The most effective development of education can take place only when the teacher, the student, the parents and the outside environment can interact with one another, in a series of feedback loops, free from regimentation and irrelevant theories and principles preached from the top.

- Dr. Vikram Sarabhai
INTRODUCTION

Vikram A Sarabhai Community Science Centre (VASCSC) is a pioneering institution established by the distinguished scientist Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, in 1966. It was created as a facility where people concerned about the quality of science education could come together to experiment and try out new ideas and techniques for teaching science.

VASCSC aims to nurture and direct young minds towards scientific thinking with methods and techniques that make the process of learning, an enjoyable and lasting experience. Here, students are encouraged to move out of the rigid framework of textbooks and to think, explore and create. At the same time, emphasis is placed on connecting science concepts learnt at school with everyday experiences of students. Over the past fifty years, VASCSC has combined formal and non-formal techniques and come up with many innovative methods to give students a better understanding of Science and Mathematics.

VASCSC has to its credit a number of firsts which include an interactive exhibition space, open laboratories, mathematics laboratory, science playground, active use of computers in science education and developing interactive educational programmes – which have entered the mainstream now.

The Centre is open to all those who are interested in learning about Science and caters to various groups including students, teachers, educators and community. The Centre’s activities and material are popular and have reached out to a large number of schools and institutions across India.

GOVERNANCE

The Board of Governors (BoG) is the apex body governing the management and overall functioning of the institution. The Standing Committee is a sub-committee of the BoG. The Executive Director is the executive head of the Centre.

RECOGNITION

VASCSC started as ‘Experiment for Improvement of Science Education’ by the Group for Improvement in Science Education (GISE) headed by Dr. Vikram Sarabhai in 1963. The GISE Activity eventually evolved as ‘Community Science Centre’ in 1966. As a memorial to Dr. Sarabhai, the Centre was named as Vikram A Sarabhai Community Science Centre in 1972. VASCSC’s foundation stone was laid at the hands of Dr. C. V. Raman, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai and Smt. Saraladevi Sarabhai. The Centre has been enriched by its association with eminent scientists like Prof. K. R. Ramanathan, Prof. P. R. Pisharoty, Prof. M. S. Swaminathan, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, Prof. M. G. K. Menon, Prof. Yashpal and Prof. P. C. Vaidya.

National Award for ‘Outstanding Efforts in Science & Technology Communication’ by Dept. of Science & Technology, Govt. of India in 2008

The ‘Times of India Social Impact Award’ for Education in 2011
FACILITIES

Laboratories
The well-equipped labs at VASCSC provide a learning environment where students can experiment, explore and discover. Science educators facilitate the process of understanding scientific concepts through hands-on approaches.

Quadrangle
Interactive exhibits, models and puzzles are displayed in the quadrangle area of the Centre. Visitors of all ages can explore the world of science by themselves and have fun while they learn.

Science Hobby Workshop
The Workshop is involved in prototype development of Science and Mathematics Teaching Learning Material (TLM). Here, students’ hands-on experience is enriched by providing opportunity for science model and toy making.

Library
For those who wish to delve deeper into sciences, the VASCSC library provides them appropriate reference material. Here, students and teachers from school through college, can access the collection of several thousand Science and Mathematics books and periodicals.

Science Playground
Children can learn science concepts while at play in the Science Playground. Sound, colour, temperature, energy, simple machines are just a few of the many concepts that are made easy to understand at the Science Playground.

Science Shop
A wide array of TLM including publications, models, kits and posters are available at VASCSC’s Science Shop. This resource material can be used by teachers in their classroom teaching and by students for self-learning. These products are designed to make exciting teaching aids and gift items.
INNOVATION HUB
To inspire innovations in science and mathematics education, VASCSC is setting up an Innovation Hub at its premises, in partnership with NCSM. The Innovation Hub components include Hall of Fame, Innovation Resource Centre, Idea Lab, Design Studio, Tod Fod Jod Corner, Kabaad se Jugad Corner and Idea Box. This initiative aims to foster problem solving and independent thinking through hands-on learning and engagement in the process of science, technology and innovation.

ACTIVITIES
The Centre promotes science education through activities including:
• Conducting programmes for children to nurture their curiosity through hands-on experience
• Training workshops in Science & Mathematics for teachers
• Developing Teaching Learning Material & publications
• Developing and conducting mobile science exhibitions
• Facilitating schools in developing science activity centre and science playground
• Conducting science-based events
• Enriching sessions for groups visiting the Centre
• Facilitating school children for performing curriculum based experiments and providing guidance for school projects
VASCSC has been entrusted by Dept. of Science & Technology, Govt. of India with the coordination and management of its flagship programme - Science Express, since its inception in 2007. The Centre has reached out to the people across India through this iconic exhibition train. VASCSC's Science Communicators aboard the train create interest and awareness through the exhibition and complementary activities. Till May 2016, the Science Express has received over 1.56 crore visitors at 455 locations and has become the largest, longest running and most visited science exhibition in the world.

The Science Express (SE) presented cutting edge research in science & technology from all over the world, in phase 1 to 4. As Science Express - Biodiversity Special (SEBS) in phase 5 to 7, the exhibition showcased the biodiversity of India and was well-received as the brand ambassador of COP 11 to the UN Convention on Biodiversity. In phase 8 as Science Express Climate Action Special (SECAS), the exhibition focused on the global challenge of Climate Change.
SYMBOL
VASCSC’s symbol reflects the Centre’s focus on reaching out to one and all. The five arrowheads in the symbol represent teachers, students, researchers, administrators and community. VASCSC is represented by delta, the symbol of change. VASCSC aims to create change by bringing these groups together.

PROMOTING INNOVATION
VASCSC is promoting innovation through initiatives like ‘Innovation Hub’, ‘Innovation in Science & Mathematics Education’ and ‘STEM Training for Teachers’. The Centre is developing innovative Teaching Learning Material. Children and teachers are engaged in hands-on activities to foster innovation and creativity. They are encouraged to undertake innovative experiments, projects and problem solving exercises in multi-disciplinary set up. These help in connecting the concepts learnt at school with their real life experience. Schools and students are welcome to participate in these activities.