

Mahatma Award - Partnership for Impact

"Championing Neurodiversity: A Collaborative Approach"



Submitted by: Thomson Reuters

September 2024

Contact information

- Name** - Ashika G
- Title** - Senior Specialist, Corporate Social Responsibility
- Organization** - Thomson Reuters
- Cell Phone** - 86579 94088
- Email** - Ashika.g@thomsonreuters.com

Content

About Thomson Reuters	3
Key Details.....	3
Our Culture and Values.....	3
Corporate Social Responsibility at Thomson Reuters	4
Our Commitment to Community	4
Fostering Inclusion by supporting neurodiverse individuals.....	5
Fostering inclusion within Thomson Reuters.....	6
A. Partnership for Community Impact.....	7
B. Partnership for Inclusion: It begins from within!.....	8
C. Partnership for Impact Awareness.....	9
Impact - Onwards and Upwards.....	12
Way Forward.....	13

About Thomson Reuters

Thomson Reuters is a multi-national corporation headquartered in Toronto, Ontario that empowers professionals with cutting-edge technology solutions informed by industry-leading content and expertise in the business information services industry. Our products include information-enabled software and tools for legal, tax, accounting, and compliance professionals.

Our role at Thomson Reuters is to serve our customers, pursuing justice, truth, and transparency. With roughly 26,000 employees, we help inform the way forward to a more understanding, trusting world for all.

Key Details

Company Type	Public
Headquarters	Toronto, Canada
Industry	Mass Media
Founded	17 April, 2008
Key People	David Thomson (Chairman) Steve Hasker (President and CEO)
Number of employees	25,600

Our Culture and Values

At Thomson Reuters, we take pride in creating an environment where our employees feel valued, supported, and able to thrive both in their personal and professional lives. Across our organization, we have built a distinctive culture which supports continuous learning and career development, celebrates innovation and a growth mindset, and is fuelled by a common purpose to inform the way forward.

The foundation for this is a sense of belonging, which we strive to achieve by valuing **diversity of thought and perspective**, along with fostering an environment of respect and accountability.

In addition to our commitment to our employees and customers, we are equally **dedicated to giving back to the communities in which we live and work**. Our corporate social responsibility initiatives focus on leveraging our skills, resources, and expertise to make a positive impact. Whether it's through volunteering, partnerships with non-profits, or supporting social justice causes, we believe in creating meaningful change and fostering a culture of compassion and generosity.

Together, we are building a brighter future not just for our organization, but for society as a whole!



Trust: We act with integrity and independence by holding ourselves and each other to be ethical and reliable in all we do.



Innovation: We innovate to serve our customers, drive growth and win in dynamic business environments.



Performance: We deliver results, excelling at work that positively impacts the world.



Partnership: We work together – with each other, with our customers and with industry partners – to deliver superior results and experiences.

Corporate Social Responsibility at Thomson Reuters

Thomson Reuters believes in shared responsibility to do business in ways that respects, protects and benefits their customers, employees, communities and environment. **Thomson Reuters' corporate responsibility lies in sharing of skills and resources with the communities where they live, work and do business.**

"At Thomson Reuters, we recognize our governance structure is a critical part of our ability to prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, human rights, and environmental responsibility as core growth mandates. Our Board of Directors and Corporate Governance Committee work closely with our management to continuously evaluate our progress against our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy, assess ESG risks, and set the standard for responsible business practice.

Steve Hasker

President and Chief Executive Officer, Thomson Reuters

Our Commitment to Community:

Our commitment to **Corporate Social Responsibility** and **Diversity and Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do**, guiding our actions and shaping our values. We strive to integrate these principles into a cohesive theme that drives meaningful social good, both within our organization and beyond.

Fostering Inclusion by supporting neurodiverse individuals

One of our key focus areas of our CSR program is fostering inclusion through educational and medical interventions for individuals with disabilities. Over the past few years, we have been supporting "**Samarthya**"—a **Capacity Building Initiative on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in rural Karnataka**, run by our NGO partner, [Ishanya Foundation](#).

The Samarthya program aims to provide comprehensive knowledge, training, and resources to organizations in need. It focuses on training stakeholders who work with children and adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDDs) such as Autism, ADHD/ADD, intellectual disabilities, and learning disabilities. Through this initiative, we conduct specialized training workshops that emphasize practical learning and are tailored to meet the specific needs of the participants and their environments.



By equipping educators, caregivers, parents, counsellors, social workers, and frontline government workers with the necessary skills and knowledge, we strive to create a more inclusive society. These training workshops cover methods of identification, assessment, teaching strategies, and livelihood training, ensuring continuous support and follow-up to maximize the impact.

These stakeholders are offered opportunities to understand and learn about Autism, ADHD/ADD, intellectual disabilities, and learning disabilities. By equipping them with this knowledge, we strive to build a more disability-friendly environment for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs).





SAMARTHYA

A Capacity Building Initiative on Neurodevelopmental Disabilities in Karnataka

TOTAL IMPACT

Direct Beneficiaries:
4256

Indirect Beneficiaries:
12047

STAKEHOLDERS

- Special Educators
- Asha Workers
- Anganwadi teachers
- Rehabilitation Workers
- Health professionals -
Medic & Para-medic
- Caregivers
- Students - Psychology,
BEEd, Para-health







We strongly believe that partnership is at the core of our values as a fundamental driver for positive change and the creation of a more inclusive world.

Our partnership with the Ishanya Foundation exemplifies our commitment to fostering inclusion and driving positive social change. By leveraging our collective expertise and resources, we aim to empower individuals with disabilities and build a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Fostering inclusion within Thomson Reuters

While we have been actively working to foster inclusion externally, we are equally committed to providing opportunities for neurodiverse individuals to become employable within our organization. As a company at the forefront of promoting an inclusive culture, we continuously push boundaries to create environments where everyone can thrive.

This commitment led to the inception of our **Neurodiversity Internship Program**, a testament to our dedication to integrating neurodivergent individuals into our workforce and offering them meaningful career opportunities. Recognizing the significant underrepresentation of neurodiverse individuals in mainstream employment, we launched this pioneering initiative in July 2020.

The program aims to provide autistic individuals and those with intellectual or developmental disabilities with the skills, support, and experience they need to thrive in a conventional work environment.

SDG Goals

Our CSR program to provide education and medical support to neurodiverse individual and our Neurodiversity Internship Program aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. Here are the applicable SDG and this collectively highlight the program's comprehensive approach to fostering inclusion, education, and economic opportunity, thereby contributing to a more equitable and sustainable world.



Partnership for Impact: Our journey beyond boundaries

The success of our Neurodiversity internship program can be attributed to strong impact partnerships, which take on three key forms:

- Partnership for community impact
- Partnership for inclusion
- Partnership for impact awareness

A. Partnership for Community Impact

When we planned to commence the Neurodiversity Internship Program, we faced several challenges, including a lack of internal subject matter expertise and necessary changes in our recruitment process. These challenges were overcome through a strategic partnership with a non-profit organization specializing in neurodiversity.

We realized that to effectively run a program of this nature, we needed strong on-ground support from partners whose vision aligns with ours. This led us to partner with [Enable India](#) and [Ishanya Foundation](#), both renowned NGOs working in the Diversity and Inclusion space.

Ishanya's Testimonial

"We got practical experience with handling various challenges (technical, emotional, behavioral, communication) that an individual with a disability might face when put in a real-life work situation and got an opportunity to work out various strategies.

This experience of the internship program with Thomson Reuters has not only given us a better understanding of the whole process but also the right approach for inclusive recruitment."

Our collaboration with impact organizations to create opportunities for neurodiverse individuals was to ensure that our program meets the unique needs of participants and contributes

positively to the broader societal landscape. This partnership helped us to bridge the gap between our company and the community, fostering a supportive environment where neurodiverse talent can thrive.

B. Partnership for Inclusion: It begins from within!

Our journey of inclusion for neurodiverse individuals in the workforce through the launch of the Internship Program marked the beginning of an unconventional path—a journey that we embraced wholeheartedly. To validate the feasibility of this program, we undertook detailed research and analysis on autism and engaged with various organizations specializing in this area.

One of the initial challenges we faced was whether our team within could adapt to working with autistic interns and effectively deliver training. We wanted to ensure that we make it as seamless as possible. For this we undertook a well-planned series of strategic approaches:

Comprehensive Sensitization and Training Initiatives: To foster a supportive and inclusive environment, we began by raising awareness within our organization about the program. This included educating employees about what neurodiversity is and the unique strengths and perspectives that neurodivergent individuals bring to the workplace, highlighting the positive impact of engaging neurodiverse individuals in their teams—such as enhanced creativity, problem-solving skills, and diverse viewpoints. We then rolled out requests from those business functions that were interested to pilot this in their teams.

The success of this initiative proved crucial in fostering acceptance and understanding within our teams.

Buddy System: Recognizing the need for personalized support, we introduced a buddy system. Neurodiverse interns often form a strong bond of trust and confidence with a single mentor, and our buddy program was established to cater to this need, providing a reliable and consistent point of contact within the organization.

360-Degree Evaluation: After our pilot cohort, we conducted a comprehensive evaluation to understand the challenges we faced and refine our approach. Our feedback process involved a 360-degree review with input from a wide range of stakeholders, including hiring managers, buddies, members of the Disability Employee Network (DEN), and our NGO partner. The insights gained were instrumental in shaping decisions regarding internship extensions and the potential for transitioning interns to contractual or full-time roles.

Immersive Learning Sessions: led by our Disability Employee Network BRG has become increasingly apparent. These efforts have been key in creating a supportive environment where employees feel equipped to communicate effectively and collaborate productively with their neurodivergent colleagues.

Workplace integration: Our NGO partner plays a critical role in sourcing candidates and conducting job analysis with our managers. The selected interns undergo a comprehensive 6-week skills training program, covering essential workplace competencies such as email etiquette, time management, and use of Microsoft Office tools.

“Integrating a neurodivergent into our fast paced, detail-oriented accounting team presented challenges, yet it led to a transformative experience. The team’s adaptability shone as they created a nurturing environment for the intern, employing innovative teaching methods and sensitivity in stakeholder collaboration.

*This internship highlighted our innate ability to work with diverse talents and the value of opportunities that allow us to grow and enhance our inclusive practices”- **Manager Testimonial***

C. Partnership for Impact Awareness

On the successful launch of our pilot cohort, we realized that we bear a larger responsibility in raising awareness about the inclusion of neurodiverse individuals, both within our organization and externally. Our internship program was a significant initiative in this regard, and its impact extends far beyond individual success stories. It served as a powerful example of how inclusive practices can enrich our workplace and society at large.

By fostering a more inclusive environment, we not only support the career growth of neurodiverse individuals but also **promote a culture of acceptance and understanding. This program is a testament to our commitment to making a meaningful difference and highlights the importance of our collective partnership efforts in driving positive change.**

We understood that our awareness campaigns needed to be driven both internally and externally. Internally, to ensure our employees are proud of our organization’s D&I culture, and externally, to amplify the impact and share our model and learnings with other interested corporations.

Through these efforts, we aim to inspire other organizations to adopt similar inclusive practices, thereby creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond our own company. By sharing our successes and insights, we hope to contribute to a broader movement towards a more inclusive and understanding society.

Internal Programs

Panel Discussions: We conduct panel discussions involving teams and hiring managers of neurodiverse interns. These discussions focus on sharing best practices and experiences in creating an environment where such individuals can thrive.

Disability Employee Network (DEN) BRG: In our mission to foster an inclusive workplace, Thomson Reuters has established Business Resource Groups (BRGs), including the Disability Employee Network. This group collaborates with HR, business leaders, and other stakeholders to

enhance the recruitment and retention of employees with disabilities, including autistic colleagues. It also hosts immersive learning workshops in partnership with NGOs to educate employees on neurodiversity and developmental disabilities

Leadership Involvement: Our Internship Program enjoys robust support from our executive leadership. Notably, our CEO, Steve Hasker, has recognized the program for its role in challenging the status quo and fostering a more inclusive culture. This acknowledgment includes a seed donation of \$10,000 to a charity of choice and was also recently mentioned in the Thomson Reuters' [Social Impact and ESG Report](#)

CEO Letter



Steve Hasker
President and Chief Executive Officer, Thomson Reuters

We spotlight our Autism Spectrum Internship Program in India, which, over the last three years, has seen us recruit 52 neurodivergent interns into our offices, with many continuing their careers at Thomson Reuters. Building on the success of that program, a team in Argentina created a similar program called Oportunidades sin Fronteras, which was recognized as the Best Inclusion Project by the City of Buenos Aires, and helped Thomson Reuters earn the top slot on Argentina's Companies Committed to Human Rights list.

This work demonstrates the value of our purpose and what it means for us to inform the way forward. Guided by our Trust Principles, which are the heart of everything we do, and supported through our governance structure, our people help us maintain the highest standards of integrity and respect each day.

We reaffirm our commitment to the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment, and Anti-Corruption, and we align with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which augments our longstanding commitment to the UNGC, the UN Declaration on Human Rights, as well as other international standards.

I am proud of the work we do every day. I'd like to thank our colleagues, customers, and partners who have helped make this level of commitment possible.

External Initiatives



Over the years we have participated in several India Autism and Neurodiversity summits since 2021. The objective of the summit is to bring neurodivergent talent, parents of neurodivergent talent, educators, and corporations together to share best practices and raise awareness of the skills that neurodivergent talent bring into the workplace.

Our first summit was in 2021 and included partners such as Brainpreneurs. The summit hosted external speakers Amy Gravino, Gopika Kapoor, and a member of our Thomson Reuters Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) internship program.

Our second summit was in 2022 in partnership with Ishanya India Foundation and other partner corporates. The theme of the summit was “**NeuroInclusion – Be the Change**”. It hosted external speakers Preeti Mathur, Shamin Mehrotra, Usha Rengaraju, and Ankur Madan.

We have since participated in these summits on a regular basis, most recently in 2023 with the summit theme of “**Empowering Neurodiverse Voices Through Technology**”, where we co-hosted this event

References

We share our organization’s commitment to the full inclusion of autistic talent externally through publications such as [Inclusion and Action: The Success Story of our Autism Spectrum Internship Program in India](#) and [India Autism at Work Summit](#)

Impact - Onwards and Upwards

We take pride in our track record of converting internships into full-time employment opportunities. To date, over eight of our interns have been offered full-time roles within our company. Additionally, several interns have used the experience gained through our Internship Program to secure positions at some of the largest and most respected companies in the industry.

60+ Internship offers | **20+** Business units engaged | **8** Interns converted to FTEs

It always fills us with pride and happiness when we hear stories of impact from our interns. They often share how this program has been a significant milestone in their career journey. Additionally, parents express their happiness in their children's achievements and their gratitude for the opportunities provided.

"As I reflect on my time with Thomson Reuters, which began on December 4th, 2020. I am filled with appreciation for the remarkable journey I've had. Being on the Autism Spectrum has meant that I approach learning uniquely, and my supervisors have been incredibly supportive. My experience working from home has been made more enriching by the constant support from my team, with all of them providing a special care that has resonated deeply with me. After a productive two-year period with the team, I am thankful for the support that has made this growth possible and excited about what lies ahead." **Intern's Testimonial**

"One stand out moment was the first day of the program. My son was seated virtually in front of his managers. He was answering all of the questions they had been asking with so much confidence that tears kept rolling down mine and my husband's and eyes. My son was treated with so much love, support, and respect and he was so warmly welcomed to Thomson Reuters. This was something my son had never experienced before." **Parent's Testimonial**

Recognitions

While hearing impact stories provides all the support and validation we need, it is always encouraging to be recognized for our efforts. These stories highlight the tangible differences we make in the lives of individuals and communities, reinforcing the value of our initiatives.

Recognition, whether it comes from within our organization or from external sources, serves as a powerful motivator. It acknowledges the hard work and dedication of our teams, and it validates the effectiveness of our programs. This encouragement not only boosts morale but also inspires us to continue striving for excellence and to push the boundaries of what we can achieve.

Moreover, being recognized for our efforts enhances our reputation and credibility, attracting more support and resources that can amplify our impact. It also helps to raise awareness about

the importance of our mission, **encouraging others to join us in our commitment to creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone.**

In essence, while the stories of impact fuel our passion and dedication, the recognition we receive provides the encouragement and momentum to keep moving forward, making a difference one step at a time.

2021: Received one of the top ten Annual Thomson Reuters awards from President & CEO, Steve Hasker.

2022: Named “Best Employer for Persons with Disabilities” by ASSOCHAM in India.

2023: We expanded the program to Argentina and was recognized as the Best Inclusion Project by the City of Buenos Aires. This was mentioned by Steve Hasker in the [2023- ESG Report](#)

2023 DivHERsity Awards, India – In the following categories- women's learning and development programs, **diversity hiring**, and women leadership development.

Way Forward

As we mark the **5-year anniversary of our Neurodiversity Internship Program, we renew our commitment to supporting neurodiverse individuals.** Looking ahead, we remain united in our mission, driven by a multi-stakeholder partnership model that amplifies our impact. Together with our partners, employees, and the broader community, we are poised to break new ground in creating a community and workplace where everyone, regardless of their neurodiversity, has the opportunity to thrive.

Our journey is ongoing, and we are dedicated to making a positive impact and fostering an inclusive environment for all. We strongly believe that we need every opportunity and forum to talk about our impact partnership program to encourage more corporates to make a commitment to neurodiversity and inclusion.

By sharing our experiences and successes, we hope to inspire others to join us in this important mission.

Together, we can build a future where neurodiverse individuals are valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential. We look forward to continuing this vital work and making a lasting difference.

We strongly believe in the being the change we want to see in the world!