



ANNUAL REPORT

2006 – 2007

**SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING ALTERNATE
COMPUTING & EMPLOYMENT (SPACE)**

C-11, Elankom Gardens, Vellayambalam, Thiruvananthapuram- 695 010, Kerala, INDIA

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From the Chairman's Desk

The year 2006-07 was a year of many new initiatives and important breakthroughs for SPACE. I am presenting to all stakeholders the Annual Report highlighting all activities of SPACE for the period 2006-07. This report constitutes the Society for Promoting Alternative Computing and Employment (SPACE) Annual Report to the members.

SPACE jointly with Akshaya project of Kerala state IT mission is organising a series of events to train local organizations on content building and knowledge archival.

Alakal Radio in Malayalam is the 1st exclusive radio initiative in India for the fisherfolk, launched by SPACE.

Jointly with Kerala State IT Mission, we have proposed to launch an ICT resource center for visually disabled. Work has been started to launch this center.

SPACE is looking forward to working closely with all partners in the future to promote the use of FLOSS in Governmental as well as non-Governmental sector.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman

Dr K.R. Srivathsan , Director, IITM-K
Park Center, Technopark Campus,
Thiruvananthapuram - 695 581
Kerala, India.

Vice Chairman

Mr. Anwar Sadath, Kerala State IT Mission (KSITM)
ICT Campus
Vellayambalam Junction,
Thiruvananthapuram 695 033
Kerala. India.

Executive Secretary

Mr. Satish Babu
InApp Information Technologies India (P) Ltd
121 Nila, Technopark
Trivandrum 695 581

Treasurer

Dr V Sasikumar, FSF India
32, NCC Nagar
Perrorkada.P.O
Thiruvananthapuram 695005

Members

Mr. P M Sasi, IEEE Kerala Section
Centre for Development of Advanced Computing
P.B.NO:6520, Vellayambalam
Thiruvananthapuram 695033

Mr. Amarnath Raja, Computer Society of India
InApp Information Technologies India (P) Ltd
121 Nila, Technopark
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Dr Venkatesh Choppella, IITM-K
Park Center, Technopark Campus,
Thiruvananthapuram - 695 581
Kerala, India.

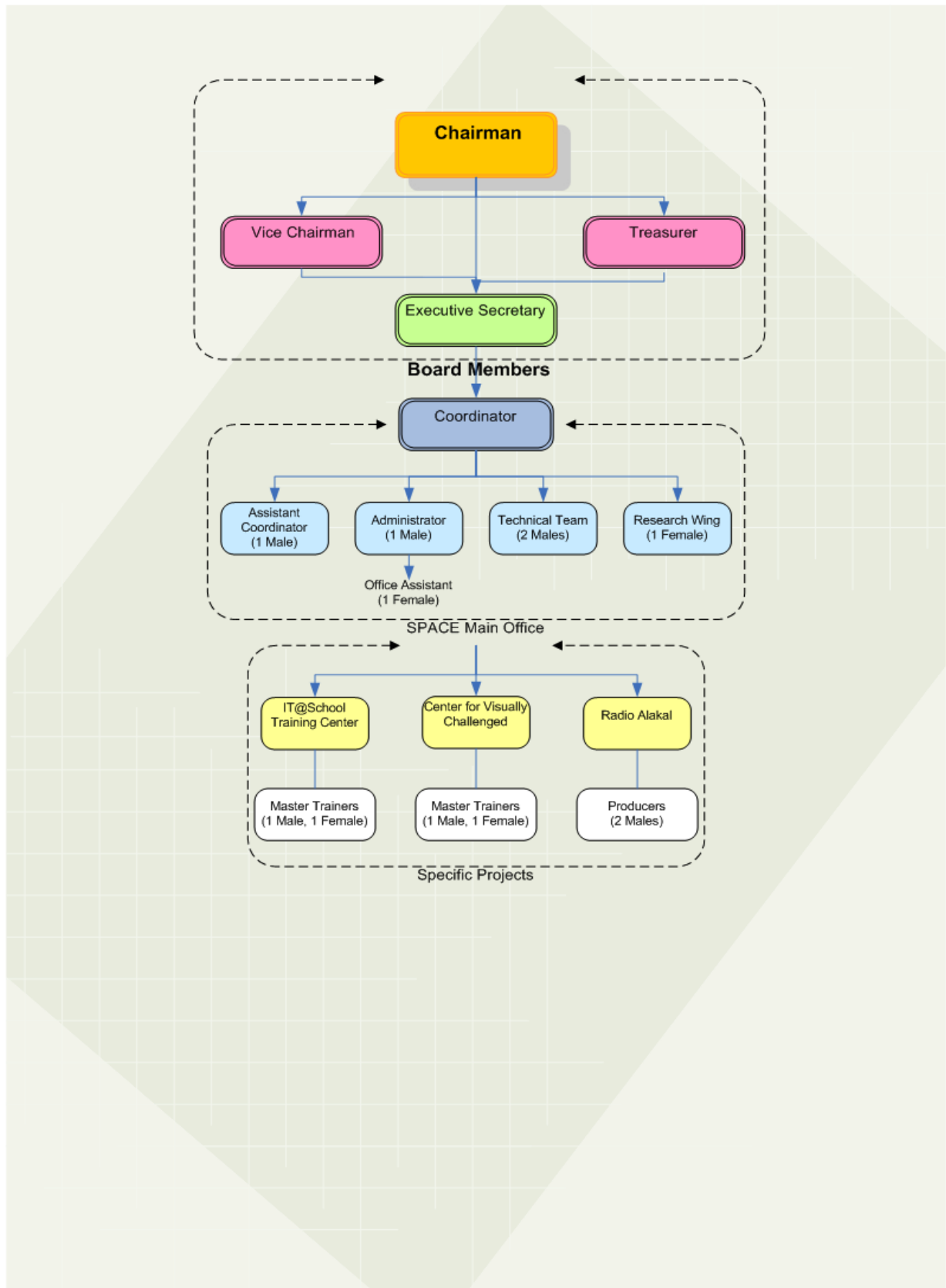
Ms. Asha Varma, NIC
Principal Systems Analyst
National Informatics Centre
Kerala State Unit

Ms. Bindu Sajan, Journalist
554, Haritham
Darshan Nagar, Peroorkkada
Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram

Coordinator

Mr. M. Arun
C-11, Elankom Gardens
Vellayambalam
Thiruvananthapuram- 695 010

ORGANIZATION CHART



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Board Members

Chairman: Chairman presides over all the meetings in the Executive Committee and is responsible for maintaining general oversight over the activities of the Society.

Vice Chairman: The Vice Chairman shall discharge the duties of the Chairman in the Chairman's absence.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall arrange for books of accounts to be maintained.

Executive Secretary: The Executive Secretary is responsible for operations of the office and interfacing between the board members and the Coordinator.

Employees

Coordinator manages day-to-day activities and acts as an interface between the board members and SPACE personnel.

Assistant Coordinator supports Coordinator in his/her activities. Assistant coordinator takes the responsibility of Coordinator in his absence.

Administrator tries to maintain comfortable working atmosphere in the organization. Day-to-day bookkeeping system is carried out by the administrator.

Office Assistant helps administrator to keep the office in order.

Technical Team includes consultants, developers and trainers.

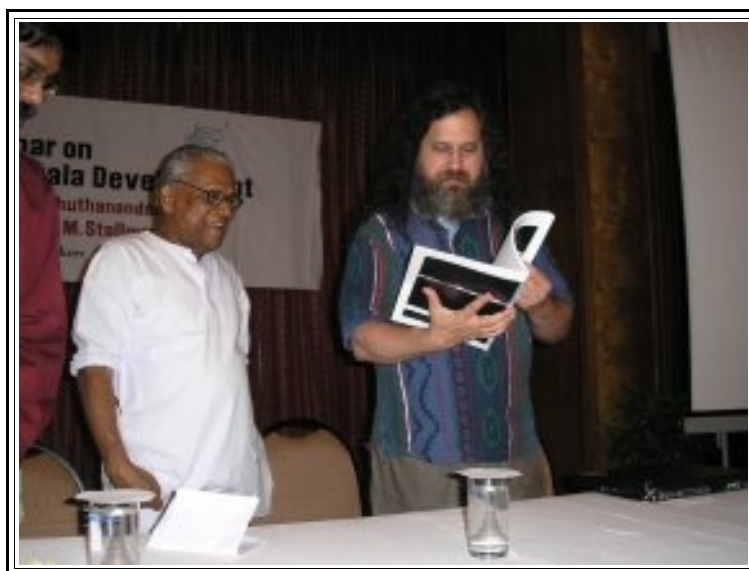
Research Staff includes social researchers and are responsible for conducting research studies and documentation.

2006-2007 HIGHLIGHTS

SPACE activities during the reporting period were focused on influencing the OCT Policy of the newly formed Government of Kerala. Efforts undertaken by SPACE saw light with the State Government announcing a FLOSS friendly ICT Policy. Members of SPACE received special mention for their contribution in formulating the new ICT Policy.

The major events that SPACE conducted / or were a part of are briefly mentioned here.

Seminar On Free Software For Kerala Development And Releasing Of Study Report On 'Free Software Projects In Public Enterprises Of Kerala



SPACE in association with Kerala State IT Mission conducted a seminar on Free Software for Kerala Development on the 23rd of August 2006. Hon. Chief Minister Sri. V. S. Achuthananthan inaugurated the seminar, and Richard Stallman, founder of the GNU project and free software movement delivered the keynote address.

“The Government will take the lead in popularizing free software”, said the Chief Minister. Mr. Stallman, who delivered the keynote address, said free software was not an alternative to proprietary software, but it aimed at "liberating the inhabitants of the cyberspace from the clutches of the monopolists." Occasional use of free software would not help to achieve the goal. The one-day seminar, held at the Residency Towers was attended by distinguished invitees from various academic and technical backgrounds. Presentations on Free Software related activities of various organizations like NIC, SPACE and IITM-K were also held during the afternoon session.

WORKSHOP ON WIRELESS NETWORKING

IITM-K jointly with SPACE, IEEE Kerala Section and Computer Society of India organized a Workshop on Wireless Networking on the 1st and 2nd of December 2006 at the IITM-K premises in Technopark, Trivandrum.

The workshop had a hands-on session on building community networks, with people sharing their experiences, current developments, challenges and emerging opportunities in the area of community wireless networking.

Relevance of the workshop

➤ *Wireless Community Networks*

With wireless networking technologies breaking the barriers of distance and cost, it is now feasible to build network communities with meshed networks that span towns and villages, with each node doing their bit to add to the network. This gives rise to the possibility of developing networked communities without the dependence on service providers and hosted by the community, for the community.

➤ *Kerala and Community Networking*

Kerala is ideally suited for propagation of such networks due to its unique nature of having a "rural - urban continuum" and there being practically no place without human habitation within a kilometer of distance. Such networks, hosted and boosted by the community, could be the easiest and most cost effective way to go forward for developing urban and rural networks.

PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

SPACE participated in various national and international forums to share its experience and to learn from others who are working in the area of ICT and media. Some of the important events in which SPACE actively participated were:

- *5th GPLv3 Conference*, Japan (August 06)
- *4th International Conference on Free Software and Free Society*, Venezuela (October 06)
- *AirJaldi*, Dharamsala – Conference on Free Information Infrastructure (October 06)
- *FOSS.in*, Bangalore – National Conference on FOSS (November 06)
- National Knowledge Commission's *Round Table on Open Educational Resources*, Delhi (January 07)
- *Science, Education and Learning in Freedom*, TIFR Mumbai (February 07)

FOSS MICRO ENTERPRISES

Under the small business development program, Free Software training programs were conducted. Several small-scale IT enterprises, spread across Kerala benefited from these training programs. Many of them are still availing technical support from SPACE over phone and email. SPACE was able to incubate 8 business units to FOSS sector, which are providing solutions to local organizations. A major development in small business development is the partnership established with Kudumbashree and Akshaya projects. The main activities in this area are given below.

GNU/Linux Installation and Troubleshooting workshop for hardware assemblers

One of the thrust areas of SPACE activities for 2006-2007 was to develop free software support groups across the state. In order to achieve that, SPACE initiated training programs for Hardware Vendors in association with All Kerala IT Dealers Association at Kanjirappilly, Kottayam and Perinthalmanna, Malappuram. These training programs were aimed at helping Hardware Vendors tackle common issues with GNU/Linux installation and hardware compatibility. Small booklets on troubleshooting were also made as part of this program.



Around 30 technicians from different organizations participated in the workshop at Kanjirappilly, Kottayam and 40 technicians from different organizations participated in the workshop at Perinthalmanna, Malappuram.

They found the training useful for their business. All of them participated in the training programs actively and made use of the lab facility made available to them.

Online HelpDesk for addressing technical issue

SPACE launched an online help desk for addressing technical issues in FOSS. All the common problems are listed in the FAQ section. The site, <http://support.space-kerala.org> is open to all for viewing and posting queries by registered users. Presently, SPACE is giving registration and support to all IT@School Master Trainers and VMEs interested in using/promoting Free Software. All the queries posted will be periodically added to the FAQ section for public viewing.

KOHA Training for Kudumbashree IT Units

SPACE together with Govt. Engineering College, Barton Hill, Thiruvananthapuram organized a one day training program for Kudumbashree IT Units in *KOHA - a Free Software Library Management Software*. Dr. Gopakumar, Head, Department of Information Technology, shared his experiences in implementing KOHA in the department library and College library. The participants got a general idea on Koha and they were given hands on training in data entry operations in Koha.



Koha is a popular free software application for library management. It is a business opportunity for a VME. Thousands of village libraries across Kerala and academic institutions across the state are some of the possible clients. We are presently trying to market the service of Kudumbashree units in library computerization.

Web Development Workshop for Kudumbashree IT Units

SPACE together with Kudumbashree organized a 2-Day workshop on developing and deploying websites with Free Software for Kudumbashree IT units in Thiruvananthapuram.

World Wide Web-Our media

SPACE organized a two day workshop on using Internet and the World Wide Web as citizen's media at Akshaya e-Center, Thiruvankulam on 10th and 11th March 2007. The program focused on building and deploying content for the web.

Hands-on-training was given on html, css and wordpress. The participants built their own blogs at wordpress.com as part of the workshop, two of which can be found at <http://mulanthuruthy.wordpress.com> and <http://akshayatkm.wordpress.com>. The event was supported by KSSP Thiruvankulam Unit, Akshaya e-Center and Thiruvankulam Public Library.

FREE SOFTWARE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

During 2006-2007, SPACE was able to provide training to 105 professional college teachers (59 female). Training by SPACE has become one of the most popular quality improvement programs under the Department of Technical Education. In addition to teacher training, training on FLOSS was conducted for 273 professional students (102 female) and 65 science students (52 female). These programs were aimed at creation of FLOSS Human resource development. Training also helped us understand more about ICT awareness among students.

GNU/Linux System Administration Course

In order to create FOSS support units across the state, SPACE conducted GNU/Linux (most popular free software operating system) System Administration training programs across the state. Training was conducted jointly with Sharp Focus Technologies – Kerala. 10 people from various parts of the state participated in this one month full time course. The course started on May 1 and ended on the 31st.

FOSS in Science – January 4-6, 2007

A National Workshop on Free Software in Science was held at the Union Christian (UC) College, Ernakulam during January 4-6, 2007. There were about one hundred participants including students, teachers and researchers from various parts of India. There were several presentations on various topics including Scientific Computing and Data Visualization using Python and Mayavi,

Training Programs for IT@School

SPACE jointly with IT@School project started a GNU/Linux resource center at Ernakulam to give advanced training for IT@School Master Trainers. 200 master trainers were trained in the GNU/Linux Resource center.

SPACE facilitated the following training programs:

1. Video Tutorial for IT@ School on 1-07-2006 Training Workshop for IT@School New Master Trainers at Artist Centre on the 7th and 8th of July 2006. This was the introductory training for new master trainers. (30 participants, among them 5 were female)
2. Training on FOSS programming with Gambas for 10 master trainers. Gambas is a free development environment based on a Basic interpreter with object extensions, like Visual Basic
3. Training for Master Trainers on 8th and 9th September

Training Programs for teachers in colleges

Several training programs were conducted for teachers in Professional and Science colleges. The details of these training programs are given below. These training programs helped teachers to acquire skills in FOSS and ICT which in-turn has also improved ICT skills of students in various educational institutions.

Month	Activity	Target group	Men	Women	Total
April 06	GNU/Linux Support Site	Teachers, General public			
May 06	GNU/Linux System Administration Course	Business units	10	0	10
	Alakal community radio	Fishermen community, General public	100	50	150
June 06	Pilot project in e-Governance (work flow engine).	Bureaucrats			
July 06	Training workshop for IT @ school new master trainers	School teachers	25	5	30
	Software development (GAMBAS) training.		10	0	10
	Workshop on building community news letters with free software	General public	7	3	10
August 06	Workshop on GNU/Linux		40	0	40

	for H/W assemblers, Perinthalmanna				
	GNU/Linux children's workshop in Perinthalmanna	School Children	8	7	15
	Free software for Kerala development(seminar)		73	20	93
	Foss cell seminar- Chenganoor engineering college	Professional Students	35	25	60
September 06	Training for trainers IT@school	School teachers			
	FOSS training(Python programming) for college teachers, College of Engineering Trivandrum	College teachers	10	5	15
October 06	Administration training for hardware technicians- Kanjirappilly	Business group	25	0	25
	Master trainer's training	School teachers	10	0	10
	FOSS training (Python programming)	College students	15	15	30
November 06	Koha training-Barton Hill engineering college	Business groups	1	7	8
	FOSS training (PHP programming), Wayanadu engineering collage	College students	22	8	30
	FOSS Training (Scientific computing), SB College	College students	10	22	32
December 06	Community wireless workshop	Teachers, Students, Business groups	17	3	20
	FOSS Training, Regional Institute of Technology	College teachers	14	16	30
	FOSS Training (GNU/Linux system administration and PHP Program), Central Polytechnic	Teachers	27	8	35
	Training on web for Kudumbasree units	Business groups	0	20	20
January 07	FOSS in science, Seminar	Teachers, Students	60	41	101
February 07	ICT for Visually challenged, Seminar	General Public	57	43	100
	ICT in college education	College Teachers, Students			

March 07	Web our media workshop, Ernakulam Akshya	Business groups	5	5	10
	Free software cell in FISAT -One day workshop on introduction to GNU/Linux	College Students	32	28	60

ICT in Engineering Education

SPACE jointly with Department of Electronics, Govt. College of Engineering, Trivandrum organized a 10-day course on "ICT in Engineering Education" from 26th February 2007 to 9 March 2007.

The course was intended to expose the teachers to the principles and practices in employing Information Communication Technology (ICT) in engineering education. It also aimed to impart the basic skills needed for effectively using the state of the art Free Software ICT tools in their regular teaching. Course content is useful for other higher education sectors also. This program was supported by the Department of Technical Education, Govt. of Kerala.

PILOT PROJECTS

Community Media Workshop



SPACE organized a two day workshop on "Building Community Newsletters with Free Software" at Vasudeva Smaraka Library, Chemaniod, Malappuram. The program focused on building and organizing content for a newsletter, typesetting it and publishing it online with the help of free software. It was an experimental project to understand the role of ICT in rural public libraries.

Alakal Community Radio

Community radio is increasingly being seen as a medium for developing and empowering communities that have been isolated and marginalized from the mainstream. It was with the objective of using radio as an effective tool of communication for development of the fishing population, the community radio project 'Radio Alakal' was launched on 1st May 2006. A first of its kind venture targeted at fishing communities, Radio Alakal is a joint venture of Kerala Swathanthra Matsya Thozhilali Federation (KSMTF) and SPACE.

Radio Alakal, which functions from the offices of SPACE at Vellayambalam in Trivandrum, is currently being narrowcast in the coastal village of Vizhinjam. The office is equipped with two computers, mikes, headphones, voice recorder, UPS, music keyboard and audio editing software called Audacity. It may be one of the first community radio initiatives in India working exclusively using free software.

ICT and rural libraries

SPACE, in association with the Mother Theresa Grandhasala (Public Library), Vizhinjam has opened a Community Telecentre in Vizhinjam. The centre, which has been operational since 15/4/2007, currently has a computer (donated by SPACE), and two faculties to provide training and support. Activities of this facility include:

1. Training on community radio production
2. ICT training for school children
3. Basic computer education for students in adult literacy program
4. IT education for local people.



Twelve people (6 male, 6 female) from the locality were trained on radio production. 22 Girls and 21 boys from neighboring villages participated in the ICT training for school children. 11 fishermen are also taking ICT training at the center. Regular training programs are being conducted for school children and students in adult literacy center.

ICT for Visually Challenged

The Kerala State Information Technology Mission is planning to establish a model ICT resource center for for the Visually Challenged with technical support from SPACE. Under this program SPACE aims to assemble free and open source software for making computers accessible for visually challenged people and to provide training on using these tools.

An audio desktop is the main interface to the computer for the visually challenged. The system has a screen reader that reads whatever the user types in or displays on the screen. It can be used to create text files, browse Internet, read emails, play music, read e-books or other tasks the visually challenged user wants to do with a computer.

The center will function as a resource center for providing training. The network of Kudumbasree units would be used to extend the activities of the Center to different parts of the State. The Center will also carry out research and development activities.

A national conference was organized on 21st February 07 to discuss about the programs of the center and to gain experience from similar experiments in the country. The conference was well received and had around 100 participants. Based on the discussions during the conference, program for the center was finalised.

PARTNERS



KERALA STATE IT MISSION (KSITM)

The Kerala State IT Mission is an autonomous nodal IT implementation agency for department of Information Technology, Government of Kerala. It is a Society registered under the Travancore Cochin Literary Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act.

The Honorable Minister for IT is the Chairman of the Governing Body of KSITM. The IT Secretary, GoK chairs the Executive Committee of KSITM. KSITM focuses on strengthening the IT/ITES industry base, E-Governance, interfacing between government and the industry, interfacing with potential investors and so on.

KSITM promotes SPACE with the objective of promoting alternative computing, Free, Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS). SPACE and KSITM are closely related. It has developed strong program level partnership and supported SPACE financially on several activities. SPACE is helping the benefits of ICT to reach a larger section of the society and to promote employment and development through FLOSS. SPACE also addresses special needs of Kerala in FLOSS such as local language computing. It acts as a link between Kerala and the FLOSS Community around the world.

SPACE, in association with KSITM has set up a model centre for Visually Challenged in Thiruvananthapuram district. This project focuses on areas such as computer accessibility for Visually Challenged people, Internet and E-mail, e-books, dictionary, other learning resources and cost effective computing using free software, recycled hardware and so on.



AKSHAYA

Akshaya is an Information Communication Technology project of the Government of Kerala aimed at improving the ICT literacy in Kerala. The honorable former President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam on 18th November 2002, launched the project. It aims at providing basic computer skills to at least one person from every family thus empowering them to access innumerable services that information and communication technology offers.

The project involves setting up around 5,000 multipurpose community technology centers called Akshaya e- Kendra's across Kerala. Akshaya is a social and economic catalyst focusing on the various facets of e-learning, e-transaction, E- governance, information, and communication.

Akshaya was introduced first in Malapuram district by establishing more than 400 Akshaya e- Centers connected through a wireless Internet infrastructure. Nearly 6 lakh people were given training in basic computer skills in the first phase of the project. The second phase aims at extending the project to seven other districts in Kerala. The project will be implemented in the remaining six districts in the third phase. The project also involves setting up around 5,000-multi purpose community technology centers called Akshaya e-Kendra's across Kerala.

SPACE assists Akshaya to plan and implement innovative ICT based socially relevant programs such as 'Web for All' and 'Community Web Portal' for Kannur. 'Web for All' improves the availability of locally relevant websites by making web development easy and cost effective. SPACE is building a team of master trainers for web development. SPACE provides technical support for the Kannur community portal, a research based project taken-up by UNESCO and Akshaya. The support includes setting up of the portal, training, content development and managing the portal.



IT@SCHOOL

IT @ school is a project under the Directorate of Public Instruction (DPI) of the Government of Kerala, which imparts Information Technology in high school education for qualitative improvement of teaching and conventional learning system in the state. It equips teachers to use computer as an educational tool. The stakeholders of the project are the school management, teachers, students and the local community. The project is being implemented in all the High Schools of the state (2,666 schools). The venture helped to set up computer labs in 99% of High schools in Kerala. Over sixteen lakh students enjoy the benefit of the project. Over 40,000 teachers were provided 90 hours of training on IT skills.

SPACE jointly with Free Software Foundation (FSF) of India and the Government of Kerala introduced all the schools in Kerala to free software. It is one of the largest free software projects in the world. The project covers nearly 2,800 high schools in Kerala.

KUDUMBASREE

Kudumbasree is a poverty obliteration project launched by the Government of Kerala, with the active support of the Central Government and NABARD. It aims at establishing 60,200 Neighborhood Groups in Kerala for the eradication of absolute poverty in 10 years under the leadership of local self-government bodies. It also aims at the empowerment of women. Prime Minister Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee inaugurated the project on May 17, 1998 at Malappuram. Kudumbasree imparts training to women in Kudumbasree Units. The action plan by Kudumbasree involves formation of women collectives, skill upgradation trainings, and promoting micro-enterprises.

Kudumbasree approached SPACE to provide technical support for setting up Kerala employment portal. Kudumbashree, with the help of SPACE provided technical support for setting up 'Keralashree' employment portal.



SOUTH INDIA FEDERATION OF FISHERMEN SOCIETIES (SIFFS)

SIFFS is a non-governmental organization (NGO) working in the marine fisheries sector. It is the apex body of organizations of small-scale artisanal fish workers. It has a three tier organizational structure.

Over the last two decades, with over 6,000 member fishermen, organized through 100 primary societies in eight districts of Southern peninsular India, SIFFS has kept its focus on strengthening artisanal fisheries.

Established essentially as a fish-marketing organization, SIFFS now provides a range of services to member and non-member fish workers. Today, over 50,000 fish workers including non-members are availing these services, in their numerous endeavors to assume collective control over their own life.

SPACE is providing free software technical support in Habitat Reconstruction Management System for SIFFS' Tsunami Habitat Reconstruction through one of the VME's.



Free Software Foundation of India

FREE SOFTWARE FOUNDATION OF INDIA (FSFI)

FSF is a non-profit organization committed to advocating, promoting, and propagating the use and development of 'Swatantra' software in India. Their goal is to ensure the long term adoption of Free Software and defend the freedom of computing.

FSF-India and SPACE are working closely with the Government and other public bodies in propagating FLOSS and ICT. FSF-India members are part of the SPACE Board of Directors.

FSF-India and SPACE Partnership

Partnered with SPACE for the GPLv3 conference at Bangalore

Partner in IT@School Program

Partner - Free Software, Free Society Conference



SCHOOL OF MEDIA STUDIES (SOMS)

SOMS is a leading media education institution in Kerala imparting most advanced and industry-oriented media courses. Latest branches of media with immense growth potential, from web streaming to the FM Radio are part of the curriculum.

SPACE is working with SOMS to develop its media strategies. SPACE has worked with SOMS to conduct training on New Media and independent journalism for media students. SPACE is planning to setup a media resource center jointly with SOMS.

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION-KERALA

The Department of Technical Education facilitates the administration of Engineering Colleges, Polytechnics, College of Fine Arts, Technical High School, Commercial Institute, Food Craft Institutes etc.

Introduction of FLOSS in technical education institutions is very important in addressing the need of human resource requirement in this field. To this end, the Department of Technical education and SPACE are working together to train staff in professional educational institutions. Free software training became one of the most popular training programs for polytechnics and engineering colleges.



SOMA

SOMA is a society registered in 1992 under Societies Act with the mission of 'Transforming Dreams into Deliverables' and providing services for Project Management in the Social sector. SOMA is experienced and has immense expertise in the field of social development project management including its financial management assistance for long years. SOMA has shown keen interest in leveraging Information Technology for strengthening social sector project/program management.

SOMA supports SPACE by providing their invaluable financial management and project management services. Some valuable studies have also been conducted with the support of SOMA.

*In addition to various institutions mentioned above, SPACE is working closely with NGO's such as **Mediact and Kerala Sasthra Sahitya Parishad.***

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS