

OSAMA MANZAR

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Mint/Wall Street Journal Columns: <http://ow.ly/eEDej>

Osama Manzar is a convert social entrepreneur spearheading the mission to overcome information poverty in India. He is an inspiring speaker, influencer, angel investor, mentor and believer. Osama founded Digital Empowerment Foundation with the objective that there should be universal digital literacy and digital access to all to overcome information gap and parity and help build equitable society.

He is a Member, Working Group, Internet Proliferation & Governance for Ministry of Communication & IT and was a Member, Task Force on Growth of IT, ITES & Electronics HW Manufacturing Industry, Ministry of Communication & IT, India. He is also a member of the Advisory Board for National Optic Fibre Network (NOFN) of the Universal Service Obligation Fund under the Indian Department of Telecom. At the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Manzar is a member of the Screening Committee for the Community Radio Licensing.

Manzar sits on the Boards of the World Summit Award, the Society for Labour & Development, Ibtada, the Association of Progressive Communication (APC), ProtoVillage, and the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI).

He has been British Chevening Fellow in 2002 and was invited by US State Department for the International Visitors Leadership Program in 2011.

Manzar has authored [NetCh@kra: 15 Years of Internet in India](#). Other titles by him include [e-Content: Voices from the Ground](#); [Internet Economy of India](#); [India's Best e-Contents](#), and [Development & Digital Inclusion](#). He writes a weekly column in the [Mint](#) and Hindustan, and has previously written columns for Gaon Connection.

He instituted [mBillionth Awards South Asia](#), a platform for recognising and mentoring mobile content, application & services, in 2010. In 2005, he launched India's first ever platform for felicitating the best e-content practices in India and South Asia through [Manthan Awards](#). Over the years, Manthan Awards has extended its reach to Asia Pacific region and has accumulated more than 4,000 best e-content practices in its nomination bank from India and other Asian countries. Gradually, he also institutionalised the [eNGO Challenge Awards](#) and the [Social Media for Empowerment Awards](#).

Manzar is an e-Content Expert for India, Grand Jury Member and Member of Board of Directors for [World Summit Award](#) (WSA). In addition, Manzar has been Jury Anchor for India's Dataquest e-Gov Champion Award (2008), Bahrain e-Content Award (2009), Sri Lanka's e-Content Award & Bangladesh's BRAC Manthan Award for Digital Innovation. He has been the moderator for e-North East Award Jury (2012), and is the facilitator of the Pearson Teachers Award, an initiative of Pearson & NDTV in collaboration with Digital Empowerment Foundation.

He has also been a part of the Professional Social Entrepreneurship Program by [Social-Impact International](#). He has worked with Computerworld as assistant editor, with the Hindustan Times as the head of Interactive Media Division, and had started a software company called 4Cplus before he quit to establish DEF in 2003.

A physics graduate, Manzar has a post-graduate diploma in Journalism and is credited for covering at least 200 ICTD case studies in India and South Asia. He has traveled to more than 2,000 villages in India and South Asia, and 30 other countries.

Manzar is fluent in English, Urdu, Hindi and can read and write Arabic and Persian. He tweets @osamamanzar.

Some of the works of DEF could be seen at: <http://manthanaward.org>; <http://mbillionth.in>;
<http://digitalknowledgecenter.in>; <http://pirengo.org>; <http://internetrights.in>; <http://citizenmedianetwork.org>;
<http://greenp.engo.in>; <http://gyanpedia.in>; <http://neerijaal.org>; <http://engo.in>; <http://epanchayat.in>;
<http://emsme.in>; <http://wforc.in>; <http://engochallenge.org>; <http://sm4e.net>