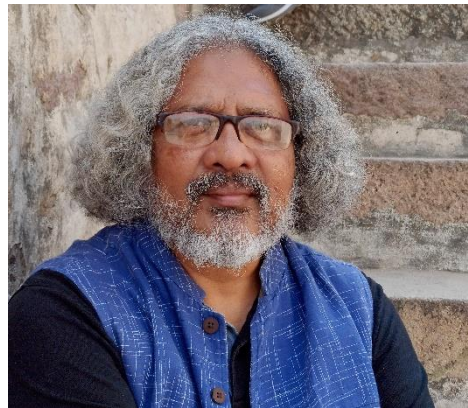


Sarath Davala

Why I am standing for the Position of Chair of BIEN

My name is Sarath Davala. I am the coordinator of India Network for Basic Income, and also the current Vice Chair of Basic Income Earth Network. I live in Hyderabad, India. I am a sociologist with a PhD from the University of Delhi.

Between 2010 and 2014, I was the Research Director of the Basic Income Pilot Project implemented in Madhya Pradesh, India. In 2015, my research colleagues and I published the findings of this major experiment in a book entitled: "Basic Income: A Transformative Policy for India". Ever since I have been an itinerant speaker at various gatherings in more than a dozen countries. I have continued to research and write about the possibilities of implementing a basic income in India. In the last five years, I have seen a great progress in the basic income debate in India and around the world. It was a privilege to organise and chair the BIEN congress last year.



We are at the threshold of cataclysmic changes in the world. Looking at it from the point of view of making this world a better place for each and every human being, there seem to be as many threats as there are opportunities. The biggest opportunity is that the idea of an unconditional basic income for all inhabitants of the world seems like an achievable goal. In this journey, Basic Income Earth Network has a critical role to play.

I am standing for the position of Chair of BIEN at such a juncture. I would like to facilitate co-creation of an intellectually robust and highly engaged Executive Committee that can stand up to the challenges that lie ahead. The next ten years are crucial for the basic income movement in the world which means that every member of our community has to join hands and become part of this movement. As we see, the basic income discussions are as animated in Canada, Mexico, Spain and Brazil as they are in India, Taiwan, Kenya and South Korea. There are as many politicians talking about it as there are students and their professors writing about it. The future EC is going to deal with such immense diversity of articulation, and in order to lead the movement, it requires a deep understanding and appreciation of different national contexts.

Thirty-four years ago when BIEN was founded, we were probably lonely in the basic income space. Today there are many players in that space and we need to converse with most of them, if not all. This requires us, as a team, to have extraordinary clarity about our organisational purpose and mission, so that we remain utterly profound and immensely relevant to lead the global movement. I would like to co-create the BIEN that will rise to this challenge.