

# TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE INDIAN SOCIAL SECTOR

Frequently Asked Questions



A joint initiative of



Centre for  
Social Impact  
and Philanthropy

&



Execution partners:



KORN FERRY and



SATTVA  
Delivering High Impact

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Outreach Partner: GuideStar India

## Talent Management in Indian Social Sector: Frequently asked questions

### Section 1: About the Study

#### What is the study about?

People are central to the social sector. With an extremely vibrant and complex ecosystem within which Social Purpose Organisations (SPOs) work, there is an emergent need to address talent management challenges faced by organisations. In the last decade, numerous studies have illuminated the nature of talent-related challenges faced by organisations ([Deloitte, 2020](#); [Dasra, 2019](#); [Nonprofit HR, 2018](#); [ISDM, 2018](#); [Bridgespan, 2017](#)). While such reports have brought forward the nature of challenges faced by organisations, there remains a deep lacuna in the understanding of current talent management practices of organisations. Thus, a knowledge infrastructure that informs and benchmarks talent management practices within the social sector is critical. This study attempts to build exactly that. How can people in this sector be motivated; What leads to ideal organisational climates for organisations to retain and nurture talent as well as ensure organisational effectiveness through advanced management practices? These are questions that this study aims to answer. The study shall also enable organisations and key stakeholders to develop a shared vocabulary and data-informed narratives on talent management in the Indian social sector.

The insights generated from this study will be publicly accessible for use by social purpose organisations, funding organisations and ecosystem support organisations, or individual professionals to make data-informed decisions on people practices. The study has two critical parts: one on compensation practices in the sector, benchmarked to organisational archetypes and categories; and the other on organisational structures, processes, and practices that impact talent motivation and drivers within organisations and in the sector.

A one of its kind, first-ever empirical study to identify and co-create benchmarks of talent practices, the study shall equip the sector with many seminal pieces, including a compensation and good practices database, a classification of social purpose organisations in the sector for further research and knowledge co-creation, as well as a typology of roles in social purpose organisations.

#### Why is this study being conducted?

There is limited data on compensation and talent management practices in the Indian social sector. Further, there is almost no research available, as knowledge commons, that can help organisational leaders, managers, and professionals in the Indian social sector make data-informed decisions on strategic and operational choices vis-à-vis talent. This study aims to enable stakeholders in the Indian social sector to make such decisions while considering empirical insights emerging from the field.

The study shall also enable organisations to learn from good practices currently being used by their contemporaries to solve talent challenges. The study aims to facilitate the beginning of a shared, open-source knowledge infrastructure on talent and people practices in the Indian social sector towards enabling enhanced effectiveness of social purpose organisations.

Insights emerging from the study shall also hold value for new and aspiring/potential talent to understand the diversity of roles the sector offers and related benchmarks of organisational practices towards motivating the individuals and professionals who fulfil such roles.

### What is the methodology of the study?

The study employs parallel mixed method design bringing together the strength of quantitative and qualitative methods to arrive at meaningful insights. While module 1 of the study on 'Benchmarking compensation practices in the social impact sector will focus on compensation and talent metrics; Module 2 on 'Drivers of talent' shall bring together qualitative insights on organisational structures, process and systems that influence drivers of talent. Module 2 shall also offer insights on drivers that motivate individuals and professionals working or engaged in social purpose organisations fulfilling various roles and responsibilities.

Both study modules shall be pursued in parallel and are exploratory in nature. The design of the overall study is informed by an iterative strategy. The study will be executed online through data collection methods like surveys, focus groups discussions, and structured and semi-structured interviews with respondents.

Sampling for the study is purposive, non-probabilistic. The study design introduces a framework for a typology of organisations in the Indian social sector, resulting in the identification of 14 organisational archetypes. The sampling process and criteria are designed to capture the diversity and benchmarks of practices across organisational archetypes. For further details on the methodology of the study, please write to us at [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in).

### I want to be part of this study; whom can I reach out to?

The study shall create immense value for each participating organisation as well as for the whole ecosystem. If your organisation is interested in participating in the study, please write to us at [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in). To know more about how the study will help/support your organisation, please see the answer to '[Why should my organisation participate in the study?](#)'

### What will be the medium of language of communication in the study?

While the study questionnaire and the guideline for filling the survey are available in 9 Indian languages, organisations will need to record their **responses in English**. The other languages in which

the questionnaire and guideline are available for your reference are Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Odiya, and Bengali.

#### Can I answer the questions in my language other than English?

Please record all your responses in the survey form only in English. While the translations in 9 languages are available for your reference, you are expected to respond only in English. Should you require any further assistance in responding to the survey, please write to us at [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in). We will be happy to assist you.

#### Will it be an online/ offline study?

Keeping the novel coronavirus pandemic in mind, this will primarily be an online study.

If you have any questions regarding challenges that your organisation might face in participating in an online study, please reach us at [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in)

#### Will my partners or funders also be part of this study?

We will reach out to most of the Indian social sector funding organisations for participation in the study. If we reach out to your funder(s) and they agree to participate, we will be glad to onboard them. If you have any questions about your funders' or partnering organisations' participation in the study, please write to us at [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in).

For concerns relating to data privacy and confidentiality, please see, '[Can my organisation participate in this study and remain anonymous?](#)'

#### Why should my organisation participate in the study?

By participating in this study, you will get an opportunity to engage in rich conversations with like-minded peers in the sector. You will get an opportunity to review and reassess your organisation's talent management practices and processes. In doing so, you will be contributing immensely to the shared understanding of talent practices within the sector.

Each participating organisation will receive a compensation report featuring data insights on 'Internal equity and external competitiveness', specific to their organisation. Additionally, 25 participating organisations will be featured as case studies on talent practices in the sector. All study participants will be critical to the creation of a shared database on compensation and talent management practices in the sector analysed based on key parameters of the role, geography, theme of engagement, size of organisations, etc. Furthermore, each participating organisation will add diversity and richness to the quality of the study, its data, and accompanying insights.

Your participation will thus go a long way in enabling the creation of knowledge commons for the sector and your organisation towards leveraging data for effective development management practice. The study will support stakeholders in this sector make informed decisions about these practices including funders, ecosystem support organisations and CSOs across archetypes.

Insights emerging from the study shall also hold value for new and aspiring/potential talent to understand the diversity of roles the sector offers and related benchmarks of organisational practice towards motivating the individuals and professionals who fulfil such roles.

For further details on the study and its outputs please feel to reach us at [talent.study@isdsm.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdsm.org.in)

#### Can my organisation participate in this study and remain anonymous?

Yes, we will be glad to honour such requests. Please write to us at: [talent.study@isdsm.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdsm.org.in) with the subject line 'Consent: Anonymity'

#### Do you require any documents from my organisation during the study?

The data collection team will reach out to you for sharing of documents relevant to the study. The documents will mostly include official policy documents and records regarding people practices in your organisation. We take confidentiality very seriously. All documents shared by you shall only be available to the research team engaging in data collection and analysis. These documents shall only be used for research purposes and will be requested along with the survey forms, interviews and group discussions that you will engage with.

Through this process of exchange of documents, your organisation will be assigned a dedicated point of contact who will be your 'study champion'. The study champion shall ensure absolute transparency and support to make your journey through the study an engaging and meaningful experience.

#### Which organisations are part of the study?

More than 160 organisations within the Indian social sector ecosystem are to participate in the study. These organisations will include,

1. Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and social enterprises working across different themes, sectors, and models of engagement.
2. Ecosystem support organisations offering various kinds of services and support structures for other organisations and the ecosystem, and,
3. Funding organisations including foundations, philanthropies, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) units, financial institutions for social sector investments and impact investment groups.

The sample universe of the study shall be put together by combining the databases of Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy (Ashoka University) and Indian School of Development Management, as well as organisations who have registered themselves with GuideStarIndia.

If your organisation is keen to participate in the study, please reach us at [talent.study@isdsm.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdsm.org.in)

Where can I read more about this study?

You can read more about this study [here](#). If you still have queries regarding the study, please connect with us at [talent.study@isdsm.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdsm.org.in)

Section 2 - Who is involved?

Who is conducting this study?

The study is a joint initiative of Centre for Social Impact & Philanthropy (CSIP), Ashoka University and Indian School of Development Management (ISDM). Korn Ferry is the execution partner for Research Module 1 of the study on 'Compensation Benchmarks for Indian Social sector', while Sattva Consulting is the execution support partner for Research Module 2 of the study on 'Drivers of Talent'.

GuideStar India is the outreach partner for the study.

Who is funding this study?

The study is co-funded by a group of progressive funders. They are:

- [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#)
- [Nilekani Philanthropies](#)
- [Omidyar Network](#)
- [ATE Chandra group](#)
- Citibank Group

Section 3 - Who should participate?

Who is eligible to participate in this study?

Any organisation in the Indian social sector (not-for-profit or for-profit) which has a formal statutory identity, operations in India and has social purpose as its core mandate is eligible to participate in this study. The study will exclude government bodies/departments and ministries, formal schools (offering education up to higher secondary level) and hospitals that provide direct health services to the country's population. Given that the study requires organisations which have spent considerable time thinking and acting on people practices, the study will only include organisations with an age of over 5 years (from the date of registration).

This is a voluntary participation study, and we will be reaching out to specific organisations for participating in the study based on a framework on typology of organisations developed for the purpose of this study. To enable this process, CSIP and ISDM will be working with GuideStar to roll out the first set of onboarding forms.

#### Will I/my organisation need to sign a consent form?

Yes, the onboarding survey has a section on consent that you will need to approve for participation in the study.

#### Can I opt out of the study at any point in the study?

Yes, an organisation can opt out of the study at any point. We would however not recommend doing so as opting out of the study will impact the study negatively due to our inability to onboard replacements mid-way. It is thus recommended that an organisation makes a well-informed decision about its participation at the onset of the study.

### Section 4 - Data Collection and Management

#### What kind of data will be collected during the study?

Data on talent management practices within participating organisations will be collected through surveys, quantitative compensation questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews. The research team will be mindful of comfort level of organisations in terms of sharing this data and will account for any special requests for anonymity or non-availability of data.

#### Who will own the copyrights of the study findings?

The Intellectual Property rights for all knowledge products, including research frameworks and deliverables that arise as a result of this project will be jointly shared by CSIP and ISDM and will be held under Creative Commons Licensing Type Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY- NC 4.0).

Individual organisational data collected during study **will not be held** under this copyright clause and will belong to the organisation which has shared that data.

#### Should I prepare something before I am contacted for the data collection process?

Our **study champions** will reach out to you to prepare you adequately before all data collection exercises as and when any preparation or pre-work is required.

#### Will the focus group discussions format be formal or informal?

While the moderators will ensure that the discussion does not veer off to irrelevant tangents, specific structures will not be enforced to ensure that the participants are freely able to share their perceptions attitudes, beliefs, opinions or ideas as candidly as possible.

When am I supposed to contribute during the focus group discussion? Is it compulsory to answer/ contribute to all questions?

It is not compulsory to respond to all questions. Participants are free to respond whenever they deem fit.

How would you maintain the confidentiality of details shared by my organisation?

Data from all organisations will be stored securely and used only for aggregated analyses. The audience of this study will have access only to aggregated analyses. Absence of organisational identifiers in the study finding reports and databases will preclude the possibility of any insights being traced back to any specific organisation.

Team members and partner organisations executing this study will have access to the raw data collected during the study. This data will be used only for academic purposes related to this study.

## Section 5 - Engagement

Who will be my point of contact from the study execution team?

You will receive a separate communication introducing you to your study champion, once you have completed the onboarding survey. You may reach out to your assigned study champion for any queries at any point in time during the study. Your study champion can be contacted at [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in)

What will be the time investment of my organisation in the study?

It is expected that senior leaders within your organisation will participate in at least 2-3 discussions during this study. We would also require suitable representative(s) from the organisation to share data related to organisation's compensation and policy. Overall, your involvement is expected to stretch to a maximum of 12 hours stretched over two weeks with each sitting not being more than 2-3 hours. The study could require more involvements beyond these, based on your need and availability of information/ people within your organisation.

Your study champion will work alongside you in keeping you updated about these.

Will I be informed in advance of my time commitment to the study process/ steps? How will my priorities be accommodated?

Yes, you will always be informed well in advance about your time involvement. If at any point in time you are unable to participate in a scheduled discussion due to last-minute scheduling conflicts, feel free to reach out to the study champion to request for rescheduling (at: [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in)).

What are the various steps my organisation will go through in this study?

Your organisation will go through the following steps:



1. Organisation receives invitation to participate in the study and fill in the onboarding survey.
2. Organisation confirms participation, fills in the survey form and receives study enrolment pack.
3. Organisation goes through regional consultation Focused Group Discussions.
4. Organisation shares compensation data and goes through job mapping discussion.
5. If your organisation participates in Module 2, we will reach out to you for interviews / focus group discussions and data collection processes with mid and senior management of your organisation.
6. Organisation participates in a roundtable to discuss study results and gets access to formal reports.

Who from my organisation should/ will be engaging with the study? Can different people engage with the study at different times?

It is expected that senior leaders of the organisation who are well-versed with the talent management strategy practices of the organisation will get involved in the qualitative data collection exercises. For compensation data, individuals who handle human resource function or compensation / payroll operations may get involved.

Will I / my organisation's commitment be expected on public holidays, on weekends or during non-working hours?

The study will certainly not be conducted on public holiday and we will try our best to coordinate participation within normal working hours. However, due to the large and geographically diverse sample size there might be certain exceptions, but we will try our best to accommodate preferences of the participants.

## Section 6 - Outcomes

When will we get the results or findings of the study?

The study is expected to finish in September. We will start dissemination of findings from this study soon after that.

How can I access the results or findings of this study?

You will receive internal equity and external competitiveness reports as a result of your participation in Module 1. Furthermore, upon the completion of the study you will receive links to the databases that will form as compendia of compensation and talent management practices within the Indian social sector.

What are internal equity and external competitiveness reports?

The internal equity report will provide an organisation insight into fairness of its compensation structures and practices. The report will compare pay within an organisation across various roles, levels, and functions. This report, thus, enables equal pay for equal work within the organisation.

The external competitiveness will provide insights into external pay levels for roles existing within an organisation. This, in essence, will allow an organisation to review the competitiveness of its pay practices with respect to other organisations within and outside the sector.

Will I still have access to study results if I have withdrawn from the study?

While you may get access to the public databases that will be created because of this study, you may not receive the customised participation reports.

Will there be follow-ups to this study?

Yes, it is expected that this study will be longitudinal in nature with multiple, regular iterations in future.

How will you implement the findings of the study?

Through this study, we intend to co-create a database of practices and ideas on talent management within the sector. The study will lead to robust, accessible data on compensation trends across organisation typology and roles and a repository of strategies and good practices that operationalise the shared 'norms' for transparent and professional talent management practices.

Section 7 - Who to contact?

Whom should I contact if I have more doubts about this study?

For more information, please write to [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in). You will shortly receive a link to the study information webinar. Feel free to join that for a detailed discussion about the study. You may reach out to your assigned study champion for any queries at any point in time during the study (at: [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in)).

Section 8 - Troubleshoot.

Which online tools / platforms will I need to participate in this study?

The online discussions will be hosted on Zoom. Apart from an active Zoom account, you only need a stable internet connection.

Who will be the study champion?

The study champion will be one of the study team members who will be working with your organisation to ensure that there is continuous and seamless communication between your organisation and the study team. They will help you to troubleshoot any problems that you may encounter while participating in the study. Furthermore, they will attend to any requests relevant to your participation during or after the study.

Whom should I contact for rescheduling a discussion that I am supposed to be a part of or if I get dropped out of a discussion due to internet issues?

Feel free to reach out to the study champion to request for rescheduling (at: [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in)).

In case I am not able to reach out to the study champion, what should I do?

In case you are not able to reach to the study champion, you may write to [talent.study@isdms.org.in](mailto:talent.study@isdms.org.in).

We will expedite the resolution of your queries and have your study champion reach out to you as soon as possible.

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