

# MANU SHARMA

Entrepreneur - Engineer - Educator - Coach - Mentor - Community Activist

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## **Nomination for Bharat Rudra: Lifetime Achievement Award at the VOscars 2024**

Dear Volunteer Ottawa Board of Directors,

I am honored to present this nomination for Bharat Rudra for the VOscars 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award. Bharat's unwavering dedication to our community, combined with his inspirational leadership, positions him as the quintessential candidate for this distinguished honor. Over an impressive span of thirty-five years, Bharat has committed himself to nurturing entrepreneurship, advancing philanthropy, and enhancing community engagement within Ottawa. His journey from modest beginnings in India to becoming a cornerstone of Ottawa's community and technology sectors underscores his resilience, visionary outlook, and dedication to positive transformation.

### **Pioneering Economic Development Contributions**

Bharat's leadership in co-founding TiE Ottawa, where he served as Chair and now presides as President, in a purely volunteer role, showcases his lifelong devotion to promoting entrepreneurship and community advancement. TiE Ottawa is the Ottawa chapter of TiE (The Indus Entrepreneurs), the biggest entrepreneurial network in the world. His significant contributions over the past 22 years have markedly influenced Ottawa's entrepreneurial landscape. Bharat's mentorship through TiE Ottawa has empowered countless entrepreneurs with essential resources for their success. He has spearheaded initiatives such as TiECon Canada, inspiring regional entrepreneurs annually. Bharat's extended involvement in promoting entrepreneurship is evident through his roles as a CTV Ottawa Tech Now guest speaker, an advisor for the City of Ottawa Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards, and a member of the Startup Canada task force. His engagement in various community-led initiatives highlights his versatile commitment as a volunteer and leader.

### **Philanthropic Ventures**

Bharat's philanthropic achievements with Dhadkan (Heart Beat), which he co-founded to support the Ottawa Heart Institute, have significantly impacted our community. This non-profit organization, under Bharat's leadership, has raised over \$10 million in a decade, enhancing awareness and promoting proactive health management within Ottawa's Indo-Canadian community. Prior to Dhadkan, Bharat co-founded and led Punjabi Night, an annual event that galvanized the Ottawa Punjabi community in raising funds specifically for heart disease research at the Ottawa Heart Institute. His efforts have not only supported critical research but also fostered community engagement and empowerment. Additionally, Bharat's leadership in organizing fundraisers for various causes, including tsunami relief and cancer care, underscores his dedication to humanitarian efforts and community integration.

### **Cultural Initiatives**

Bharat's commitment to empowering Indo-Canadian youth and preserving cultural heritage is exemplified by his founding of Ottawa's first Punjabi radio show, SURTAAL. For twelve years, this platform connected young Indo-Canadians to their roots, fostering cultural identity and discouraging

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substance use. Bharat's role in introducing the Bhangra revolution through NACH PAE YAAR brought cultural vibrancy and social cohesion to Ottawa, with performances dedicated to charitable and cultural events. The enduring impact of Bharat's cultural initiatives is evident in the success of the individuals trained by NACH PAE YAAR, who now contribute positively to Canadian society.

## A Legacy of Volunteerism and Community Contributions

Bharat's volunteerism extends to organizing the inaugural multicultural event, "India Day," in collaboration with the Ottawa Senators, bridging the Indo-Canadian community with Canada's national sport. His service as Vice President and Board Member of the India Canada Community Center further highlights his dedication to community enrichment. Bharat's journey from promoting Punjabi culture to his significant achievements with TiE Ottawa and Dhadkan epitomizes a life devoted to volunteerism and community betterment. His comprehensive contributions across various domains demonstrate an exceptional commitment to service, leaving a lasting impact on Ottawa's community.

In recognition of his continued commitment, Bharat was appointed to the Board of Governors for Algonquin College in September 2023, further solidifying his role in community development.

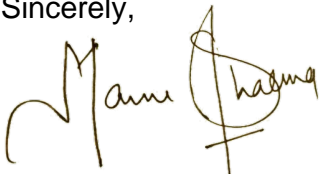
## Conclusion: A Life Dedicated to Selfless Service

Bharat Rudra's embodiment of lifetime achievement through his steadfast commitment to volunteerism, community service, and leadership is unparalleled. His contributions have not only enriched countless lives but have also established a benchmark for civic engagement and philanthropy. Bharat's work ethic, humility, and transformative contributions across entrepreneurship, philanthropy, innovation, and community building will continue to inspire future generations.

With great confidence and respect, I nominate Bharat Rudra for the VOscars 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award, in recognition of his extraordinary dedication and contributions that truly embody the spirit of this esteemed award.

Thank you for considering this nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Manu Sharma". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a stylized "S" for the last name.

Manu Sharma

Attachment:

1. *Broader impact of Bharat's work in Ottawa's community.*
2. *Select media and web references to highlight Bharat Rudra's volunteer engagements.*