

Youth of northeast India use films to tell stories about their environment and communities

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• [*The Green Hub training empowers youth with video skills to tell the stories of environment, conservation and communities from northeast India.*](#)

[Many alumni of the programme are currently part of various conservation projects in the region.](#)

[The project also helps transcend the differences in language and political ideologies in the region and facilitates social and cultural exchanges.](#)

Through the use of the visual medium, the Green Hub Project in northeast India engages and empowers youth across eight states in the region, especially from remote tribal areas and marginalised communities, in undertaking conservation action in the region. The video fellowship programme, based in Tezpur, Assam, was started in India by wildlife and environmental filmmaker, Rita Banerji and set up in 2014 as an initiative of North East Network and Dusty Foot Productions. In the training period, followed by a 10-month internship, the 20 fellows chosen each year, develop skills in video documentation and gain an understanding of how to apply these skills to tell stories in a manner that matters.

By building a deepened link to nature and conservation amidst the youth, Banerji hopes to ignite a spark in them to take this learning back to their communities and work towards protecting and preserving their environments. The use of a visual medium also helps transcend the differences in language and political ideologies across the northeast region and the project doubles up as a platform for social and cultural exchanges.

At the beginning of the programme, the fellows are immersed in intensive training for a period of three months, tailored to equip them with varied skills in video documentation. It comprises a series of workshops which are led by industry experts from across the country. This is combined with lectures from people working in the field on a diverse range of topics from human-animal conflict, natural history, social change and more. In the internship that follows, the fellows work with different organisational partners to create short films to communicate their work. Depending on the needs of the partners, they engage in video documentation based on research, issues and events to inform, raise awareness and educate. At the end of the year, Green Hub hosts a graduation ceremony for the fellows in the form of a film festival.

So far 70 youth from the region have undergone the programme and many are continuing working in the same line and are also spearheading conservation projects within their communities with extended support and a network provided by Green Hub.

While the films are used as a powerful tool to communicate any message, Banerji strongly believes that the documentation it results in is equally important as well. She foresees housing the footage collected to build a comprehensive video archive that helps in preserving traditional ecological knowledge, further develop learning strategies and build other forms of educational tools and materials.

Banner image: The Green Hub conducts video training for youth to tell the stories of environment, conservation and communities from northeast India. Photo courtesy Green Hub.

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