CSD being felicitated by Jeannette Weisschuh, Director, Education Strategy, HP SSI Group and Ann C. Ewasechko, Manager, Strategic Alliances and Innovations in Education

In a grand event held at New Delhi Hewlett-Packard (HP), the largest computer manufacturing company in India, has announced the grant winners of the Education Innovation Fund for India (EIFI), a collaborative project between the HP Sustainability & Social Innovation group and the India Council for Integral Education (ICIE), an initiative of the Sri Aurobindo Society. The US$1 million fund is designed to promote education projects that use innovative learning approaches in Science, Technology and Mathematics (STEM), pedagogy, curriculum development and holistic learning to advance education delivery and reach in India. In an event held at hotel The Lalit in New Delhi grant winners of EIFI 2012 were announced. IIM Ahmadabad was awarded the top grant of Rs.1 Crore. 15 grants of 15 lakh each were also awarded. Project LEAD of Centre for Sustainable Development has been awarded a grant of Rs. 15 lakh along with 15 other grant winners and two special grants of 10 lakhs each were also announced.

David Morris, Director, ICIE
describing the selection process told that more than 800 applications were received for 18 grants and the final Grant Winners were selected by an International Jury of experts from HP, ICIE and KPMG. ‘LEAD’ (Leadership in Education for Action and Development) is an initiative of Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD) which is being implemented in alliance with IMET Global to enhance functional, and to an extent sector-specific, competencies across levels, but also several soft skills, such as communications skills, presentation skills, stress management and team building skills in fast growing technical education sector of Himachal Pradesh. In recent years lots of engineering colleges have come up however the biggest challenge for professional graduates, today, is unemployability due to lack of functional skills. Surveys have pointed out that only 1 in 4 professional graduate is employable. Shortfall in appropriately trained faculty is another aspect of the issue. The students usually focus in scoring higher grades in examinations but do not get opportunities to improve functional skills like leadership, interpersonal skills, project management, decision making, interdisciplinary knowledge, crisis management, creativity, innovation, communication skills. Project ‘LEAD’ intends to impart these functional skills by engaging students in various activities and projects to give them a doer’s perspective to enhance their employability. Centre for Sustainable Development will work closely with teams from HP and ICIE on this project which is going to have a huge bearing on the employability of local youth.