

Publication – Mint	Link <a href="https://www.livemint.com/news/india/waste-management-solutions-company-among-finalist-for-social-entrepreneur-of-the-year-award-11606311799710.html">https://www.livemint.com/news/india/waste-management-solutions-company-among-finalist-for-social-entrepreneur-of-the-year-award-11606311799710.html</a>
Edition – Mumbai	Date – 26.11.2020

## Pravah, iKure founders in fray for social entrepreneur award

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An urban waste management solutions company and a venture that trains youth for leadership roles are among the finalists for the 2020 Social Entrepreneur of the Year award selected by the Schwab Foundation and Jubilant Bhartia Foundation.

A company working for a decade to bring affordable and accessible healthcare to the doorstep of communities in India with the aim of achieving zero mortality also featured in the final list. For this year's award, around 100 nominations were received from more than 23 cities across India.

The winner will be named on Thursday. The award will be handed over by Union minister

for women and child development, and textiles, Smriti Irani. Ashraf Patel, the founder of New Delhi-based Pravah and ComMutiny, which prepares the youth for leadership roles, was nominated for the second year in a row. "It feels good because it underlines recognition to this work on youth leadership," she said.

Pravah, established in 1993, was launched with the idea of focusing on issues of discrimination and conflict resolution within communities, particularly social conflicts, Patel said.

"We felt social conflicts, particularly around identity-based discrimination, will not be addressed unless we work on a mindset change," she said.

This prompted her to work with children, adolescents and the youth "at a time when they are formulating their identity,



(From left) Pravah founder Ashraf Patel, NEPRA's Sandeep Patel and iKure founder Sujay Santra.

their definition of their own selves and their connection to society".

At present, Patel and her team are working on building a coalition called 'Vartaleap', which seeks to awaken the

youth and be active citizens in every space, including home and school, and contribute to nurturing the young leaders or "jagriks".

Pravah also supports young social entrepreneurs and incu-

bators in the social arena led by young people. ComMutiny, which was formed in 2008, works on the idea of making collectives out of organizations like Pravah, Patel said.

Ahmedabad-based Sandeep Patel who helms NEPRA, said the nomination for the award reiterates that the "waste business is being recognized and what we are doing is coming into the mainstream". "Even though waste management from the outside looks simple, it is very complex because it is people-driven and highly dynamic in nature," he said.

NEPRA, which was launched eight years ago and recycled a few hundred kilograms of dry

waste, currently recycles 2,000 metric tonnes of waste per day across seven cities. The challenge was to create infrastructure and aligning people with local bodies to recognize the importance of waste management, he said.

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The third finalist, Kolkata-based iKure, led by Sujay Santra, is working on prioritizing primary healthcare, wellness and prevention services via innovative technologies.

The "social enterprise", as iKure describes itself on its website, combines technology intervention, skill development and outreach initiatives and has so far reached 10.2 million people across 5,200 villages in seven states.