



Karya 2024
End of Year Report



From The Founders' Desk

2024 has been an incredible year at Karya. By the end of this fiscal year, we will triple our impact, growing from 30,000 to 100,000 workers. We now work in every single state in India, and recently expanded our operations to Kenya and Ethiopia.

This year was one of new beginnings and continued partnerships. We started new engagements with Google DeepMind and Microsoft Research where our workers completed increasingly complex tasks on our platform. Our incredible workers did everything from conducting the most extensive multilingual evaluation of LLMs yet with Microsoft Research to being the first to capture India's digitally underrepresented languages for Google Translate.

We began the year with the release and publication of our highly-anticipated RCT with JPAL. This research shows that Karya's high wages and work flexibility triples job uptake among women and acts as a gateway to engaging with jobs in the formal economy. This early evidence strengthens our conviction that digital work, and the ongoing AI revolution, can accelerate pathways out of poverty for communities across the Global South.

In February, we published a study on how we can build AI training datasets while simultaneously disseminating knowledge to our workers. In our study in collaboration with Microsoft, our workers built a financial-domain dataset, while learning critical financial literacy concepts at the same time. There's no better person to describe the impact of our model than Microsoft CEO, Satya Nadella, who said this about Karya and our engagement with Microsoft on CNBC.



Later in the year, we deepened our engagement with Google. Karya is Google's chosen partner for Project Vaani, an initiative aiming to capture India's linguistic diversity.

We are beyond grateful to Google.org for supporting our skilling initiatives, and we are very excited about entirely new engagements with the team at Google DeepMind. We also had the honour to present our work to Google CEO, Sundar Pichai.



Our paper, 'Akal Badi ya Bias', studying gender-bias in AI models won the Best Paper Award at the prestigious ACM FAccT conference. This research done in collaboration with Dr. Kalika Bali and her team at Microsoft Research showcased two important truths we have known for a while - systems to improve LLMs must be culturally contextual to work, and low-income communities are both excellent builders and beneficiaries of AI.

2024 has been a year of immense growth for us (quite literally) - we welcomed 50 new team members, bringing us to a total of 75! Many of our new hires are critical organizational leaders. We are thrilled to welcome Anupriya Singh as Karya's first Chief Revenue Officer, Aditi Bharat as Karya's Director of People Success, Rishi Ahuja as Head of Customer Success, Anmol Narain as Head of Monitoring and Evaluation, Anurag Shukla as Head of Platform and Ayushi Pandey as Head of Language Technology

We wrapped up this year by officially launching the Karya Platform. We are excited to see the Platform grow over the next few years as the key lever in bringing high-paying digital work to low-income communities across the Global South.

We cannot imagine this journey or our impact so far without the belief of our supporters, donors, mentors, clients and fellow impact organizations! Thank you so much to everyone who has been a part of this incredible journey so far. We have so much more to do, and miles to go before we feel satisfied, but we are committed and excited to harness what 2025 has in store!



Safiya, Manu & Vivek

**Our workers' experiences
and the impact of Karya
work on their lives keeps
us going.**

From the field



Scan to Play
The Microsoft Video



Our Year in Numbers

50,000+

workers already
engaged through
Karya

20x

We pay our workers
nearly twenty times
the Indian
minimum wage

28

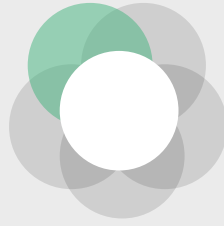
Reached all
states in India

42 Million

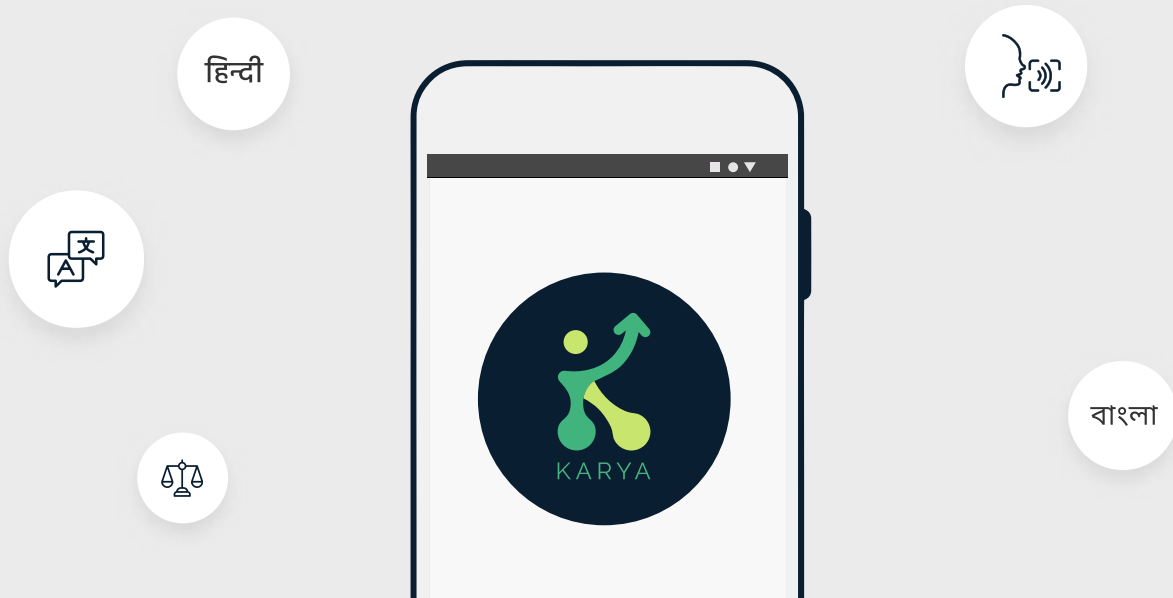
Tasks Deployed

200+

Languages across India
supported



Product



This year, Karya has made significant strides in optimizing the entire data pipeline—from task design to deployment. We have focused on enhancing usability, leveraging AI for simpler task design, and creating a seamless experience for all users.



Karya App Enhancements

- User Journey Optimisation

We focused on streamlining the user journey from work being assigned to completion. Updates to navigation and task workflows make the app more intuitive for users with varying levels of digital literacy.

- Help Functionality

A WhatsApp-integrated help feature was added to offer instant assistance, ensuring users can resolve issues quickly and without barriers.

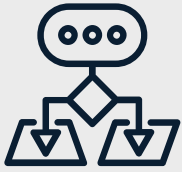
- Spotlight Feature

This upcoming feature introduces tasks in multiple languages, helping users understand and engage with tasks better.



NLQ Dashboard

The Natural Language Query (NLQ) dashboard revolutionizes how M&E queries are handled, enabling stakeholders to retrieve key insights and data metrics using conversational, natural language inputs.



Karya App Enhancements

Our platform exposes a rich and flexible task framework that allows us to create complex tasks. However, this richness comes with complexity wherein accurately setting up a complex task can take time. We have built an AI-assisted task design feature (currently in beta) that allows us to create complex tasks using natural language input.



User Tests

Our commitment to making our products useful and usable to people who use them was guided by usability testing conducted throughout the year.

- Smartphone Usage Patterns

We uncovered insights into how users' habits, app preferences, learning styles, and even family dynamics influence their interaction with technology.

- Pain Points

Common challenges identified included UI elements, navigation issues, error messaging, and the need for improved tutorials. Addressing these areas is expected to significantly enhance user satisfaction and efficiency.

- Positive Feedback

Users appreciated the contextual relevance and engaging nature of tasks, noting that completing tasks brought them a sense of joy and accomplishment.

These learnings shaped the updates made this year and will continue to inform future improvements to ensure that Karya remains a leader in user-friendly, impactful technology for underserved communities.

Insights documented by Khushboo Agrawal available [here](#)



Research & Impact



This year, our team expanded significantly, increasing our expertise in ethnographic research and monitoring & evaluation! We started the year strong at conferences - one paper was presented at ACM Compass and one (Akal Badi ya Bias) won the Best Paper Award at ACM FAccT! We worked with Aapti to conduct deep ethnographic research among our worker communities in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh and developed a strong roadmap to ramp up Monitoring & Evaluation in the coming year. Learning also emerged as a key focus area where we made strides in developing a Digital Skilling Pathway and created early versions of skilling modules that can further the impact on our workers.



JPAL RCT

Our J-PAL led RCT by Dr. Lisa Ho on female Karya workers in West Bengal was published in Jan 2024 and launched at J-PAL's 25-year anniversary during a Keynote Speech by Dr. Esther Duflo. This extensive research, spanning over one year of engagement with the Karya team and our workers, illuminated a previously un-measured impact of Karya's work model - female labour force participation. Post engagement and earning from Karya's flexible, at-home work; women were 3x more likely to pursue jobs in the formal economy.



Karya x MSR Collaborations

In a continuation of Karya and Microsoft Research's partnership, Nidhi Kulkarni (Karya) and Advait Bhat (MSR) presented at ACM Compass in Delhi, findings from our [paper](#) exploring whether financial audio data collection tasks could be transformed into learning opportunities. We are also honoured to have won the Best Paper Award at the ACM FAccT Conference for our groundbreaking research, '[Akal Badi ya Bias](#)', supported by the Gates Foundation. This collaborative research effort explored both linguistic and human mechanisms to identify and mitigate gender-biases in Hindi language datasets. Thank you to Dr. Kalika Bali and her team for collaborating with us on this critical work!



Code of Conduct by Aapti

One of Karya's key goals in the past year has been to gain a more nuanced understanding of our workers' day-to-day. We are working closely with Aapti Research Institute to conduct deep ethnographic research in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The aim of this research is to support Karya in developing a Code of Conduct, with worker well-being as the central principle. Preliminary research results have been critical in identifying areas for operational effectiveness. The study and Code of Conduct will be published in Q1 of 2025.



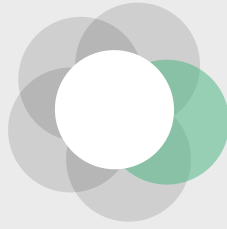
M&E at Karya

Anmol Narain joining us as our Head of Monitoring & Evaluation was a milestone moment this year. She has ramped up efforts to improve our impact measurement and worker monitoring, with critical strides being taken to develop an Income Validation Index. A novel tool that will support us in establishing rigorous baselines for our workers, the design and mentorship for this approach was supported by Zezhen Wu from The Agency Fund.

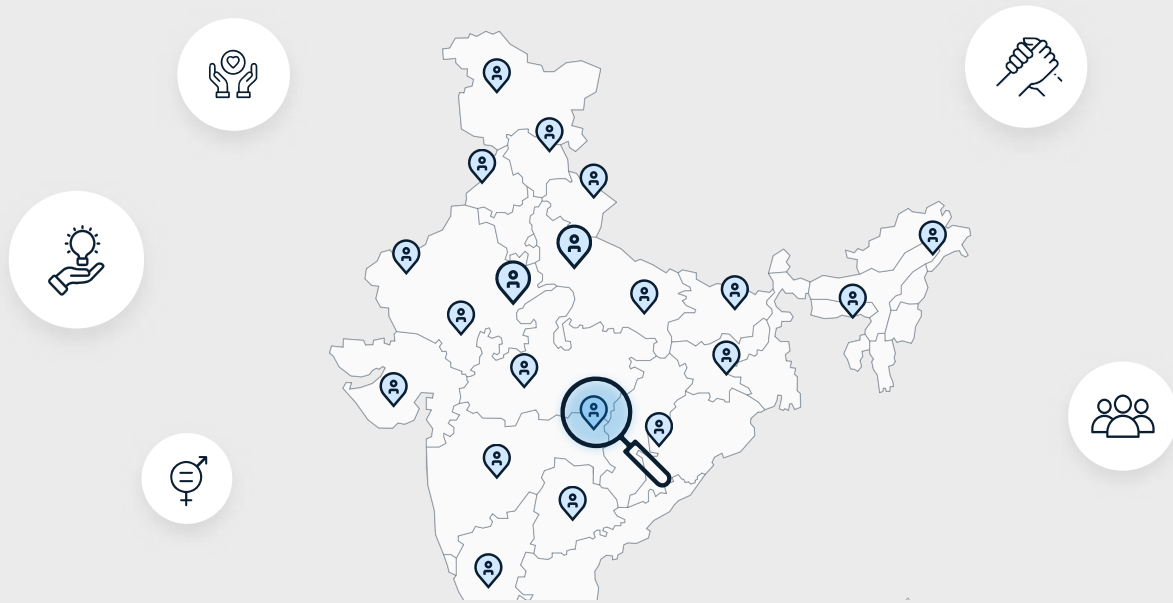


Karya Learn

Learning and skilling has quickly evolved to be a core area of research and design focus over the last year. To reach our impact goals, we must ensure we are giving workers repeated opportunities for work - skilling is the way to get there. We categorized our workers across three segments and began creating pathways that allowed for progressive skill acquisition. Next year we will launch our Baseline Skill Assessment across our workforce, implement 10 digital skilling modules and work closely with industry partners to develop market-recognised certification mechanisms for digital and AI skills.



Operations

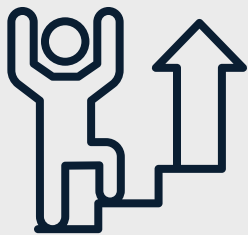


This year we onboarded, trained and engaged with tens of thousands of new platform workers. Outside of our daily-ops, we focused on two critical areas: workforce readiness and scale-focused outreach. We actively trained 3,000+ people across 10 languages to develop professional transcription skills through our internal language collection project. We have also established 3 partnerships with Indian state-level government bodies, and 200+ partnerships with large Indian NGOs; these have been critical in knowing we will achieve our 100,000 workers goal by March 2025. We closed off this year with our first operations off-site where we created a plan and roadmap for our updated operations strategy designed for scale.



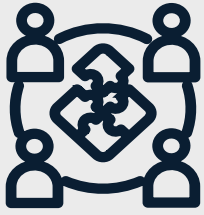
Partnerships

We are proud to announce critical new partnerships across both NGOs and Government departments. We are grateful to have signed MOUs with the Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission and the Telangana Government to onboard nearly 5,000 women from SHGs to complete Karya work. We have also established key partnerships with PRADAN and Jagriti to onboard workers for various projects.



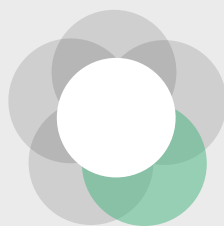
Workforce Development

A critical component to keeping our workers and engaged and our workforce market-ready is skilling and development. This year, we conducted in-person training sessions for X low-income workers across 10 Indian languages to develop our transcription workforce. These specialists now support Karya across a range of transcription and validation tasks.

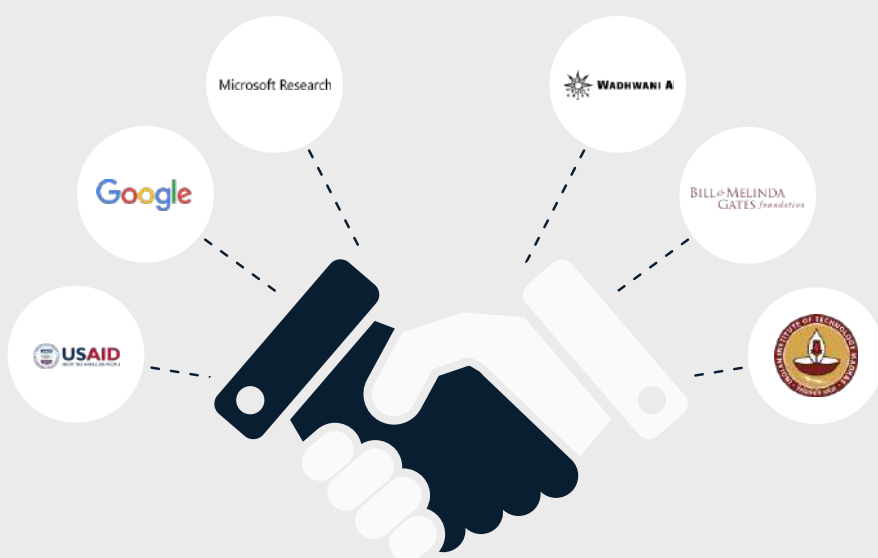


Operations Strategy 2.0

The Karya operations team met for an off-site to discuss, strategize and implement our new “Ops 2.0” strategy. This effort has been a large endeavor of the Senior Leadership team, with the design and approach of our strategy developed in collaboration with our mentors at Rippleworks. We have begun our new model of operations and are excited to be growing our team over the next year to support implementation.



Sales



This year, Karya has worked with 50,000+ data workers across a variety of complexities - from transcription to translation, image & video annotations to building multi modal datasets, and RLHF to evaluation & fine tuning.

Karya's trained workforce spans generations, languages, background and geographies: from women in Self Help Groups, to STEM and PhD graduates in peri-urban cities who need economic opportunities , to seasonal agriculturalists; our diverse workforce can tackle almost any data needs.



Karya conducts/ed one of largest LLM evaluations with Microsoft Research (MSR)

Along with MSR, Karya completed one of the largest multilingual human evaluations of LLMs so far - 90,000+ human evaluations across 10 Indian languages and 30 models in less than 3 weeks. The paper can be found [here](#). It was followed by the first in a series of [healthcare evaluation papers](#).



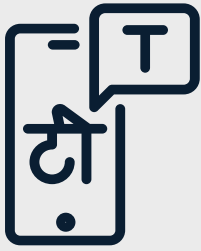
Karya is Google's chosen partner for Project Vaani

Karya is [Google's chosen partner for Project Vaani](#) where Karya will employ 32,000+ people across 60+ indic languages for data collection



Building the largest gender intentional corpora in Indic languages yet

Karya is [Google's chosen partner for Project Vaani](#) where Karya will employ 32,000+ people across 60+ indic languages for data collection



Karya translates 1.6+ Million words in 16 rare languages

For a key Fortune 20 client, Karya overcame large operational complexities to translate 16 long-tail indic languages that previously had no digital footprint. The team also developed 2 novel Unicode scripts to ensure digital compatibility.



Karya annotates ~375K images for Rocket Learning

Rocket Learning, an early leader in childhood education, leveraged Karya's trained data specialists to annotate a large number of images, which will enable Rocket Learning to develop its machine learning model that will grade children's worksheet responses, ensuring timely feedback and improving educational outcomes. So far, the endeavour has positively impacted over 1.5 Million children



Philanthropic Partnerships



Karya's mission of bringing AI-enabled earning and learning opportunities to low-income communities across the Global South requires catalytic donors, and we are so grateful to all our philanthropic partners.



We are honoured for our skilling initiatives to get support from Google.org. We will be using Google.org's USD 1M grant to identify and skill our workers to complete more complex digital tasks, and bringing Karya's platform to other countries around the world.

BILL & MELINDA
GATES *foundation*

We continue to work on Project Sanmati, in collaboration with the Gates Foundation. Sanmati aims to bring economic opportunities to 30,000 low-income women across 6 languages in India, by employing them to identify and mitigate gender-biases in Indian-language text corpora. Using this inclusive approach we will focus much of next year on building gender-bias benchmarks and mitigation frameworks for Indian languages.



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Vivek Seshadri and Manu Chopra, two of Karya's co-founders, were selected as Draper Richard Kaplan Social Entrepreneurs this year. We look forward to DRK's support in accelerating our impact.



Safiya Husain, Karya's co-founder and Chief Impact Officer, was chosen as a Rainer Arnhold Fellow, with the team at Mulago already an instrumental partner in building our strategy for scale.



This year, we started the second year as a member of The/Nudge Accelerator. The/Nudge team, and especially our mentors Subhashree Dutta and Maneesh Dhir, for their transformative support of our work!



Our grant from Patrick J. McGovern Foundation enabled us to bring Karya to Ethiopia and invest in improving our team capacity.



We had the pleasure of getting support to improve our operations strategy and leadership hiring processes. The mentorship of Louisa Reis and Varun Kaw significantly transformed our people outlook and approach going into 2025!



Through projects with TAF, we were able to lay the groundwork for two critical products: our NLQ Dashboard and our Income Validation Index. Thank you to Zezhen Wu and Edmund Korely for the advice and mentorship!



We are grateful to the team at LSE's 100x Accelerator, for their continued support of our work, and their extensive mentorship this year.

Anonymous Donor

We are grateful to an anonymous donor, whose support enabled us to invest considerably in our growth and team capacity.

Team Leaders



Anupriya Singh

Chief Revenue
Officer

With a strong background in banking, strategic growth, finance, and social impact, Anupriya leads Karya's efforts in revenue, finance, and Platform as a Service (PaaS) strategies. She focuses on building sustainable financial models, strengthening revenue streams, and advancing PaaS initiatives that align with Karya's mission. By ensuring the scalability of Karya's operations, her work supports the organization's efforts to create inclusive technologies and contribute to a more equitable AI ecosystem for diverse communities worldwide.



Nitin Jerath

Director of Design

With a degree from the Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology and a deep passion for designing with impact, Nitin plays a pivotal role in keeping workers at the heart of Karya's technology. His expertise lies in crafting thoughtful, human-centred designs that ensure Karya's app is not only easy to use but also accessible to diverse communities across regions and languages. By prioritizing inclusivity and usability, his team's work directly supports Karya's mission of advancing ethical AI through culturally nuanced and community-driven technology solutions, making a meaningful difference in how AI serves people worldwide.



Aditi Bharat
Director of People
Success

With close to 10 years of work experience, Aditi has been part of various start ups helping them grow from strength to strength. With a Master's degree in Human Resources from Georgetown University, Aditi is passionate about connecting people's skills and driving business results. At Karya, she is responsible for just this, ensuring our people are successful! And it is our core belief that we succeed when each of our team members succeeds. Hiring great talent, putting in key people processes and taking the team along this wonderful journey of making a positive impact is what she focusses on.



Anurag Shukla
Head of Platform

Anurag leads Karya's talented team of engineers with a mission to create a world-class platform that empowers marginalized communities through technology. A gold medalist engineer and former Research Engineer at Microsoft, he brings both technical expertise and a deep understanding of building scalable solutions. As one of Karya's earliest contributors, Anurag played a key role in laying the foundation of the platform, ensuring it is robust enough to tackle complex data collection needs of the world while remaining intuitive and accessible. His leadership continues to drive innovation, making Karya's technology a cornerstone for ethical AI development.



Rishi Ahuja
Head of Customer
Success

Rishi spent much of his career at Google, where he helped high-potential businesses achieve their marketing goals through Google's ad solutions. After completing his MBA at INSEAD, he joined Meta, co-managing their largest e-commerce client in India. Beyond work, Rishi mentors business school students, sharing his expertise and insights. At Karya, Rishi is dedicated to solving clients' data challenges with a focus on quality and diversity. He views his role as an enabler, bridging client needs (demand) with a well-trained workforce (supply), creating impactful, win-win solutions that align with Karya's mission of ethical AI.



Anmol Narain
Head of Monitoring
& Evaluation

Anmol holds a master's degree in public policy from the National Law School of India University, Bangalore, and has over eight years of experience in Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning for social protection. Her experience ranges from serving as M&E Lead at NITI Aayog (Government of India) which included harmonizing M&E frameworks for Data Governance across 70+ Ministries and on Inclusive Growth at PwC India. She leads Karya's efforts to measure worker well-being, monitor progress and help Karya impact workers' lives in the best possible way. By leveraging data-driven insights, Anmol hopes to contribute to Karya's mission to provide dignified, digital work to economically disadvantaged Indians and promote systemic change through ethical and community-driven solutions.

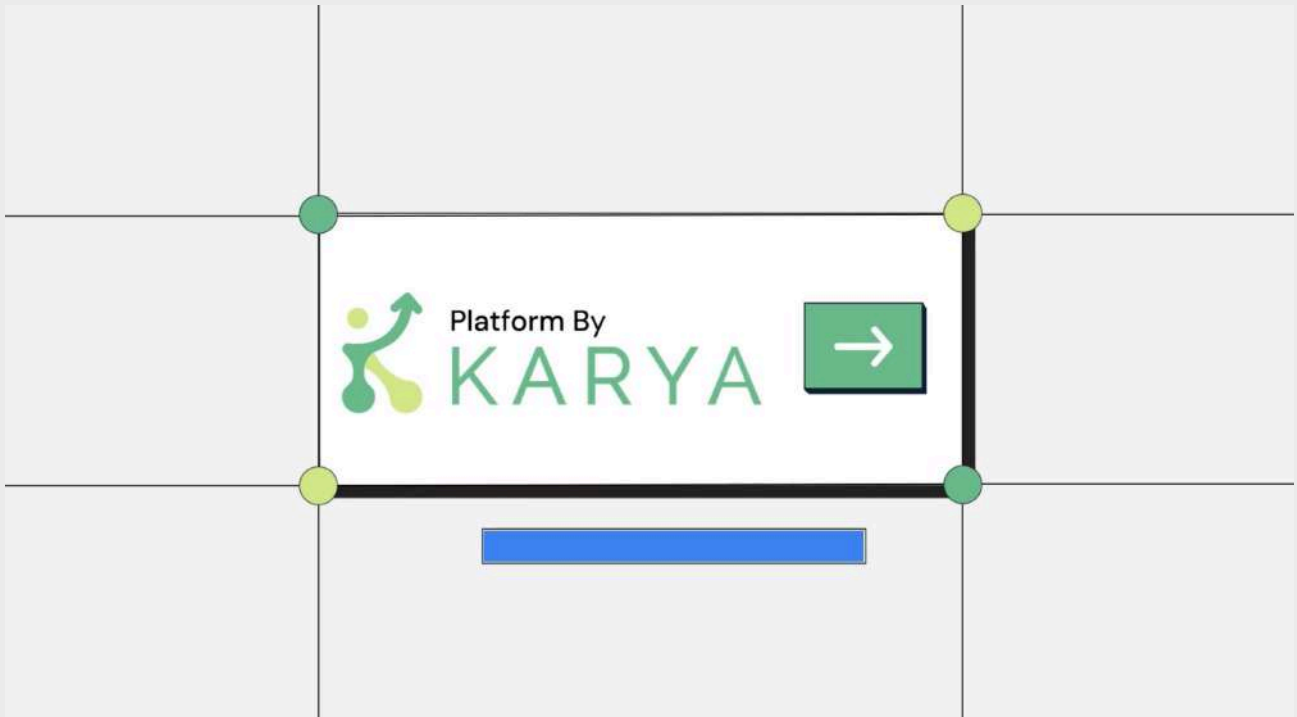


Ayushi Pandey
Head of Language
Technology

Ayushi Pandey is a research scientist in speech and linguistics, and holds a doctorate from Trinity College Dublin. Ayushi became a linguist because she wanted to document the Bundelkhandi folk songs that her Dadi used to sing. This also became her first publication. To Ayushi, Karya's mission is the surreal manifestation of a personal dream. It is her privilege to serve as its Head of Language Technologies.

Her team strives to advance state-of-the-art conversational AI for low-resource languages, offering in-house and commercial solutions in speech recognition, natural language understanding, and text-to-speech. Their efforts ensure the usability of datasets generated through Karya's mission to create employment opportunities for low-income groups.

Launching Soon



Platform by Karya

The Platform—comprising the AI-integrated Task Station, the intuitive Data Collection App, and the enabling Karya Offline—functions as a unified system to streamline complex data tasks, ensuring efficient access to high-quality data. Born from Karya’s deep understanding of challenges unique to the global south, Platform by Karya sets a new benchmark for operational efficiency and ethical standards in data collection.

platform.karya.in ↗



Karya Institute

One of the biggest questions in our world today centers around what the Future of Work will look like for the hundreds of millions of people around the world who are low-income, vulnerable and currently unemployed. As technology and AI are set to dominate the workplace, we are entering a murky future for those currently outside the formal economy. We want to make our workers future-resilient, and to do that we need to ensure the digital revolution benefits those who are most in need. To answer this pressing question, in January 2025, we are launching our internal think tank - the Karya Institute. The Karya Institute's mandate is three-fold: First, we aim to conduct rigorous research on the Future of Work across three key domains - markets, labour and skilling. Second, using our research evidence, we will develop Digital Public Goods in the forms of frameworks and rubrics. Finally, we will use our evidence to connect with policy-makers and advocate for ethics and inclusion in the future of digital work.

Projects, support & engagements

January



Long-awaited RCT launched at JPAL's 25 Year Anniversary



Karya attends FFWD Alumni Retreat



Karya attends Gates Foundation's GEDC Partners Meet in Delhi

February



Satya Nadella meets Baby Tai and Microsoft launches video on Karya



Karya presents research at Yale Inclusion Economics India Center event in Delhi

March



Karya inaugurated Bangalore Office

April

skoll

Karya attends Skoll World Forum in Oxford for the first time!



Safiya speaks at the Marmalade on a panel hosted by 100x Accelerator.



Manu and Safiya host a session on bringing Big Bet philanthropy to the Global South.

THE/NUDGE
INSTITUTE

Karya presents at New York gets The/Nudge



Karya presents at Global Inclusion Growth Summit hosted by MasterCard Foundation



Karya presents at ACT Portfolio Stepback in Bangalore

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

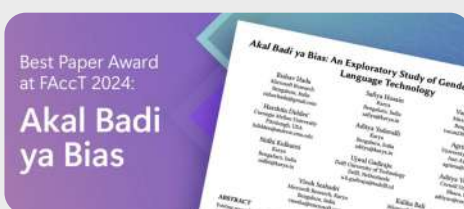
Karya is invited to a fireside chat on Gender Sensitive and Ethical AI at Gates Foundation headquarters in Seattle.

May



Karya gets a co-working space in Delhi

June



Karya and Microsoft Research's paper 'Akal Badi ya Bias' wins ACM FAccT Best Paper Award



Karya presents study on learning through digital work at ACM Compass



Karya does Q2 OKR planning

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

Karya participates in the Gates Foundation's Women's Economic Empowerment MLE Workshop to support the measurement of the Gender Equality and Digital Connectivity Learning Framework.

July



Karya highlighted at Global India AI summit



Karya announced Gemini Partnership on Google io stage in Bangalore

August



Karya showcased at The/Nudge's annual Charcha event



Safiya selected as a Mulago Rainer Arnhold Fellow and represented Karya at the kick-off retreat in Morocco.

September



Vivek & Manu selected as DRK Entrepreneurs and represented Karya at the kick-off retreat in San Francisco.



Karya attends UNGA



Members of Team Karya attend Goalkeepers Summit



Karya presents at Dasra World Philanthropy Forum and MasterCard Impact Data Summit



Karya kicks-off engagement with Rippleworks to strengthen our operations processes and streamline Leadership hiring

October



Karya attends a closed-door AI Convening at the Rockefeller's Bellagio Center



GINA'S COLLECTIVE

Karya attends Gina's Circle Retreat in DC



Karya team participates in LLAMA Hackathon



Karya speaks at UNITO AI for Global Good Summit in Delhi



Karya wins the Tech Interactive Tech for Global Good award



Karya founder and CEO, Manu Chopra, had the privilege of meeting Sundar Pichai in Mountain View, where they spoke about Karya's unique focus on using AI to bring earning and learning opportunities to low-income communities across the Global South.

Karya signs MOU with Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission to onboard SHG women as Karya workers



Karya inducted in the Prestigious NVIDIA Inception program

November



Karya hosts first operations offsite in Bangalore Office



Karya wins USD \$ 1 million grant from Google.org for digital skilling



Karya speaks at Aapti Trust Mamla supported by the Gates Foundation



Karya hosts discussion with Google DeepMind, Microsoft Research and NEGD executives

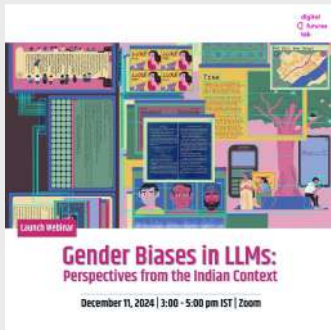


Karya signs MOU with Government of Telangana to onboard SHG women as Karya workers

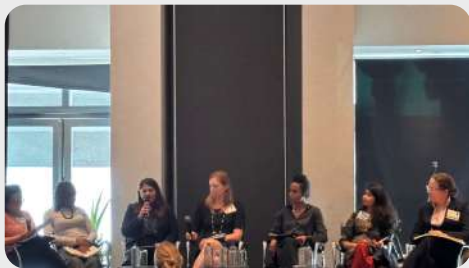


Karya signs PaaS agreement with Leyu to build Ethiopian-language datasets.

December



Karya speaks at DFL launch webinar on Gender Biases in Indian LLMs alongside Abhishek Singh (MEITY), Saurabh Karn (Sarvam) and Dr. Kalika Bali (Microsoft Research)



Anmol represents Karya at Gates Foundation GEDC Workshop in Nairobi

2025

A lot has been in the works over the last year and as we take on the new year with a growing team, support and motivation.



Your support means a lot to us.

Help us on our mission !

[Check out more](#) ↗

