



Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

MSDE-IBM Partnership Unveils Free Digital Learning Platform “Skills Build Reignite” to Reach More Job Seekers & Provide New Resources to Business Owners in India

Created to address the current skills gap in the country

Also announces a ten-week duration Skills Build Innovation Camp for students, providing hands on project experience, enhanced learning and increased employability

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Directorate General of Training (DGT), under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), is responsible for implementing long term institutional training to the nation’s youth through its network of training institutes and infrastructure. It plays a key role in the execution of vocational training schemes and in making ‘Digital India’ dream become a reality.

Recent analyses are an indicator that the rate of digital evolution is outpacing the rate of digital adoption. The young learners now need specialized skill sets to work with the advanced technologies and to make use of the diverse opportunities available under the ‘new-collar jobs’. Hence, creating opportunities for Young India with focus on new-age skills like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data, 3D - Technology, Cloud Computing, Cyber Security, etc. which are aligned to Industry 4.0 requirements, has become the prime focus for DGT.

With this in view, DGT has in the past one year, collaborated with many digital industry front-liners like IBM India Pvt. Ltd., Microsoft Corp. (India) Ltd., SAP India, Cisco Systems India Pvt. Ltd., Accenture Solutions and Quest Alliance, Adobe India, etc., to enable the

students to become industry-ready. Even in the current scenario of the continuous impact of COVID-19, DGT is lining up with the industry partners in its efforts for enabling blended /e-learning with a combination of multimedia and similar digital resources for the students/trainees, trainers and the administrators, by providing anytime, anywhere online digital content through its BharatSkills learning platform (<https://bharatskills.gov.in>).

One such strong and growing partnership has been between DGT and IBM India with some unique and first of a kind program. IBM has committed to provide multifaceted digital skill training in the area of Cloud Computing and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to students & trainers across the nation in the National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).

Now, in its effort to address the current skills gap in the country, IBM and its partners are today introducing the **SkillsBuild Reignite and the SkillsBuild Innovation Camp**.



The SkillsBuild Reignite tends to provide job seekers and entrepreneurs, with access to free online coursework and mentoring support designed to help them reinvent their careers and businesses. Job seekers, individual business owners, entrepreneurs and any individual with learning aspirations can now tap into host of industry relevant content on topics including Artificial intelligence, Cloud, Data analytics and security to reskill and upskill themselves, at no cost. Its special feature is the personalized coaching for entrepreneurs, seeking advice to help establish or restart their small businesses as they begin to focus on recovery to emerge out of the COVID 19 pandemic. Courses for small business owners include, for example,

financial management, business strategy, digital strategy, legal support and more. Plus, IBM volunteers will serve as mentors to some of the 30,000 SkillsBuild users in 100 communities in at least five major regions worldwide to help reinvigorate local communities.

The SkillsBuild Innovation camp is a 10 week program which supports 100 hours of structured learning to learners who are interested in gaining hands-on project experience to enhance learning and are intent on building their network and enhance their employability. With the guidance of expert facilitators, IBM volunteers and coaches, the students will be guided through the design thinking process and learn strategic methods to craft their problem statement, ideate creatively, solve complex problems more quickly, design an innovative user experience and tell compelling stories. The SkillsBuild Innovation Camp concludes with a pitch to facilitators, other teams, stakeholders and potential employers or investors.

Background: In November 2019, IBM India, in partnership with Directorate General of Training (DGT), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, and its implementation partners, made the **SkillsBuild online learning platform** available to Indian students through Bharatskills (<https://bharatskills.gov.in>) of DGT. Digital classrooms on this platform are available to students and instructors from the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and technical education ecosystem in India. Within the first 6 weeks of its deployment in India, the platform has already benefited 4700 motivated learners from 15 states and Union Territories who have been able to continue their learning despite lockdowns and restrictions. It currently has impacted 14,135 learners who have completed 40,000 of courses and 77,000 hours of e-learning. SkillsBuild has been rated as India's Top 10 online learning platform by National Skills Network. According to the India Skill Report (2019), only 45.6% of the youth graduating from educational institutions are employable. This reflects the massive shortage of skilled workforce in the country.

Congratulating DGT and IBM India for their collaborative efforts to bridge the skills gap in the country through this initiative, Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship said, *“Today, we mark a significant milestone in supporting Centre's efforts in accelerating Indian economy's revival from the adverse effects of COVID with the launch of SkillsBuild Reignite and Innovation Camp, in collaboration with IBM India. In line with our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Skill India Mission, the Ministry has been working relentlessly to strengthen the skilling ecosystem and leverage the rise in demand for new-age skills by expanding industry cross-collaboration and creating learning pathways through digital learning platforms. IBM's expertise in*

providing multifaceted digital skill training in the area of Cloud Computing and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will strengthen our efforts in the recovery of local workforces, communities and economies by supporting job seekers, entrepreneurs, and small businesses.”

In appreciation of the commendable role played by IBM India, Shri Praveen Kumar, Secretary, MSDE said that *“Our mission is to empower next gen with new age skills and make them future ready. Our collaboration with IBM will help us address the widening skill gap in the country and create a culture of up-skilling. IBM’s SkillsBuild Reignite platform provides right set of tools, innovative approach and access to mentors for students to thrive in this competitive environment”*.

Ms. Neelam Shami Rao, Director General of Training, MSDE, said that DGT aims to constantly upgrade and modernize the ITI Ecosystem in terms of infrastructure, pedagogy, curriculum and technology interventions for creating vast learning opportunities for the youth of India.

“There is a need to shift the needle and focus on new technologies and changing skill requirement to bridge the skill gap. It’s important that we align the workforce to industry needs and technology shifts. The SkillsBuild Reignite platform helps equip job seekers with digital, professional skills and relevant training to re-enter the workforce. Not only does this platform provides career reinvention opportunities but also innovative ways of working and individualized support for relaunching business strategies,” said Sandip Patel, General Manager, IBM India/South Asia.

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