

Script: Introduction to Program Content

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At the outset, I would like to thank the leadership team of IITAGH for giving me this opportunity to be of service to the community.

I thank Witty Bindra and Pratish Kanani, the Chairs of this conference for enriching my life through this experience.

When I was requested by them to chair the conference's program content, the theme was already defined: Inspiring Innovation for Tomorrow.

So, I took a step back and wondered, what would tomorrow look like?

After studying a few forecasts, I settled on one: By 2045, the world will have a population of about 9 Billion people.

The founding fathers of the United States and India had instilled in me that each of these nine billion people have rights to the "Pursuit of Happiness" and to education and a healthy life.

Additionally, the needs of these nine billion people will create a stress nexus—we will need 50% more food than we produce today, 30% more water and 50% more energy.

So, I asked myself the question? How do we get there from here?

And the answer that evolved was: By weaving STEEL Threads into a tapestry of innovations to meet the challenges of the future. STEEL stands for **S**ustainability, **T**echnology, **E**ducation, **E**nergy, and **L**ife Sciences. Threads because these intertwine and intermingle with each other.

So, our program content has five threads, and each of them has a leader or two:

- **Sustainability** is led by Dr. Puneet Agarwal and Arun Rajamani—two sessions—one on Food & Water and the other on Renewables;
- **Technology** is led by Vivek Kishore—at tomorrow morning's plenary session, Partha Ghosh will share his wisdom on Avoiding the Dangers of Linear Thinking for Innovation without Illusions; and we have two innovation sessions—one on the Innovation process, and the other on entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship;
- **Education** is led by Shail Kumar—six sessions in all—a plenary session on Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs), another by President Vicente Fox on STEM education in emerging nations, and four panels during breakout sessions;
- **Energy** is led by my Co-Chair, Sunil Pangarkar, with Mohan Natarajan—a plenary session on the Fracking Frenzy and how a technological and microeconomic force has changed the global macroeconomic balance, another on Energy Outlook, and two breakout sessions.
- **Life Sciences** is led by Dr. Atul Varadhachary who is responsible for a plenary session and two breakout sessions.

We are the graduates of the “Indian” Institutes of Technology. So, there will be a sprinkling of India and Indian-ness in the program.

Miss America Nina Davuluri's presence adds a flavor of the next-generation IndoAmerican to this conference.

We have Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen's plenary talk this afternoon about Rebuilding India.

And Desh Deshpande will speak at the closing plenary session about creating mega impact with social enterprises.

We have more than 90 speakers, each of whom, on an average, will have only 14.16 minutes to speak. So, why are they here? Because of you all in the audience. They are here because they want to influence you, the best and the brightest in the world, to make a difference for tomorrow, for the coming generations.

Confucius once said, “I listen and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”

We have an ambitious program and it is our fervent hope that we will remember what we see and experience, and that when we leave the conference, we all commit ourselves to some action that will Inspire Innovations for a Better Tomorrow, for future generations.

Thank you.

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