

COVID Relief Fund

When the Music Stopped

In 2020, as the world grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic, another crisis quietly unfolded across India's artistic community. Concerts were cancelled. Festivals disappeared overnight. Traditional performances, often the only source of income for countless artists, came to an abrupt halt.

For many performing artists, the greatest threat wasn't the virus itself — it was the uncertainty of how they would feed their families the next day. Behind every performance is a family that depends on it. And when the stages fell silent, so did the livelihoods of thousands of folk, tribal and classical musicians who have spent their lives preserving India's cultural heritage.

A Personal Beginning

As a musician from Jaipur, Kanika Pandey witnessed this reality up close. Many artists she had grown up listening to and performing alongside suddenly found themselves without work, without income and with little support. Families who had dedicated generations to keeping India's musical traditions alive were struggling to meet even their most basic needs.

Rather than waiting for help to arrive, she decided to act. What began as a small personal initiative, supported by friends, fellow musicians and well-wishers, soon became a collective effort to provide immediate relief to artists across Rajasthan.

Supporting Artists with Dignity

The first phase of the COVID Relief Fund reached nearly 40 folk, tribal and classical artists across Rajasthan. Support was tailored to each family's immediate needs and included:

- Essential food and household supplies to sustain families for up to three months
- Direct financial assistance for artists facing urgent hardship

Working alongside local community partners, every effort was made to ensure that support reached artists who needed it most.

Testimonials



<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/11uHVH-euXBsK6MJXVMcAKWopplrC5bRV>

A Note of Gratitude from Lokayan Sansthan, Bikaner

The COVID-19 pandemic was one of the most difficult periods for India's traditional folk artists. With performances coming to a standstill, many artists who relied entirely on live events lost their primary source of livelihood overnight.

During this challenging time, the Kanika Pandey Foundation extended timely support to several folk artists associated with our work. Their assistance not only provided much-needed financial relief but also sent a powerful message—that our traditional artists and their cultural heritage matter.

We deeply appreciate the Foundation's compassion and commitment to preserving India's living traditions by standing with the artist community when they needed it most. Partnerships like these reaffirm that meaningful philanthropy can help sustain not just livelihoods, but also the rich cultural legacy that these artists carry forward.

We are grateful to the Kanika Pandey Foundation for their trust and support, and we look forward to continuing our shared commitment to strengthening India's folk arts ecosystem.

Gopal Singh
Secretary, Lokayan

More Than Relief

Looking back, the COVID Relief Fund was about far more than providing emergency assistance. It was about recognising that artists deserve care not only when they perform for us, but especially when they are unable to. It reminded us that preserving culture begins with supporting the people who carry it forward.

That belief has remained at the heart of the Kanika Pandey Foundation ever since. Today, through artist development programmes, community initiatives and the Jaipur Raga Festival, we continue to build on the same promise that inspired this first act of service: to stand beside artists, celebrate their contribution, and help ensure that India's living musical traditions continue to thrive.