts:

- ACTIVE CHAMPIONSHIP with Class VI
- ACTIVE ADVOCACY with Class VII, and
- ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP with Class VIII

Each class worked on three distinct projects through the year to explore and strengthen various facets of community engagement and creative problem-solving. Following are examples of the projects undertaken by the students of class VI in 2016-17.

Active Championship With Class VI

To 'champion' a cause is to fight for, defend, or support the cause and stakeholders involved as a champion. Through the Flow India ACC-Tivate programme in 2016-17, students to class VI of Welham Girls' School worked to champion historical spaces, waste awareness, and creative collaborations in school and beyond.

Project # 1

Our precious past: History keepers of our community
Visit to: Ashoka Rock Edict, Kalsi, Uttarakhand

Heritage monuments and historical artefacts are tangible representations of the value systems, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles of the people who make and use them. These wondrous historical objects can provide us with knowledge of the past, empower local communities, impact economy, have socio-religious significance, sustain natural and cultural environment, and provide a sense of wellbeing and pride! In cities and new urban centres however, it is easy to feel lost. With so many people of varied communities interacting with each other and the environment everyday, it becomes even more important to conserve the remnants of our past and use them to inspire communities of the future.

Ashoka rock edict, Kalsi, Uttarakhand
circa 450 B.C.E

Students interviewing monument caretakers

Students with their historical awareness posters

'Our Precious Past' introduced students to how objects and heritage sites hold the histories of the communities that made them, lived around them, and care for them in present times. How communities preserve and sustain historical spaces and repositories of the same forms a part of their identity and gives them ownership of this shared heritage. Through observation, research, assessment, and documentation of a local heritage site- the Ashoka rock edict at Kalsi- students learnt how to take ownership of community sites and actively champion the preservation of historical spaces.

Project # 2

Life After Waste: Understanding Waste Production & Management
Visit to: Gandhi Park with Waste Warriors, Dehradun

Waste has been a major environmental issue everywhere since the industrial revolution. Besides the waste we create at home, school and other public places, there are also those from industries, farms and other sources. Humans rely so much on material things and they all (almost) end up as waste. And where, for us, does the life of waste end? In garbage cans and dump yards across the world. But… this is just the beginning.

'Life after Waste' was a programme that questioned waste- where it comes from, and how it can be managed to lead a life beyond the garbage bin. Students of class VI recognized challenges of waste management and empathised with those engaged with it through interactive activities and interviews. The challenge was to design a public interest campaign to incentivize people in the local community to better manage their waste.

Going on a cleaning drive at a local park; interviewing cleaners and waste managers

<div style="background:#e8505b; color:white;">Project # 3</div>

From Hand to Heart: Creative Collaborations through Crafts
Visit to: Purkal Stree Shakti Samiti, Purkal Village, Uttarakhand

We humans learn about the world through our senses and molding material using our hands allows us to form a relationship with our environment and other people who are part of our community. Our traditional craft practices have risen from this symbiotic relationship and these skills and designs have been passed down from one generation to the next to keep our rich heritage and all of our cultural identities alive. Flow India's From Hand to Heart project introduced the class VI students to the wonders of handmade crafts and creative practices that bring our community closer together!

Picking up the sewing needle for the first time and collectively designing & making fabric toys

Children of Purkal Youth Centre learning from & playing with toys handmade by students of Welham Girls' School

By designing and making fabric learning toys for the very first time and gifting them to the young children at the Purkal Young Learning Centre, students used creative expression to reach out to new friends and build collaboration within their own groups. Students were also introduced to quilting as an art form in which women have always taken great pride. It is beauty, patience, skill, and love in a utilitarian object. A community quilt for the school was the ideal way for the young juniors to reach out to and communicate with the school community (seniors and faculty).

Students create a community quilt on issues faced in the school community. They then interacted with other students to capture their thoughts and add patches to the quilts

Understanding how something is made and why it's made that way, is more vital to modern life than ever. Craft is a language of material, provenance and making. It is learning the value of things. The Hand to Heart project was a valuable learning experience for all of us and has given us so many ideas about the creative world around us!

ACC-Tivate Learning Badge

The ACC-Tivate Learning Badge is a student-designed badge that allows students to reflect on key skills they have learnt over the Flow India ACC-Tivate year and that they would like to acknowledge for themselves. By developing badges that recognize a certain skill or achievement, we enable our young change-makers to display and certify an additional range of skills that build upon traditional qualifications and personalize the community-based learning.

At the end of the year, students were asked to reflect on the modules they have participated in and think of key skills they have individually strengthened over the year. By designing their unique badges to reflect these new skills, students articulated what they learnt, and suggested methods for others to develop and showcase these competencies too.
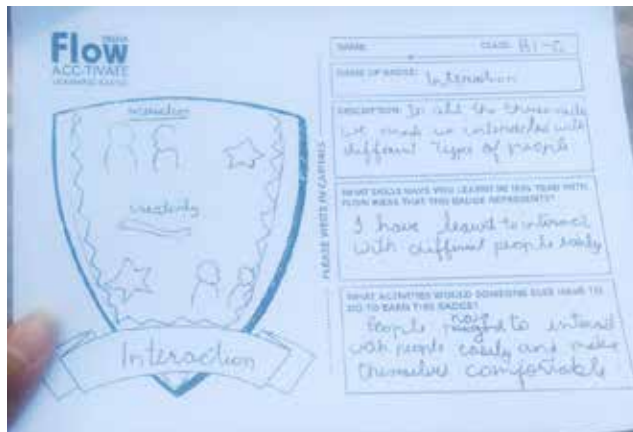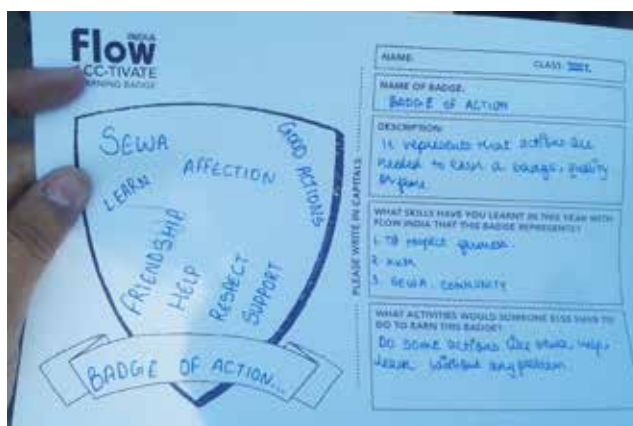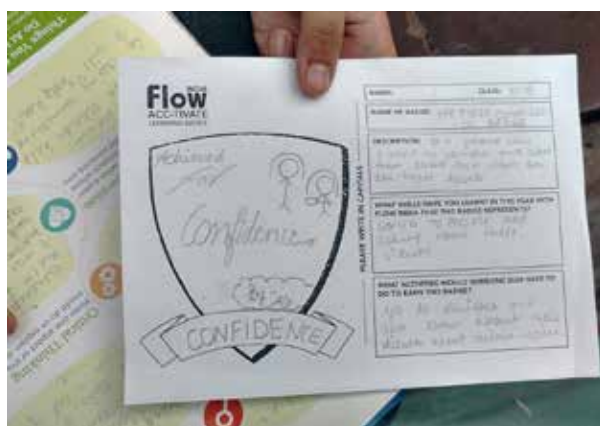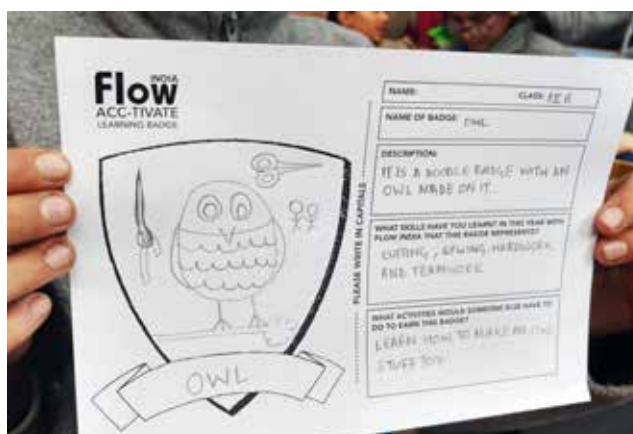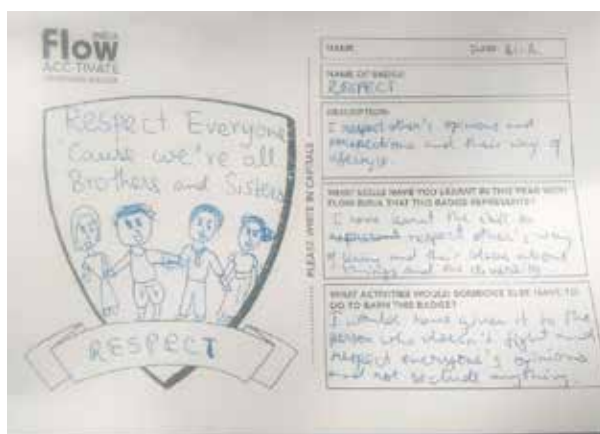
PROGRAMME OUTCOME

Through the ACC-Tivate year with the Welham Girls' School, Dehradun, it was observed that students became more reflective and critical of their role in the community in and outside school. Based on faculty and student feedback, facilitator observations, and community stakeholder interactions, the following outcomes were noted:

- The range of projects gave students opportunities to explore skills and interests and to network for future readiness.

- Professional facilitators with subject knowledge and ability to interact with real-world community workers provided guided practice to students in taking action as socially responsible global citizens.

- Students' willingness to collaborate rather than compete with one another increased with every successive project.

- Students' confidence in solving challenges was stronger when they had the opportunity to go beyond the classroom, interact with peers from senior classes, and finally showcase their findings and solutions to the entire school community.

- Interactions with children their age but from varied communities and backgrounds allowed for a deeper and equal conversation about real-world problems. Through the year, ACC-Tivate brought children from a nationally-ranked private boarding school, from a migrant nomadic community that lived in the Himalayas, from a village school for children of nearby farmers, from learning centres of a project that works with street children to empower their futures, and more on the same platform to interact and learn from each others' lives.

- With young and curious students visiting their spaces, community organisations and stakeholders were more conscious of the environment they worked in and, post the interaction, keenly expressed the need for more opportunities for children to work with them and ask pertinent questions that would help them constantly reflect on their own practice.
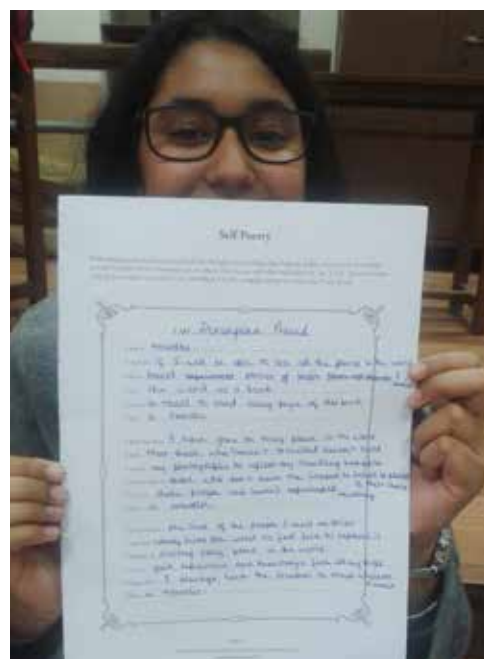
" I loved how we visited so many different places around the city that I never knew about. Interacting with people who are working with children and women in the community made me realize that I can do so much for my community and country! "

~ Medha
Student, Class 6

" My most memorable moment was when we made the community quilt. We worked as a team, overcame challenges together, and too the team spirit forward by working with our seniors to bring the quilt alive! "

~ Nivedita,
Student, Class 6

" The themes and ideas Flow India introduced the students to were interesting and the fact that they were communicated through games and activties made the project exciting. I think the message has gone home and proviked a lot of thought, which is the beginning for long term change for the children. "

~ Mamta Govil,
English Faculty, Welham Girls' School

" The project ended very well! The students loved the trips of course, but their excitement was visible when they shared their experiences and ideas with other members of the school community. It really was an enriching project for all of us. "
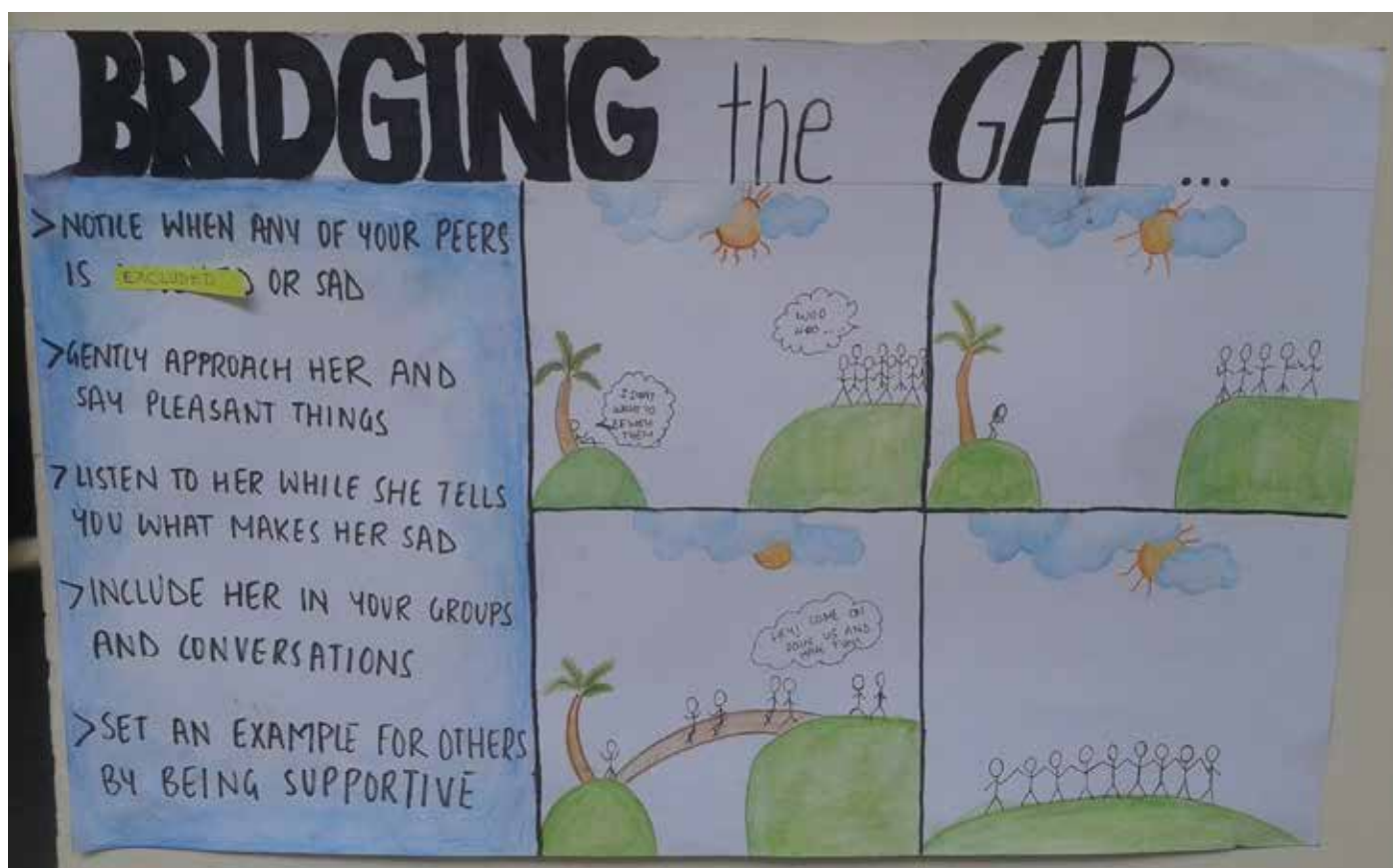
~ Swati Singh,
History Faculty & School ACC-Tivate
co-ordinator, Welham Girls' School

WAY FORWARD

ACC-Tivate is an opportunity for schools to enhance students' community outreach and communication skills. With rich environmental and community- based projects in urban and rural spaces across the country, the project is the ideal platform for students to build 21st Century learning skills, but also enhance the local cultural spaces through student engagement.

One of the most important aspects of the ACC-Tivate programme is to facilitate the development of true empathy in students for the spaces and communities they visit, and to ensure that each 'problem' or 'challenge' identified by students and the members of the local community are solved in a collaborative way.

As the programme develops, it can innovate collaborative problem-solving and ideating spaces for local communities, where experienced professionals, young students, and all community stakeholders can come together to collectively enhance their local cultural heritage.

Flow INDIA