THE WORLD BANK
IBRD · IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP
ICAR
N HEP
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MILLETS 2023
G20
भारत 2023 INDIA
वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्
ONE EARTH · ONE FAMILY · ONE FUTURE
Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
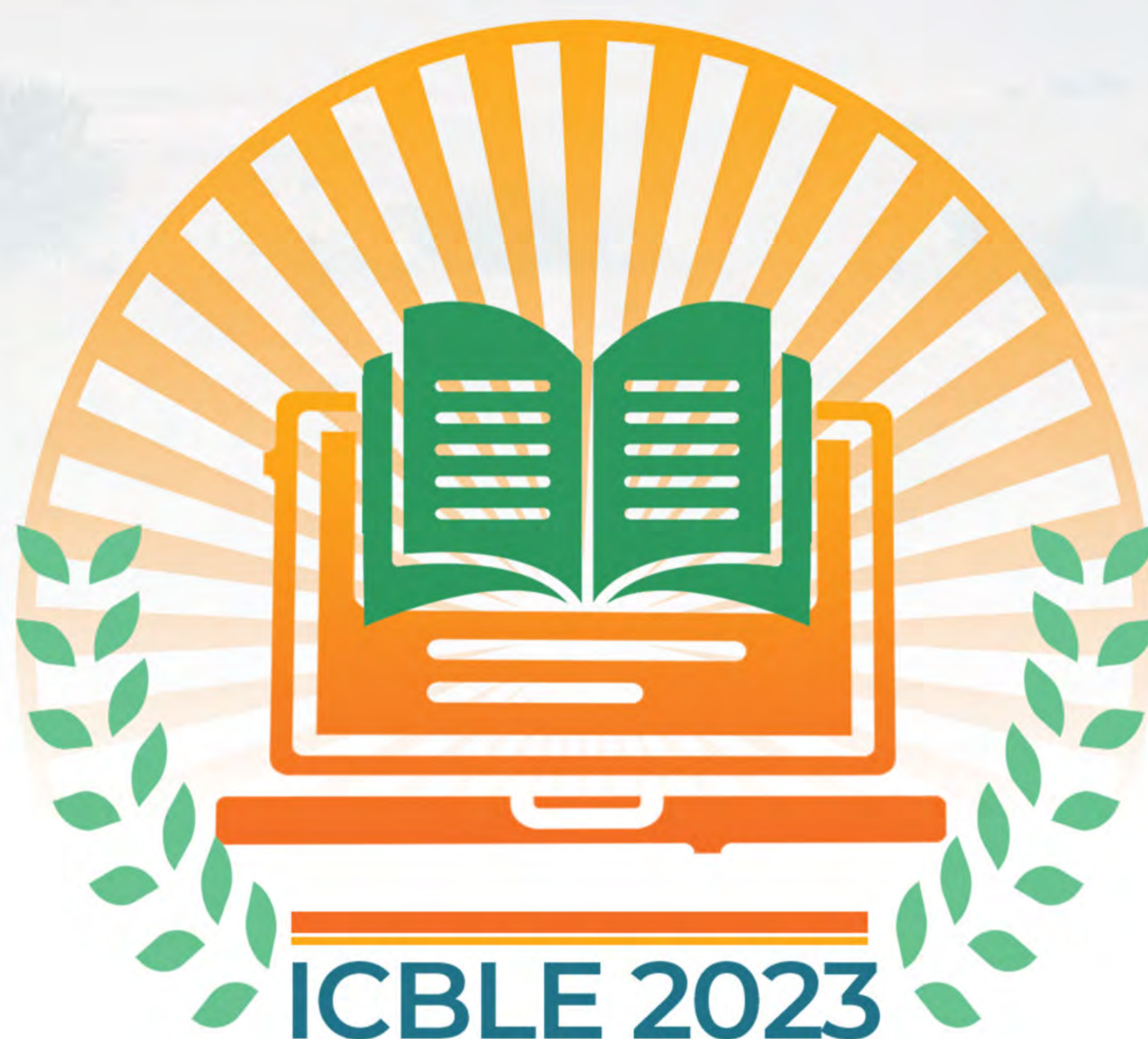
International Conference
on
Blended Learning Ecosystem for Higher Education in Agriculture

21 – 23 March 2023

Venue

C. Subramaniam Auditorium, NASC Complex, New Delhi-110012, India

ICBLE 2023

https://icble2023.krishimegh.in/

Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, India

Context and Rationale

Agriculture is one of the mainstays of the Indian economy due to its significant role in rural livelihood, employment, and national food security. To realize India's aspirations of becoming a 5 trillion-dollar economy by 2025, there is an utmost need for a digital agricultural higher education system in India to evolve in sync with the fast-changing international scenario.

The past decade has witnessed multiple global disturbances and in particular COVID-19 pandemic, which have thrown new challenges in ensuring the continuity of education in basic and higher education institutions across the world. This has motivated higher agricultural education institutions to adopt newer methods more easily for teaching & learning and leverage the power of digital technologies for better quality delivery of education.

In the post pandemic world, the education sector has undergone massive transformation with digital tools and technologies becoming the mainstay of new educational ecosystems. Educationalists across the world have been exploring alternative modes of quality education blended with traditional and in-person modes of education. Digital transformation is altering how we learn, enabling innovative distribution of education across time and space.

"Blended Learning" is one such approach that allows the teacher and students to rethink and transform the teaching & learning experience. Blended learning integrates computer-assisted online activities with traditional face-to-face teaching (chalk-and-talk).

Blended learning
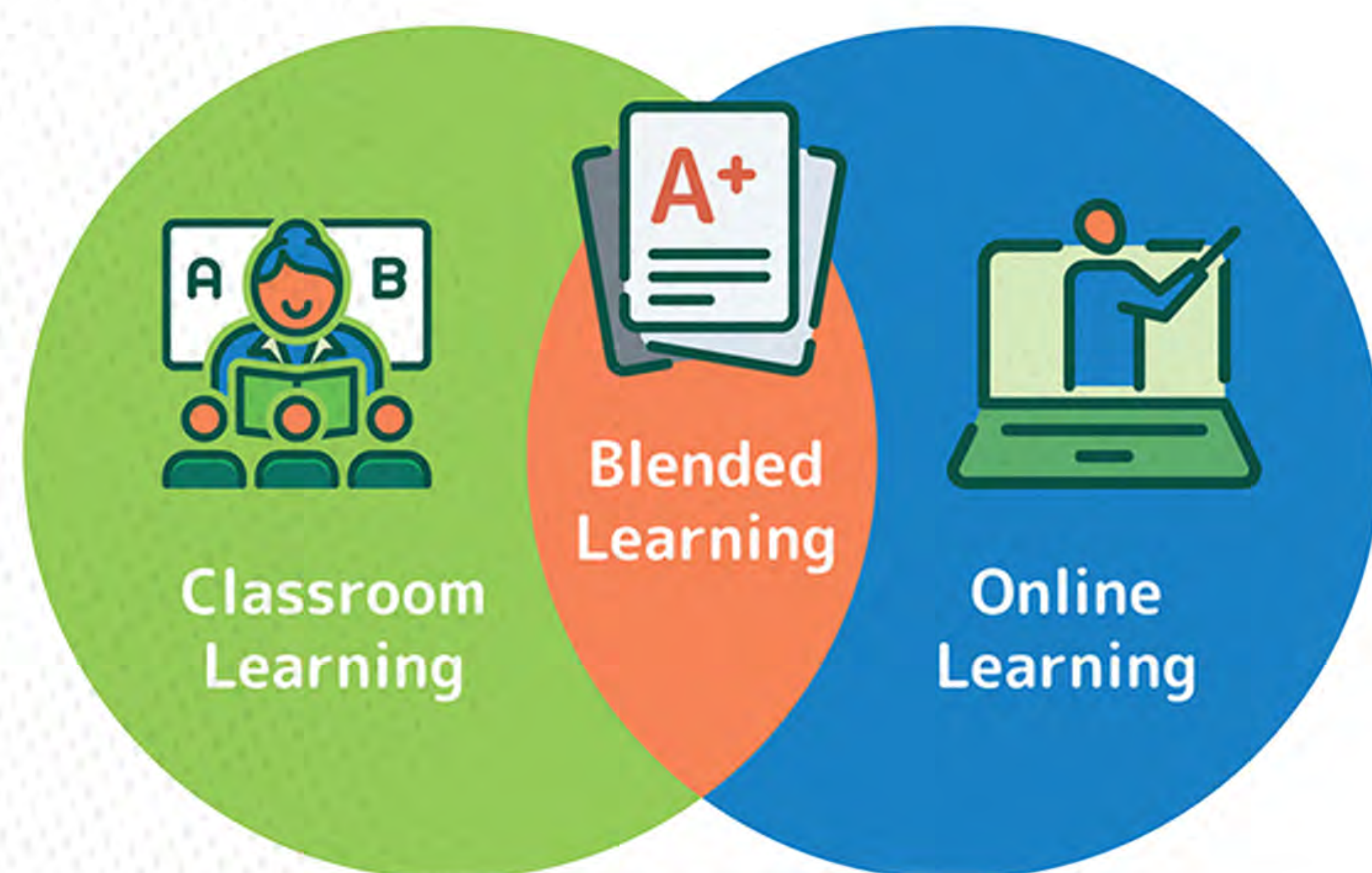
To ensure the transformation of education system with resilient and sustainable operations, use of digital tools and technologies by higher education institutions is a must. It requires immersive technology and innovative new media tools, development of state-of-the-art blended learning platforms for holistic management of higher education, development of open-standard technologies, and making educational resources available to teachers and students. These are in alignment with the recommendations of UNESCO's International Commission on Futures of Education report "Education in a post-COVID world: Nine ideas for public action". The set of actions above are some of the interventions recommended for developing **"Blended Learning Ecosystem"**.

Fortunately, the technologies available today can be innovatively applied to achieve much needed cyber-physical integration in education systems. In this context, the *International Conference on Blended Learning Ecosystems for Higher Education in Agriculture is conceived.*

Scope and Significance

The conference has been envisaged as a multi-partner global event to facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and partnerships for the development of a state-of-the-art blended learning ecosystem for higher agricultural education in India. **The learnings from this conference would enable ICAR to develop a strategy for accelerating the implementation and adaptation of a blended learning ecosystem.** The conference is being hosted jointly by ICAR and the World Bank under NAHEP and is organized by ICAR - Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute, New Delhi from 21-23 March 2023.

ICAR has undertaken a recent initiative to develop and deploy a **Blended Learning Platform** envisioned as a **"Next – Generation Learning Management System"** allowing all stakeholders in agricultural higher education to engage in effective teaching, learning and monitoring. The platform would be designed to bring to life the larger vision of **"strengthening the digital backbone of agricultural higher education institutes"**, to enable evolutionary, scalable and sustainable learning.

About Blended Learning

The use of blended learning is expanding globally and is evident in professional development training and general classroom offerings for a number of educational programs across disciplines in global communities.

What is Blended Learning ?

Blended learning is a combination of offline (face-to-face, traditional learning) and online learning in a way that the one complements the other. This style of learning provides a way for faculty to engage students through visuals and online interaction. This approach ensures that the learner is engaged and in greater control of his or her individual learning experience.

Why Blended Learning ?

Enabling effective self-paced learning

Facilitates learners and instructors to transition smoothly between self-paced learning and face-to-face classroom environment

Introduces learners to the personalized learning experience with customized learning paths to improve their academic outcomes

Increases access of learners and instructors to a wide repository of e-learning content that is robust, relevant, and continually updated in alignment with global trends

Objectives

To deliberate on strategies to operationalize a blended learning ecosystem for agricultural higher education

Objectives

To deliberate upon the sustainability of the blended learning ecosystem through promoting private public partnership in alignment with market need and demand

To deliberate among stakeholders to formulate a mechanism for the continuous improvement of cross-sectorial integration of the blended learning ecosystem

Themes and Sub Themes

The conference is organized around a few thematic areas to identify the best strategies in blended teaching & learning.

1 **Strategies for Blended Teaching-Learning**	• Blended learning for higher education in the post pandemic era in the context of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 • Designing effective assessments for online learning environments • Professional development and support for online faculty: challenges and opportunities • The role of emerging technologies in creating immersive learning experiences
2 **Technologies for Blended Learning**	• Integrating technology and education: to diversify online learning and teaching • Technology considerations to build platforms at scale and cater for different user needs • Free open-source tools and technologies to be leveraged • Learning analytics: tools and possibilities • Developing, designing and implementing augmented reality within learning environments: reflection and ethical considerations for its implementation • Game based approach for teaching to ignite student interest and drive outcomes in a collaborative environment
3 **Sustainability in the Blended Learning Ecosystem**	• Developing sustainable teaching and learning environments • Faculty and instructional designers: learning about successful collaborations from other professions • Creating an effective e-Learning culture: the pedagogical variations for online learning and teaching • Addressing security and privacy issues and concerns about the use of digital platforms for students • Systems thinking in a marketplace design • Role of blended learning environments in peer-to-peer learning
4 **Building Stakeholder Capacities to Navigate in a Blended Teaching-Learning Ecosystem**	• Building optimal capacities for implementing blended learning on college campuses • Networked and self-directed approaches to professional development in online teaching and design • Easy to use e-content development tools and methods for higher education faculties • Leading change for effective faculty development programs
5 **Contemporary Curriculum for Agricultural Education**	• Curriculum and pedagogical changes for a blended-learning environment • Faculty preferences while creating courses for the online environment • Designing effective courses online: effective pedagogy for online courses for college faculty

Conference Components

1 Keynote Lectures

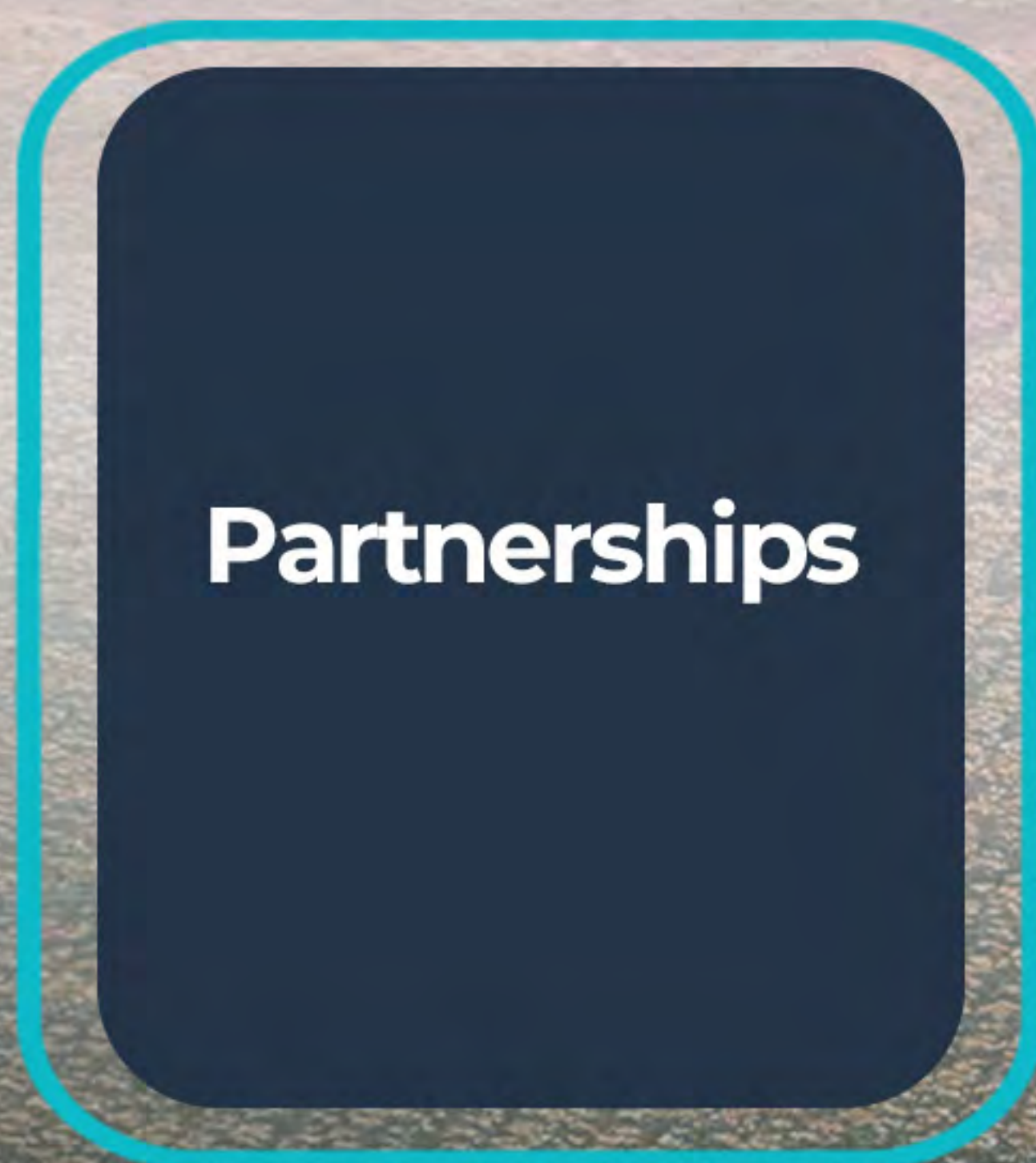## 2 Technical Sessions

3 Panel Discussions

4 Case Studies

5 Partnership Forum

6 Special Event

7 Exhibition

Expected Outcomes

- Partnerships
- Knowledge Sharing
- MoUs
- Oversight Mechanism

100+ Participating Universities

10+ Participating Countries

30+ Exhibition Stalls

15+ Keynote Speakers

4+ Panel Discussions

Participation in the event is by invitation only

Know our
Institutions and Projects

ICAR

(https://icar.org.in/)

Indian Council of Agricultural Research is an autonomous organization established in 1929 under Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India. The council is the apex body for coordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country.

ICAR – IASRI

(https://iasri.icar.gov.in/)

Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI) is a premier institute of ICAR established in 1930 to undertake research, teaching and training in the fields of agricultural statistic, computer application and bioinformatics.

NAHEP

(https://nahep.icar.gov.in/) N∂HEP

National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) is a project undertaken by ICAR with the assistance of World bank to strengthen the National Agricultural Education System in the country.

RAES

Resilient Agricultural Education System (RAES) is a development initiative under NAHEP undertaken to strengthen the Digital Infrastructure of Agricultural Universities, enhance the quality of Digital Content in the field of Agriculture and facilitate Digital Capacity Building to address the digital divide among stakeholders. Digital Resources and Information Sharing for Hybrid Technology Aided Interactions (DRISHTI) is the blended learning platform envisioned to be operationalized under RAES

NEP 2020

The National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, including SDG4, while building upon India's traditions and value systems.

Core Organizing Committee

Patron

Dr. Himanshu Pathak
Secretary (DARE)
& Director General (ICAR)

Chair

Dr. R.C. Agrawal
Deputy Director General
(Agricultural Education), ICAR
& National Director, NAHEP

Co-Chair

Dr. Rajender Parsad
Director, ICAR - IASRI

Organizing Secretaries

Dr. Anuradha Agrawal
National Coordinator
(CAAST and Component 2), NAHEP

Dr. Sudeep
Head, Division of Computer Applications, ICAR – IASRI
& PI (Component 2), NAHEP

Convenors

Dr. Alka Arora
Professor (CA)
& Co-PI Component 2, NAHEP

Dr. Anshu Bharadwaj
Pr. Scientist
& Co-PI Component 2, NAHEP

Dr. Shashi Dahiya
Pr. Scientist
& Co-PI Component 2, NAHEP