



EdTech for Equity – Critical Conversations

30 October 2025 | Infosys Science Foundation
(ISF), Bengaluru



Concept Note

Digital technologies are an important part of most discussions on educational policy and practice today. The long school closures during the pandemic increased the penetration of digital technologies in education. We are now witnessing a rapid adoption of EdTech, including AI, with promises of increased reach, efficiency, and achievement. Yet the global push for EdTech often confronts the lived realities of schools and communities, raising pertinent questions about equity, sustainability, and the very aims of education.

It is therefore vital to grasp the wider implications of EdTech and critically examine its impact on educational processes and outcomes. Sustained dialogue that brings together insights and perspectives from diverse stakeholders is essential for coherent and meaningful EdTech integration.

Towards this end, IT for Change is convening a conference, **‘EdTech for Equity - Critical Conversations’**, examining practices and perspectives in India’s Digital Education Landscape. Convened in collaboration with Critical EdTech India (CETI), the event will be hosted at the Infosys Science Foundation in Bengaluru on 30 October 2025. This is part of a three-day event, **Our Digital Futures Fest**, commemorating 25 years of IT for Change’s work towards a better digital future for all.

The conference aims to bring together diverse voices—practitioners, academics, technologists, civil society organizations, and policymakers—to share field experiences, deconstruct dominant narratives, and collectively reflect on how we might envision EdTech for equitable and meaningful education.

The tentative format of the conference is as follows:

Keynote Address: EdTech Potential and Pitfalls 9:30 AM – 10:15 AM

Perspectives that combine concept, theory, and practice of Technology in Education, foregrounding the aim of universal, equitable education, by Jian Xi Teng, Programme Specialist for Education, UNESCO Regional Office for South Asia. Mr. Teng is responsible for higher education, digital learning, literacy, STEM, and technical and vocational education. He has led work on ICT in education policy and capacity building in 15 countries, publications on digital citizenship, frontier technologies, and inclusive policy development. He works with UN agencies, multilateral agencies, academia and the private sector at global, regional and national levels to strengthen education delivery for SDG4.

Fireside Chat: Making EdTech work systemically

10:15 AM – 10:40 AM

Anvar Sadath, CEO, Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education, Government of Kerala in conversation with Kavita Sanghvi, Director – Education, Kotak Education Foundation, about the journey, challenges and successes of implementing EdTech in Kerala's public education system.

Teabreak

10:40 – 11:00 AM

Panel 1: EdTech in Practice

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Organizations, corporations, and educators are experimenting with technology – from local 'smart classrooms' to state-wide repositories and global platforms. Understanding and analyzing their experiences can help build deeper insights into both possibilities and perils of integrating technology into education across diverse parameters – political, geographic, and socio-economic contexts, grades, curricular focus areas, etc. Participants in this panel will explore:

1. How different programmes and models imagine EdTech for universal quality education
2. The role of different stakeholders – students, educators, communities, administrators – in these initiatives
3. How the implementation of these models could strengthen public education
4. Key challenges faced, and possible approaches to address them
5. How these models understand and address questions of scalability and sustainability, towards universal access and inclusion

Panelists:

- Chitkala B C, Sikshana Foundation
- Jayanti Dasgupta, Educational Initiatives
- Niharika Gaur, Khan Academy
- Gowri Mahesh, Learning Matters
- Balasubrahmanian S, Chrysalis
- Rahul Garg, ConveGenius
- EkStep (TBC)
- Openlinks Foundation (TBC)

Lunch

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Panel 2: Where is the Ed in EdTech?

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

There is a need to adopt critical perspectives in engaging with EdTech policies and programs to better their understand benefits, complexities, risks, and harms. It is essential to take a step back to critically examine broader imaginaries and politics surrounding EdTech, to tease out principles that should underlie its adoption. This panel will seek to problematize EdTech by engaging with questions like:

1. What are the pressing issues, concerns, tensions, and problems that surround EdTech in India today?
2. What harms, inequities, or exclusions are we seeing associated with EdTech?
3. What is the political economy of EdTech in India and globally?
4. Who are the key actors influencing EdTech policy, and what/whose agendas are being advanced?
5. How do EdTech and AI reinforce colonial mindsets?

Panelists:

- Anurag Shukla, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad
- Anil Mammen, Tata Institute of Social Sciences
- Poruri Sai Rahul, FOSS United
- Aishwarya Sharma, Manav Rachna University (MRU) & National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA)
- Rishi Mazumdar, QUEST Alliance
- Microsoft Research (TBC)

Reflections for the Day

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

This closing session by Vikas Maniar will weave together insights from the keynote address and the discussions in the two panels, connecting field experiences with critical perspectives. It will open space to reflect on how EdTech could serve education in democratic and equitable ways, focusing on key aspects that emerged in the discussions, and shaping them into a coherent statement on how EdTech programs can be meaningfully designed and implemented in India.

Closing Remarks and Wrap-up

4:00 PM

About IT for Change (ITfC)

The work of IT for Change over the last 25 years has focused on research, field projects, and policy advocacy on how digital technologies can contribute to human rights, social justice, and equity. Our work in education is characterized by an emphasis on empowering teachers and building systemic agency through Teacher Professional Development, coupled with integration of FOSS (Free and Open Source Software) for inclusive, accessible education for all. We are part of networks of academicians, researchers, educators, and technologists working to develop a critical understanding of EdTech. Simultaneously, we build and implement models of EdTech that can strengthen the public education system towards universal, equitable education.

About Critical EdTech India (CETI)

CETI is a network of researchers and educators, set up to critically examine and engage with the evolving field of educational technology and build a body of knowledge, with a primary focus on developments in India. CETI aims to advocate for policies that address the negative impacts caused by the unquestioning adoption of EdTech and propose EdTech principles and policies that would enable progressive educational aims to be met. CETI works to network with like-minded individuals and communities in the country and globally, and expand the community of Critical EdTech practitioners.



Organized by:

