

The Museum of Possibilities, a path breaking initiative started in Commissionerate for welfare of the differently Abled, Chennai, showcases a gamut of assistive devices .This vibrant place spread over 2500 sq ft with an accessible cafe in tow, has a range of simple solutions to day to day accessibility issues .

We meet up with primary consumers to understand their thoughts and aspirations on the Museum of Possibilities (MoP).Mr Satish is a banker while Ms Smitha Sadasivan, was an accessibility consultant for the Election Commission of India. Both of them use assistive devices extensively and can be seen whizzing off on their motorized wheelchairs .



Picture shows visitors viewing the assistive devices on show at Museum of Possibilities

Satish, why is it important to have a place like this?

In my opinion, The Museum of Possibilities is very important because in our country most people don't have information or knowledge about access and assistive devices. The small percentage of people who have some knowledge of this are still grappling with how to procure it. This would be a one-stop place for all the simple solutions which would change their life.

There might also be people who are developing assistive devices or have brilliant ideas about some new technology but may not know how to reach out to the stakeholders -this is where Mop will be useful as the museum would be the platform to connect people and bridge this gap.

The need for MoP has been felt long back and it should have been started many years ago but nevertheless, I am happy that we have made the beginning for many like this across the country.



Picture shows Satish on his motorized wheelchair, reading the life changing events on the Impact wall in the Museum

What is unique about this place, can this be replicated and how does the model home in the museum influence the way we look at assistive devices.

It is unique in many ways, I have not seen or heard about any other place being built exclusively for people with disabilities, it caters to all disabilities and is completely accessible. I feel this is unique and a pioneering one as the solutions and devices are applicable to independent living, work and leisure.

I like the model home as it demonstrates how independent living is possible with small adaptations and aids. The Museum of possibilities is a replicable model and has a great scope in creating awareness and changing the lives of people with disabilities whether urban or rural.

What is the impact on access and on the society, you are envisaging through this concept?

The impact will be humungous. The mop is not only a must-visit place for people who have no information or knowledge about access but also for people who are already using assistive devices but may not know about the new developments in the field and how they could change their lives.

The new technologies and adaptations will change the quality of life and open up many opportunities in the area of employment, hobbies, sports, etc.

The workplace adaptations are simple and would lead to financial Independence. This will make them less dependent on others and become independent. This, over a period of time, will make society open up to an inclusive workforce.

What sort of convergence /development /networking scope does MoP have?

I feel Mop will play a major role in making people realize how small changes can make many things possible and lead to a better quality of life. I also feel we need to spread the word about Mop not only in Tamil Nadu but across the country so more and more people will benefit.

A lot of work needs to be done to create awareness about Mop and also to build a network. New product demos on media, and conferences will make people know about Mop.

As a primary end-user of assistive devices what else would you like to see at Mop?

The MoP should be able to display or reflect the innovations developed globally -only then it will evolve and sustain people's interest. Innovation and reaching the

the public should be a continuous process.

The MoP has a lot of scope in connecting the needs of people with disabilities to the developers -for example, I use a motorized wheelchair and I dream of driving a car that can be operated by a joystick. We don't have this technology in India and importing a car like that is beyond a common man's pocket. This is where I feel Mop can play a crucial role -identifying developers for individualized needs and making dreams come true!!

<https://tnmop.in/>

Now there is a model in place so govt can't be postponing the agenda of accessibility. Every public building, job establishment, and transport system should be accessible. If personal mobility on the ground at the micro-level can be made fully accessible, why not at the macro level.

The housing department should take inputs from the Museum of Possibilities and execute. Now we have a model for ensuring all housing programs are accessible which should be mandated by the government. It's time that penal provisions are enforced for accessibility non-compliance.

At a personal level, MOP gives an experience and feel of what accessibility can do to a person, how enabling it is, how much freedom it gives and how every aspect of life can be made easy with simple adaptations.-Smita Sadasivan