

India Cycles4Change Challenge

July 11, 2020

The Smart Cities Mission opened the registration for India Cycles4Change Challenge. The challenge aims to **help cities connect with their citizens as well as experts to develop a unified vision to promote cycling.**

Cycles4Change Challenge

The challenge is open to **all cities under the Smart Cities Mission, capital cities of States/UTs, and all cities with a population of more than 5 lakh population.** The Challenge will run in two stages. Stage One will run until October where **cities will focus on piloting quick interventions to promote cycling and developing a scale-up strategy.** In October 2020, 11 cities will be shortlisted and will receive Rs. 1 crore award and guidance from national and international experts to further scale-up the initiatives in Stage Two, which will be held until May 2021.

The need for personalized forms of transport is expected to increase as a response to COVID-19. A recent survey by the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) India Programme shows that **cycling would increase by 50-65% as cities come out of lockdown.** Cities around the world are leveraging the opportunity to expand their cycling networks and public bicycle-sharing systems. As per ITDP, increasing cycling can help cities in a **green economic recovery.** Investments in cycling infrastructure have economic benefits of up to 5.5 times the initial investment. Cycling for short distances can result in an annual benefit of INR 1.8 trillion to the Indian economy.

Indian cities have started working towards **promoting cycling as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Kolkata has proposed a dedicated cycle corridor by reclaiming parking spaces. The

city will conduct a preliminary road survey within four months, after which the project will be implemented by early next year. In Guwahati, The Green Lane Foundation, with the support of the Bicycle Mayor of Guwahati and Pedal for a Change, is conducting a survey for citizens to vote for the best routes for bicycle lanes in the city, which will be incorporated into the challenge.

Cities are encouraged to **collaborate with CSOs, experts, and volunteers** as they develop and implement their plans. Citizen collaboration will also be a key metric in the evaluation of proposals submitted by the cities. To assist the cities in this aspect, the online portal also features a registration form for CSOs, urban designers, planners, students and other citizens who wish to collaborate with their cities.