



VISHWAKARMA
UNIVERSITY

Maximising Human Potential

**Leadership and Management Team
of the Year**

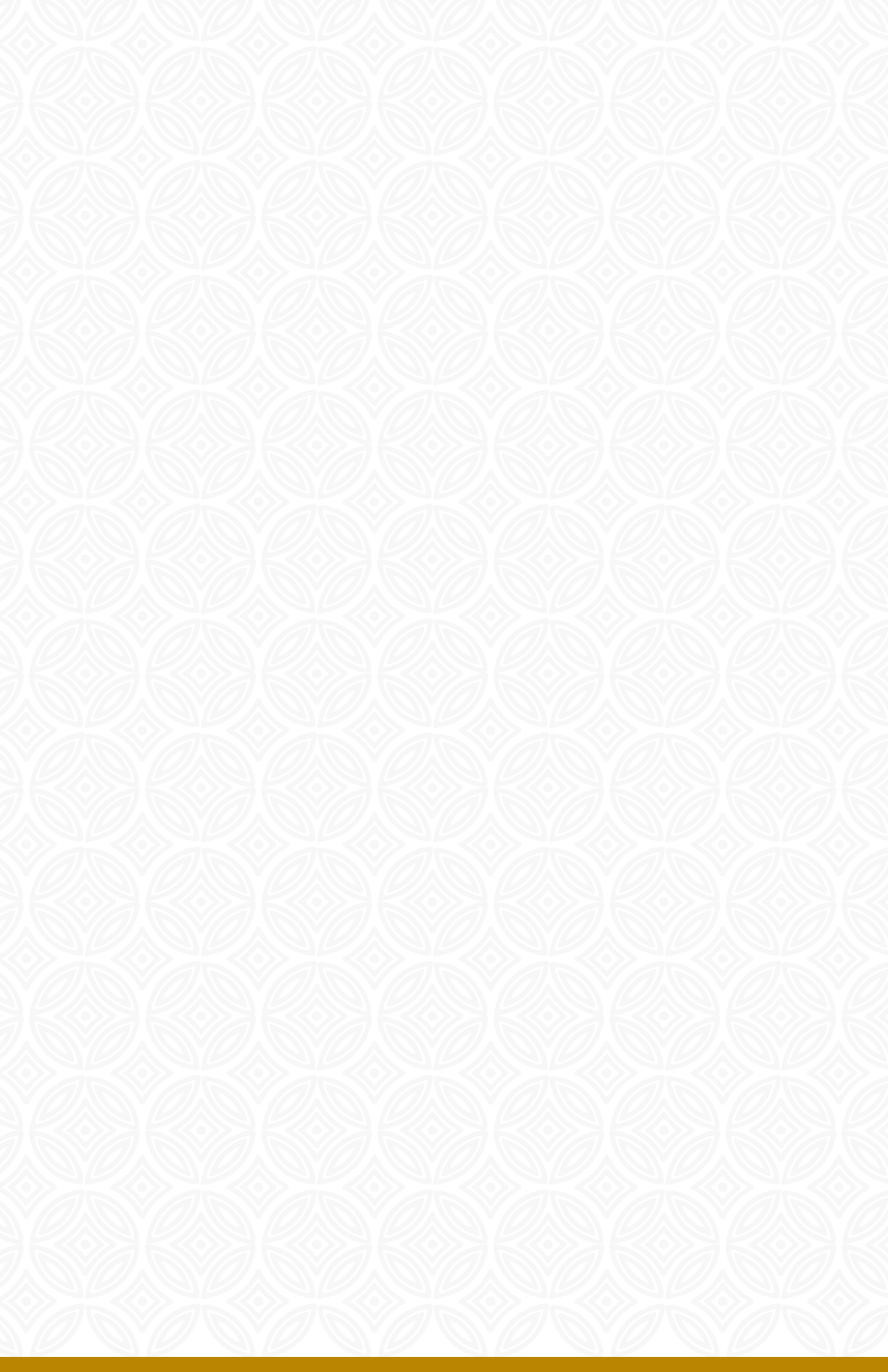
Vishwakarma University

THE

**Awards
Asia 2023**

Winner







VISHWAKARMA
UNIVERSITY

Maximising Human Potential



VISHWAKARMA
UNIVERSITY
Maximising Human Potential

Copyright © 2023 Vishwakarma University, Pune.
All rights reserved.

POSTAL ADDRESS:

Survey No. 2, 3, 4 Laxmi Nagar,
Kondhwa (Bk.) Pune - 411048. Maharashtra, India

www.vupune.ac.in

The copyright of the booklet is with Vishwakarma University, Pune. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or used in any manner without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.





Maximising Human Potential

Table of Contents

01

THE Awards 01 - 05

- Citation
- Message by Phil Baty, THE's chief global affairs officer.
- About THE Awards
- VU- University par excellence

02

President Bharat Agarwal's message 06

03

Making education a tool for empowerment 07 - 08

Prof. (Dr.) Wasudeo Gade, Vice President, Vishwakarma University.

04

VU's participatory development philosophy: 09 - 16

The search for the 'whole being', developing minds to exhibit knowledge

Prof (Dr.) Siddharth Jabade, Vice-Chancellor, Vishwakarma University.

05

VU's THE Winning Initiatives 17 - 32

(i) Vertical Sewage Treatment Plant

(ii) Vishwakarma University Centre of Communication for Development

(iii) Capacity Building in Collaboration with Maharashtra State Faculty Development Academy

(iv) VU Legal Aid Clinic

(v) Farmer Producer Organizations: Communication in News Media - Theory and Practice

06

The Path Forward 33 - 34



It was Vishwakarma University's powerful commitment to the public good – not always a priority for private universities – that impressed the judges and confirmed the difficult decision to declare it the winner in a highly competitive category, Leadership and Management Team of the Year.

"VU is a university with a real awareness of its own place within the community, excelling in its contribution to participatory development in the region, where the challenges are immense," our judges said.

The university has what it describes as an "innovate, integrate and educate" framework to engage industry, government, social businesses and its community in real-life challenges that not only improve education for its students but also make meaningful social, economic and cultural change on the ground. One initiative that stood out for the judges was an industry-backed Water Centre of Excellence, which has developed a sewage

treatment plant, converting sewage into usable water to serve poor communities.

Another impressive VU initiative is a legal aid clinic that creates legal awareness and provides pro bono legal consultancy for socio-economically vulnerable members of society. The clinic is well on its way to helping 5,000 villagers and 20,000 children in the next two years.

"In India, private universities often take on public-good functions that in other countries are performed in the public sector," said the judges. "VU's activities in relation to sewage treatment, 'empowerment communication', rural collectivisation and social businesses, and social inclusion through legal services, demonstrate its deep levels of commitment... The numbers reached are brilliant."

Phil Baty

THE's chief global affairs officer



This is the fifth year for Times Higher Education Awards Asia, and what a fascinating period it has been. Of course three years were dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant huge challenges for everyone, both personally and professionally. But for the higher education sector, populated across both academia and the professional services by some of the smartest and most inventive people on the planet, new challenges also mean a rich supply of novel, innovative solutions.

I hope I'm not tempting fate when I say that we can now see the higher education landscape returning to, if not normality, then certainly a

new reality, with many of the lessons learned over the past few years being implemented to great effect.

THE Awards Asia – now fully established on the continent, and coveted by institutions in all corners – has been a distinct beneficiary of this rapid evolution: we received another record number of entries this year (nearly 700, from more than 220 institutions representing over 20 countries and territories), many of which were both outstanding and inspirational. It was an incredibly difficult task to select 10 winners from such a deep pool of excellence.

About THE Awards

Widely known as the 'Oscars of higher education', the THE Awards were a fixture in the UK higher education calendar for 14 years, before we took this prestigious event overseas for the first time in 2019.

These awards offer a major international platform to recognise outstanding leadership and institutional performance, and celebrate the continent's higher education excellence.

The response from entrants over the past four years has far exceeded our expectations, both in terms of the number, and their wide

geographical spread. It is a great privilege for us and our panel of external judges to read about your proudest achievements.

THE Awards Asia 2023, the fifth running of these awards, saw a glittering final ceremony at The Chinese University of Hong Kong on 21 June 2023 and brought attention to the brilliant work, diversity and dynamism of Asian and Middle Eastern higher education.

(Reference: *THE Awards 2023*)



University par excellence

Vishwakarma University (VU) is an educational trailblazer in India, empowering students with inclusive education for social, economic, and cultural transformation. Established in 2017 as a State Private University under the Government of Maharashtra Act No. XXXVIII, VU is recognized and regulated by the University Grants Commission (UGC). The university is a member of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU, New Delhi).

VU offers undergraduate, graduate, and Ph.D. programs that focus on academic excellence, translational research, and socially responsible outreach to keep up with changing industry trends. The faculties of Science and Technology, Commerce and Management, Art and Design, Humanities and Social Sciences, Media and Communication, Interdisciplinary Studies, Law, Pharmacy, and Architecture offer a variety of programs.

The University has developed an ecosystem to help students follow their natural curiosity, unlock their potential, and uncover their unique career paths to succeed in their respective fields and contribute to society's advancement. VU's model of learning integrates knowing, practising, performing, and reflecting. Practical and pragmatic

learning paradigms have been developed as a result of the "learning by doing" approach with industry participation.

VU has established Transdisciplinary Centers of Excellence with industry collaboration under the unique "Industry-on-campus" initiative at VU where students and faculty across disciplines work with industry experts to find solutions to real-life problems. The Centers aim to develop technologies that are appropriate, accessible, and adaptable, and can be implemented with techno-commercial feasibility to have an impact. VU's Center of Communication for Development is telling stories of empowerment from the constructive struggle of ordinary people.

VU is also collaborating with global institutes, including the Korea Institute of Science and Technology, Nanyang Technological Institute (NTU), Singapore; the State University of New York at Binghamton; The National University, USA; the University of Ontario, Canada; and Chulalongkorn University, Thailand; Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand; and HoF University of Applied Sciences, Germany.

VU has been recognized internationally for its pioneering educational and leadership efforts. In 2022, VU was shortlisted in the 'Excellence

and Innovation in the Arts category in THE Awards, while in 2021, VU was ranked among the top 200 world universities for work related to Affordable and Clean Energy.

In 2022, VU was ranked in the Global Top 100 Innovative Universities in the innovative ranking system of the World's Universities with Real Impact (WURI). The aim of the innovative university ranking is to highlight universities' efforts in engaging with and improving the future, the environment, and society through innovative contributions and creative approaches.

VU emerged successfully, competing with 1,759 universities across 92 countries in the "U Multirank World University Ranking," an independent ranking prepared with seed funding from the European Commission's Erasmus+ program. VU is the youngest participant and excels on indicators such as graduating on time, student internships in the region, student-to-faculty ratio, student engagement, and graduating on time.



Bharat Agarwal

President,
Vishwakarma University,
Pune, India.

02



We cherish our more than three decades in education and societal service. We have always provided resources and support for VU's academic and research vision. Our objective is to make a positive impact on society through academics, research, and outreach.

VU's participatory development model has been instrumental in the development of the education system, and the award is a testament to our efforts.

Since VU's inception, our focus has been on high-quality education, research, and innovation. We aim to create societal change through our interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research.

Our goal is to implement the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) and help India become a knowledge-based superpower. India's traditional knowledge is valued by NEP and its goal is to ensure the welfare of all. Our value system at VU is based on India's ancient knowledge and diverse heritage.

We are determined to expand our socially responsible model for the common good and are sincerely working towards this goal.

Vice President,
Vishwakarma University,
Pune, India.



Making education the tool of empowerment

In the category of Leadership and Management Team of the Year, Vishwakarma University (VU) impressed the judges at THE with its strong commitment to the public good. Our responsibilities as a university have been increased by this recognition. Our focus is on developing different methods to implement our participatory development model and bridge the gap between academia and society.

Maintaining a healthy and sustainable development synergy requires collaboration between academia and society. In addition to fostering a participatory approach in academia, VU focuses on research activities that address pressing social issues. The involvement of the people being studied in the research process is crucial as they bring valuable knowledge from their life experiences. Industry plays a significant role in research that aims to achieve social change. The initiatives by VU that have been acknowledged by THE are a result of this thought process.

The Vishwakarma University Centre of Communication for Development (VUCCD)

is shedding light on the untold stories of marginalized communities by highlighting their journeys of empowerment and progress. The collaboration with Sahyadri Farms in Nashik is aimed at closing the gap between news consumers, journalists and the farming community. The Law Department's legal clinic is helping vulnerable and marginalized communities through initiatives like legal awareness campaigns, legal literacy camps, and pro bono legal aid. VU is actively engaging with society to tackle important issues through these endeavors and others. We aim to extend this inclusive approach to all levels of society and serve as a catalyst for positive change.

Challenges in higher education

According to the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-2021, the total enrollment in higher education increased to nearly 4.14 crore in 2020-21 from 3.85 crore in 2019-20. There has been an increase of approximately 72 lakh in enrollment (21%) since 2014-15. The number of female students increased to 2.01 crore from 1.88 crore in 2019-20, and the percentage of female

students to total enrollment increased from 45% in 2014-15 to around 49% in 2020-21. As per 2011 population projections for the 18-23 years age group, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) increased to 27.3 from 25.6 in 2019-20. The enrollment of SC students is 58.95 lakh as compared to 56.57 lakh in 2019-20 and 46.06 lakh in 2014-15. ST students' enrollment has increased to 24.1 lakh in 2020-21 from 21.6 lakh in 2019-20 and 16.41 lakh in 2014-15. Enrollment of OBC students has increased by 6 lakh to 1.48 crore in 2020-21, from 1.42 crore in 2019-20.

There has been a significant increase in the number of universities in India over the past nine years, from 723 in 2014 to 1,113 in 2023. During this period, 5,298 colleges have been established, bringing the total to 43,796 in 2023, compared to 38,498 in 2014. Rural areas make up 43% of universities and 61.4% of colleges in the country.

Higher education in India is progressing, but there is a significant challenge in increasing the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) across urban and rural areas and different communities. Accessibility to higher education is crucial, particularly for those who are socially and

economically disadvantaged. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without inclusive higher education. India's challenge is to ensure that quality education is affordable. Students who rely on government institutions for higher education deserve a higher standard of education. Regrettably, the number of students seeking admission to government institutions is decreasing, as is the number of those institutions themselves.

Realization of self-power

Education is a way for individuals to become aware of their own abilities. VU is making every effort to support students in this process of empowerment. Education is a crucial resource for our students to succeed in their own challenges. Recognition of the VU's educational principles and practical implementation will further strengthen this mission.

*Reference -
Press Information Bureau: Ministry of Education releases All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-2021, Retrieved from <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1894517#:~:text=The%20total%20enrollment%20in%20higher,1.88%20crore%20in%202019%2D20>.*

VU's participatory development philosophy:
The search for the 'whole being', developing
minds to exhibit knowledge.



Prof (Dr.) Siddharth Jabade

04

Vice-Chancellor,
Vishwakarma University,
Pune, India.



Vishwakarma University's remarkable achievement in clinching the Leadership and Management Team of the Year award at the 2023 Times Higher Education (THE) Awards Asia serves as a resounding testament to the university's pioneering educational philosophy. This philosophy has been the driving force behind an inclusive and participatory development model, effectively bridging the divide between various external stakeholders, ranging from industry and government to social enterprises and the local community. Through this holistic approach, education is transformed into an instrument for steering profound social, economic, and cultural change.

At the core of VU's approach lies the "innovate, integrate, and educate" framework. This framework not only encourages collaboration with external stakeholders to foster innovation but also actively involves/ integrates students and faculty in the innovation process. This ensures that learning / education is not confined to theory but is practically applied.

In today's augmented age, where technology reigns supreme in our daily lives, VU recognizes its fundamental responsibility as a university to contribute to society's social, cultural, and economic progress keeping students and people as the focal point.

The proliferation of computer systems, robotics, and digital communication systems has transformed our thinking, actions, and interactions. We find ourselves in an era where non-biological thinking prevails. While technological advancements are undeniably important, they also raise concerns about our connection with the world around us. Our increasing reliance on technology can desensitize us and erode our sense of social responsibility. It's crucial to recognize that technology, while powerful, is not always a panacea; it can create new challenges. Thus, understanding the societal dimensions of technology must assume a prominent role. The convergence of knowledge, technology, and society is vital for harnessing technology's potential for the greater good.

In light of these considerations, VU collaborates and integrates with the entire

social ecosystem, comprising industry, government, social enterprises, and the community, to grasp real-world problems and unmet needs. We nurture our educators and students to address these genuine challenges and bring their experiential insights back into the classroom. As a university, we generate knowledge and ensure its application in the appropriate context, with the right stakeholders, and for the right purposes. VU functions as a knowledge enterprise in society, and the ongoing process of generating, disseminating and translating knowledge to create an impact is intricately linked to societal progress and demands. Positioned at the forefront, we strive to create an ecosystem of stakeholders who play pivotal roles in the knowledge value chain. The ecosystem is built around our students, teachers, and experts in the form of a trusted networked community of practice to seed, nurture, and harvest innovations.

The Participatory Development Model

Vishwakarma University (VU) adopts a participatory development model that fosters active involvement from both students and industry stakeholders. This model is underpinned by the academic philosophy we've developed at VU, which aims to equip students with the skills and attributes needed to navigate the challenges of the 21st century. These key themes include:

- **Application of Knowledge:** Instilling the ability to apply knowledge in unfamiliar and evolving situations.
- **Understanding and Interpretation:** Cultivating the capacity to comprehend and interpret complex concepts.
- **Independent Curiosity-led Thinking:**

Encouraging deep, curiosity-driven thinking.

- **Values and Attitude:** Nurturing strong values and an affirmative attitude.

The integration of research into academic pursuits, coupled with an emphasis on encouraging students to apply their knowledge practically, plays a crucial role in this approach. It stimulates students to view their learning from an application-oriented perspective, bridging the gap between classroom instruction and real-world application. By demonstrating the practical relevance of what they learn, students gain confidence and motivation to engage actively in the learning process rather than merely being passive recipients of information.

This active participation fosters critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, paving the way for students to become independent thinkers. Such self-led thinking is invaluable for their future careers, where they will often encounter unfamiliar situations beyond the structured university environment. VU ensures that the education students receive remains pertinent and contextually relevant.

At VU, we are particularly committed to interdisciplinary participatory action research, such as projects addressing issues like climate change and agrarian distress, urbanization, and migration. Our Sahyadri Communication Project is a prime example of this model in action. These participatory research initiatives align with the higher education philosophy we aim to promote, aligning closely with the goals of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP).

As we engage in extensive discussions surrounding NEP-2020 across all tiers of the education system, it becomes imperative

to contemplate how education will serve as a catalyst for nurturing a knowledge-based society and fostering innovative development paradigms and models. It is crucial to delve into the philosophical and epistemological dimensions of higher education to discern how these dimensions can empower students in the formation of their life philosophies.

Beyond imparting practical skills, training, and employment-oriented approaches, there exists a profound need to explore the juncture where truth intersects with beliefs, leading to the creation of new knowledge. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon us to examine how, as a society, we conceptualize and represent knowledge.

Understanding the essence of education

At its core, the word ‘education’ finds its roots in the Latin term ‘educare,’ signifying ‘to raise’ or ‘to bring up,’ while ‘educere’ suggests ‘to lead forth’ or ‘to emerge.’ In the Indian context, ‘shiksha’ and ‘vidya’ represent ‘education.’ ‘Shiksha’ derives from ‘shas,’ denoting ‘to discipline’ or ‘to control,’ whereas ‘vidya’ traces its origins to ‘Wd,’ meaning ‘to know’.

For philosophers and scholars alike, education

transcends the mere dissemination of facts, theories, and models to be regurgitated for grades and certificates. True education involves imparting knowledge, nurturing rational thinking, and delving deep into the understanding of concepts. Such education should empower individuals to become independent thinkers, fostering curiosity, skills, ethical values, and attitudes. Knowledge and the capacity to think and reason are central facets of the educational journey, underpinned by an individual’s values and attitudes. The cultivation of these values and attitudes occurs within the educational ecosystem, through interactions with educators and peers, and via a broader awareness of the surrounding society. This educational process is holistic, shaping minds, not just dexterous hands. Knowledge and skills can be quantified through assessment methods like examinations, but values and attitudes are intangible aspects of an individual’s makeup.

Education serves as the key conduit for transforming human resources into human capital. It represents a substantial investment in the development of human capital. However, this investment extends beyond physical infrastructure and the sheer number of educational institutions; it encompasses the very essence of education envisioned by our esteemed forebears.

In the contemporary landscape, discerning what is worth knowing has become paramount. The value of knowledge varies significantly based on geographical location, era, and societal context. Over the past five centuries, there has been a shift from ‘knowing why’ to ‘knowing how.’ Social sciences, humanities, and local contexts wield tremendous influence in the transmission of knowledge. These fields transcend the mere exchange of technological



and scientific facts. Multiple mental constructs of reality are intricately linked to the context shaped by one's surroundings. In our pursuit of comprehending these realities, we must delve into the fundamental tenets of knowledge philosophy within higher education and its interconnections with both one another and broader societal structures.

Vishwakarma University (VU) is diligently reframing the knowledge philosophy within higher education, recognizing that numerous constructs of reality emerge from our socio-cultural and economic milieus. This rethinking will pave the way for fresh paradigms, theoretical perspectives, methods, and methodologies for acquiring and processing knowledge. The higher education system



plays a pivotal role in nurturing pure logical and rational reasoning, distinct from everyday reasoning, experiences, and perceptions. The Constitution of India underscores the development of a scientific temperament, humanism, and a spirit of inquiry and reform as fundamental duties. Embracing free thinking will create fertile ground for reasoning to flourish.

The role of higher education

Our guiding philosophy underscores the essential role of higher education within any society: to cultivate a well-prepared human resource, specifically individuals possessing discerning, inquisitive, and rational minds. These minds are destined to contribute to the repository of applied knowledge, thereby enhancing society's capacity for innovation and productivity. This contribution is a fusion of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. Universities play a pivotal role in establishing and advancing a learning ecosystem characterized by the right cultural norms and intellectual standards within society. They are instrumental in nurturing a well-rounded human resource capable of pursuing societal objectives.

A United Nations report, 'Education and Skills for Inclusive and Sustainable Development Beyond 2015,' highlights the growing emphasis in many countries on work-based learning for both youth and adults. This approach places significant importance on internships and apprenticeships. However, a significant challenge lies in seamlessly integrating enduring aspects of workplace learning into education, skills development strategies, and policies. This includes the development of innovative approaches for recognizing and validating non-formal and informal learning experiences and ensuring flexible access to skills development and qualifications.

The report highlights a critical issue in many developing countries: skill development in the informal sectors of the economy serves as the primary avenue of employment for a significant portion of the population. Regrettably, such skill development often lacks quality and receives limited policy attention. There is an urgent need for fresh skill development



approaches that harness the full potential of diverse learning environments, encompassing not only informal but also formal sectors of the economy.

The visionary educator Paulo Freire championed the concept of dialogue in education, wherein every participant is encouraged to question their existing knowledge and recognize that through communication, thoughts evolve, and new knowledge emerges. The notion of viewing knowledge as a mere deposit made into passive recipients does not foster meaningful progress. Freire astutely described this concept as follows: “Knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing.” In elucidating the concept of conscientization, he posited it as a process for developing critical awareness of one’s social reality through reflection and action, with action serving as the driving force behind change. Genuine learning, in his view, hinges on the exploration of real problems and genuine needs.

Let us refrain from misconstruing and limiting education to mere vocational training. Education transcends the narrow scope of preparing individuals solely for livelihoods. It demands a cognitive perspective within the educational system, one that underscores the essential processes of acquiring knowledge

and fostering understanding. It calls for a holistic outlook, encouraging the application of knowledge and understanding to diverse situations rather than rendering them inert or devoid of value.

If knowledge fails to enable a student or learner to connect with their surroundings and cultivate empathy, if it secludes them from society rather than facilitating an understanding of interconnectedness, then a fundamental issue exists. In this case, education has not fulfilled its role in developing individuals as complete human beings. The primary aim of higher education is to nurture students and learners into ‘whole beings.’ At VU, we are steadfastly committed to this noble pursuit. The international recognition of our philosophy serves as validation that we are on the right path toward achieving this objective.



References:

[1] Shri Sushil Kumar Singh, "Higher Education Commission of India", Ministry of Education, Government of India, Unstarred Question No. 806, Answered on Feb 2022. Retrieved from <http://164.100.24.220/loksabhaquestions/annex/178/AU806.pdf>

[2] Dr. Krishna Pal Singh Yadav and Shrimati Sandhya Ray, "Introducing Indian Values in School Education", Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India, Unstarred Question No. 3428, Answered on 9 Aug 2021. Retrieved from <http://164.100.24.220/loksabhaquestions/annex/176/AU3428.pdf>

[3] NCERT, "Basics in Education- Textbook for B.Ed. Course", ISBN 978-93-5007-283-7, 2014. Retrieved from [https://www.hzu.edu.in/bed/Basics-in-Education%20\(NCERT\).pdf](https://www.hzu.edu.in/bed/Basics-in-Education%20(NCERT).pdf)

[4] Piece, T. T. (2012). Education and skills for inclusive and sustainable development beyond 2015. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/4_education.pdf

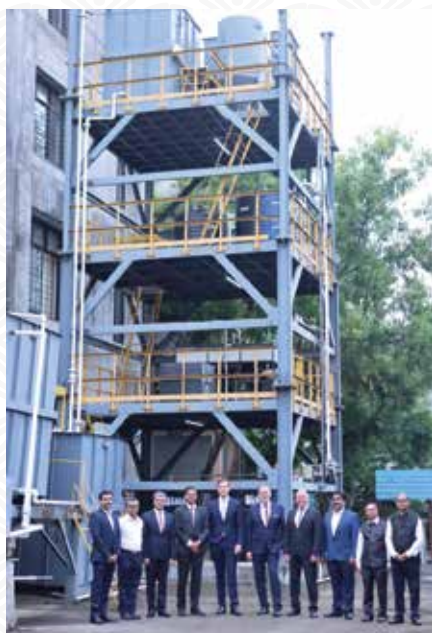
[5] Concepts used by Paulo Freire. Retrieved from <https://www.freire.org/concepts-used-by-paulo-freire>

[6] NCERT, "Basics in Education- Textbook for B.Ed. Course", ISBN 978-93-5007-283-7, 2014. Retrieved from [https://www.hzu.edu.in/bed/Basics-in-Education%20\(NCERT\).pdf](https://www.hzu.edu.in/bed/Basics-in-Education%20(NCERT).pdf)





Vertical Sewage Treatment Plant



The Water Quality Centre of Excellence was established on June 14, 2018 in pursuit of a mission focused on raising awareness about clean drinking water and sanitation while extending aid to marginalized and underprivileged communities. This initiative was made possible through a collaborative effort with the Wilo Foundation in Germany.

Equipped with state-of-the-art instrumentation capable of assessing the physical, chemical, and biological aspects of water, the Centre stands as a testament to its commitment to

advancing research in water treatment and purification. It aspires to be a catalyst for transformative change in the realm of water and sanitation.

The Centre's objectives encompass the promotion of groundbreaking research in water treatment and purification, the cultivation of vital public awareness regarding clean drinking water, fostering collaborative research partnerships with industries to deliver innovative, cost-effective, and scalable solutions to grassroots communities, pioneering inventive approaches to address water-related challenges, and instilling a heightened awareness of the importance of water among the populace.

Industry-on-campus

Through the industry-on-campus initiative, Vishwakarma University (VU) has pioneered a collaborative effort that invites industries to actively participate in transformative processes. VU has established transdisciplinary centres of excellence on its campus, effectively transforming the university into a "living lab." Here, innovative technologies are put to the test within a controlled operational environment.

In partnership with Wilo Mather and Platt Pumps Private Limited, Pune, India, VU embarked on a joint venture to conceive and

develop a Vertical Sewage Treatment Plant (VSTP) aimed at producing potable water. The escalating sewage crisis in urban areas has led to a rapid deterioration in water quality, with severe consequences becoming increasingly evident. Moreover, both urban and rural regions grapple with spatial limitations when deploying sewage treatment solutions. To address these challenges, the university's faculty and students conceived the VSTP concept, a solution fully supported by Wilo.

This ambitious project, initiated in 2019, is unfolding in three distinct phases. The stages include the ideation of VSTP Technology, the conceptualization of the VSTP, the design of individual components, system design and configuration, installation of the VSTP on campus, patent processes, investigative work, testing, validation, and simulation and modelling.

Five faculty members and students from the Science and Technology departments are actively engaged in driving this project forward. The VSTP is now operational on the VU campus, with comprehensive testing conducted within a controlled environment at Technology Readiness Level 5, marking

a significant milestone in this innovative endeavour.

Salient Features

The construction of this plant represents a remarkable fusion of cutting-edge scientific knowledge and innovative technology. Within the university premises, a three-story model of this plant has been meticulously assembled. With a capacity to treat 10,000 liters of wastewater daily, the purified water it produces is not only suitable for agriculture and industrial processes but is also on track to meet potable water standards.

This versatile plant is well-suited for both urban and rural areas, and its technology is poised for deployment across 30 different locations. The results are impressive, with a 95-99% reduction in Chemical Oxygen Demand, a 95-100% reduction in Biochemical Oxygen Demand, a 55-60% reduction in Total Dissolved Solids, a 99-100% reduction in Total Suspended Solids, and a pH range within 6.7-7.2. Undoubtedly, this project stands as a tangible embodiment of VU's core values, including its commitment to experimental and experiential education, transformative and impactful research, and a deep sense of social responsibility.



Hemant Watve

*CEO and Managing Director,
Wilo Mather & Platt Pumps
Private Limited, Pune*

“It is a distinct pleasure and honour to be affiliated with VU, a university emblematic of the new generation. VU adeptly addresses the societal demand for education, offering inclusivity while also embracing forward-thinking approaches. The university tailors its educational system to meet these evolving needs. VU's collaborative approach is a refreshing initiative, as it enables a profound understanding of both corporate and enterprise requirements. The exposure students gain to real-life challenges while being encouraged to innovate and create something distinct, is a hallmark of VU's approach. I am confident that the VU culture will serve as a fertile ground for nurturing the next generation of entrepreneurs and groundbreaking ideas. I extend my best wishes to the university.”

The Vishwakarma University Centre of Communication for Development



On August 15, 2020, the Vishwakarma University Centre of Communication for Development (VUCCD) was inaugurated, within the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication. Its primary mission is to advance research in the fields of Development and Empowerment. Notably, Vishwakarma University holds the distinction of being the first Indian university to pioneer the teaching, research, and application of a groundbreaking discipline known as Empowerment Journalism. This innovative field was conceived and developed by Prof. (Dr.) Radheshyam Jadhav, VUCCD's director and an accomplished journalist, during his tenure at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford.

The 6th Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) report, titled "Who Makes the News," published in 2020, states that the value of the news is compromised when opportunities are not provided for more citizens to tell their own stories in their own words. These are stories that are important not only to the storytellers but also to a broad range of people. The report adds that "the failure to represent the diversity of people and opinion present in society not only has implications for public discourse and decision-making, but it also plays a role in eroding trust in news journalism."

Communication, in its multifaceted manifestations, exerts a profound influence on the socio-cultural fabric of society. The prevailing communication norms often serve to perpetuate cultural dominance while silencing the voices of marginalized communities. It's a tool wielded to maintain the status quo of oppressive structures.

Yet, the advent of new media has heralded a transformative era in communication, opening pathways to its democratization. This shift empowers individuals who have been overlooked by mainstream legacy media to craft, share, and consume content without the constraints of gatekeepers. This democratization of communication is marked by its inclusivity, interactivity, and impartiality. Now, the art of storytelling and its dissemination is no longer confined exclusively to journalists and professional communicators.

VUCCD is actively engaged in developing participatory communication models that empower communities to share their narratives within a journalistic framework, leveraging the potential of new media. Recognizing the importance of documenting the lives, experiences, and challenges faced by individuals, storytelling has become a

potent tool in the hands of ordinary people for effective communication.

Furthermore, VUCCD places a strong emphasis on inspiring students and researchers to conceptualize development and empowerment communication through a grassroots perspective and to embark on participatory action research. The objective is to redirect attention away from a male-centric approach to development and empowerment processes and communication, focusing instead on gender-sensitive theories and models within the field. VUCCD facilitates connections between students and grassroots initiatives, providing them with valuable insights into the constructive struggles of the community.

Empowerment through constructive struggle:

Effective empowerment communication entails not merely showcasing success or development but also emphasizing the constructive struggle undertaken to challenge and dismantle the power structures responsible for oppression. This element of struggle is integral to empowerment, as it empowers those engaged in the process. Sustainable development can only be realized when empowered individuals have the agency to determine the direction of their development. The empowerment journalism model underscores this crucial dimension.

Redefining Development:

VUCCD actively fosters discourse, dialogues, and research centred on reimagining the concept of development from a grassroots perspective. It staunchly supports research grounded in the real-life experiences of ordinary people. The pursuit of alternative development models and theories deeply rooted in local culture and ethos is deemed

indispensable for achieving sustainable development. The prevailing development paradigm has often fallen short of its goals, exacerbating disparities between developed and underdeveloped individuals and nations. Communicating alternative development theories and models serves as a pivotal catalyst for advancing the sustainable development agenda. Through various projects, workshops, and seminars, VUCCD contributes significantly to this vital discourse.

Vision & Mission:

VUCCD's vision revolves around elevating the role of communication in shaping the trajectory of society's development. It seeks to redefine development by placing people at the very heart of the development process. VUCCD is at the forefront of evolving the empowerment concept, grounded in grassroots experiences and enriched by research in empowerment journalism and communication theories and models. Its mission encompasses conducting research in the realms of development and empowerment journalism and communication, narrating stories of development and empowerment, and fostering a network of grassroots development and empowerment communicators.

VUCCD conducts training sessions to disseminate theories and models of development and empowerment journalism and communication and provides students, journalists and the general public with training in development and empowerment studies. Additionally, it publishes research, stories, and studies in the field of development and empowerment journalism and communication.

Student Activities :

VUCCD actively engages students by connecting them with international

communicators through its international lecture series, facilitating exchanges of ideas with experts from other countries. The centre also organizes competitions focused on development and empowerment storytelling, debates, field visits, and seminars. VUCCD actively participates in rural integrated projects, encouraging students to explore empowerment narratives across diverse topics, such as LGBTQ community experiences, financial inclusion for working women, the struggle against virginity tests, and issues faced by individuals dealing with

Vitiligo and breast cancer, among others.

References:

1. *GMMP Report: WHO makes the NEWS?* Available at: https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/GMMP2020.ENG_FINAL20210713.pdf, accessed 5 May 2023.

2. *Empowerment Journalism: A model for reporting on women in climate-smart agriculture.* Available at: <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/empowerment-journalism-model-reporting-women-climate-smart-agriculture>, accessed 25 July 2023



Sampatrao Pawar
Social activist & founder of
Kranti Smriti Van, Sangli

“ VUCCD has established itself as a robust platform for showcasing the narratives of true changemakers. There are countless individuals in our midst who play pivotal roles in enhancing our lives, those who demonstrate unwavering determination in the face of adversity, and those who persevere through challenges without external assistance. However, the stories of these ordinary people often remain unnoticed. VUCCD has taken the commendable initiative of recognizing these unsung heroes by sharing their stories and bridging the gap between students and the grassroots realities they represent. ”



Madhura Janorkar
Former Student.

“ During my time studying BA Journalism and Mass Communication at Vishwakarma University, one of the standout features was the hands-on approach to learning. The VUCCD platform provided me, as a student, with the invaluable opportunity to put into practice the article and news writing skills we had been taught in theory.

Writing for this platform not only allowed me to effectively convey my thoughts but also gave me a platform to share stories that needed to be heard by the wider world. Additionally, I had the chance to delve into various aspects of journalism, including conducting interviews, capturing appropriate photographs, brainstorming ideas, and persuading people to share their stories.

This practical exposure was a much-needed boost for me and helped me realize my passion for writing. Having the opportunity to write for a public platform and earn bylines while still studying was a unique and highly valuable experience in terms of my learning journey and preparation for entering the industry. ”



Capacity Building in Collaboration with Maharashtra State Faculty Development Academy

The Maharashtra State Faculty Development Academy (MSFDA) was established under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, by the Department of Higher and Technical Education. Its primary mission is to provide training to faculty members working in Higher and Technical Education Institutions (HEIs) across Maharashtra. MSFDA's vision is to reshape the landscape of higher education by continuously enhancing the professional development of educators in the state's HEIs. The academy places a strong emphasis on training that aligns with the fundamental principles and approaches outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020. These principles include experiential learning, fostering creativity and innovation, promoting interdisciplinary education, nurturing scientific and rational thinking, fostering collaboration with practitioners and expert institutions, and championing diversity and inclusion.

Goals of the MSFDA-VU joint initiative

This collaborative effort between MSFDA and VU aims to bridge existing gaps in the education sector, considering the potential influence of factors such as NEP 2022, digitalization trends in the industry, and evolving career dynamics. The initiative seeks to bring about a mindset shift and empower stakeholders to engage in



meaningful collaborations with the industry. It endeavours to instil an entrepreneurial mindset among faculty, students, and other involved parties. The joint initiative facilitates industry-driven projects through specialized centres established within various HEIs and promotes research driven by real-world issues. It achieves this by enhancing the capacity of HEIs and fostering collaborative efforts for generating intellectual property between HEIs and the industry.

Beneficiaries Teachers

Teachers participating in this initiative hail from various districts in Maharashtra, with a preference for those from rural and suburban areas. To overcome language barriers, resource persons conduct sessions in the local language (Marathi), as well as Hindi and English, catering to the audience's profile.

Participants represent diverse academic disciplines, including pharmacy, engineering, commerce, science, arts, library sciences, physical education, and more. The belief is that teachers from any discipline can contribute to solving real-world problems through collaboration with students, alumni, colleagues from other disciplines, and

industry professionals. Participants serve various roles, encompassing research, quality assurance, industry engagement, innovation, training and placement, and alumni relations.

Resource Persons

Over 30 faculty members from VU, representing various disciplines, are actively involved in this initiative. These academic practitioners possess experience in industry-led projects and applied research, both within their own fields and in multidisciplinary contexts. They have developed content, including quizzes, examples, and references, to facilitate additional learning for participants. These modules cater to the diversity of teachers and the session durations.

Capacity Building

In Phase I, VU conducted virtual training for approximately 200 undergraduate and postgraduate teachers. These educators represented over 150 higher education institutions, thereby impacting numerous colleagues and students. Through the 'Local Industry Connect Project,' these teachers collectively engaged with around 200 industry professionals to gain insights into industry priorities.

Phase II involves in-person training for approximately 60 undergraduate and postgraduate teachers over five consecutive days. These sessions are residential and take place in Pune, featuring interactive sessions at the MSFDA Pune facility, visits to Vishwakarma University, and interactions with local industries.

Phase III envisions the establishment or nurturing of transdisciplinary centres of excellence. These centres will be multidisciplinary, involving multiple academic disciplines, engaging industry

partners (each centre is expected to have at least one reputable partner), and involving various stakeholders to address the needs of professionals, faculty, students, and more.

Five C's model for industry collaborations

These centres will follow the Five C model for fostering industry connections and promoting mutually beneficial academic partnerships with Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), large enterprises, startups, and the social sector. The model includes Clarity (establishing common goals through deliberations with leadership and key stakeholders), Commitment (building and sustaining relationships based on trust, shared values, and mutual interests), Communication (maintaining ongoing dialogue among working group members regarding priorities and constraints), Consistency (systematically monitoring progress through periodic reporting and meetings), and Celebration (recognizing partners' contributions and acknowledging the team's efforts).

Other initiatives

Additionally, a team of six faculty members conducted a '3-day Train the Trainer program' for Tuljaram Chaturchand College, Baramati, Pune, benefiting 30 participants. The program covered various aspects, including groundwork for industry partnerships, impactful innovations and industry connections, emerging technologies, security, intellectual property rights (IPR), design thinking, analytics, and immersive technologies.

Invited sessions by VU faculty have been conducted on other campuses, such as Rajaram College, Kolhapur, and CKT Panvel, focusing on entrepreneurship development.



Dr. Kazanfar Surve
*Associate Professor and
BMS Coordinator, Western
College of Commerce and
Business Management*

“Collaborating with communities and exchanging knowledge with fellow academicians has been an invaluable initiative. It has enriched our comprehension of the profound importance of research and innovation. Engaging with individuals from diverse departments and regions has afforded us the opportunity to gather a wealth of insights. The trainers provided us with a wealth of valuable resources, and the training modules offered a broad spectrum of knowledge. As a result, at our campus, we have embarked on a journey towards research and innovation that is closely aligned with industry needs. Inspired by this training and newfound motivation, we have established an Innovation and Research committee.

Our committee has set in motion plans for two major events and four minor events to be executed during this academic year. This proactive approach to fostering innovation and research promises to yield meaningful results and contribute to the advancement of our academic community.”



Dr. Manisha Shelkande
*Head of Department, Vidya
Pratishthan's Institute of
Information Technology,
Baramati*

“This initiative is undoubtedly a catalyst for our personal development. I've taken the lead on several crucial initiatives, including Personality Branding, Critical Thinking, and Entrepreneurship Development. These endeavours have not only inspired us to expand our professional networks but have also empowered us to present our work more effectively across diverse platforms and forge partnerships with other institutions.

Drawing from the valuable insights gained during this training, we have taken proactive steps to establish a Communication Development Cell within our institute. Additionally, we've embarked on the journey of enhancing the personal branding of our faculty members, which ultimately contributes to the overall branding of our institution.

Leveraging the design thinking methodology, we've been able to craft innovative solutions to address various academic challenges. Moreover, we are actively pursuing opportunities to secure funded research projects, spurred on by the knowledge & strategies gleaned from this training. This collective effort promises to yield positive outcomes for our institution & our professional growth.”



Dr. Sanjay Kurkute
*Dean R&D, HOD E&TC
Engineering, Pravara Rural
Engineering College, Loni*

Following the training, we've embarked on a startup venture focused on Electric Vehicle technology, and our prototype is currently undergoing rigorous testing within our college. Our engineering campus boasts nine undergraduate departments, and we're actively engaged in a range of innovative initiatives, particularly in the realms of innovation and incubation. These activities have been seamlessly integrated into our campus operations, setting the stage for further progress. The training has undeniably played a pivotal role in steering us towards these promising endeavours.



VU Legal Aid Clinic

In line with Article 39A of the Constitution of India, which advocates for equal access to justice for all, regardless of their vulnerability based on factors like religion, race, caste, economic status, and place of birth, Vishwakarma University established the VU Legal Aid Clinic on October 26, 2021.

The clinic welcomes students from the Faculty of Law and other academic disciplines to volunteer and engage in legal aid initiatives. This unique opportunity enables students to connect with diverse segments of society, gain insights into their specific legal challenges, and formulate legal remedies.

Objectives and activities

The primary goal of the VU Legal Aid Clinic is to empower vulnerable and marginalized individuals through pro bono activities. These encompass raising legal awareness, organizing legal literacy camps, delivering free legal aid, offering pro bono legal assistance, and facilitating the implementation of schemes by the National Legal Services Authority.

The Legal Aid Clinic also conducts interdisciplinary research projects addressing socio-legal issues. It collaborates with non-profit organizations and community-based

groups to identify the distinct legal needs of marginalized populations. Additionally, the clinic collaborates with the judiciary and government agencies to enhance access to a broader range of cases and also partners with technology companies to develop digital solutions for legal issues.

Successful partnerships have been forged with corporations committed to corporate social responsibility, facilitating pro bono legal services and initiatives for access to justice. Collaborations with law firms and legal practitioners have also proven valuable, providing mentorship opportunities.

The VU Legal Aid Clinic has also been actively engaged in spreading legal aid and legal literacy among vulnerable segments of society. Its activities include national-level seminars, workshops, visits to Lok Adalats (community-based dispute resolution forums), street plays, village camps, Jansunwai (public grievance redressal), and awareness campaigns on cybercrimes aimed at adolescents. The Department of Law commemorates Constitution Day annually.

Visits and Seminars

Field visits expose students to real-world legal processes. Past visits to the Pune District Court allowed students to observe the dispute

resolution process of the National Lok Adalat, a government and judiciary initiative aimed at expeditiously resolving minor disputes. Students had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the proceedings and volunteer in facilitating them.

The VU Legal Aid Clinic, in conjunction with Pune DLSA, organized a seminar on "Legal Services and its Scope." The student team from the VU Legal Aid Clinic received recognition, winning the Best All India Legal Aid Clinic Student Lawyer Team Award and a cash prize of Rs. 10,000/- in the Prof. V S Mallar Memorial Legal Aid Competition, organized by CEERA, NLSIU Bengaluru, in collaboration with the Department of Justice, Government of India.

Activities for this competition included village visits, street plays, Jansunwai, and speed monitoring.

Trainings and Workshops

The Maharashtra State Faculty Development

Academy conducted a three-day training workshop called 'Yuva Manasrang' on Mental Health Awareness from November 11 to 13, 2022. As part of this initiative, students will establish a Yuva Manasrang Club, serving as a peer support group for individuals experiencing mental health issues, and facilitating their access to professional counselling. Following the activities assigned by the Yuva Manasrang Workshop, the Legal Aid Clinic organized a sensitization session on suicide prevention, addressing both the psychological and legal aspects. The VU Legal Aid Clinic also conducted a one-day Training of Trainers Workshop on Legal Literacy and Awareness on May 6, 2023.

Through its pro bono efforts, the VU Legal Aid Clinic plays a crucial role in developing innovative solutions for community participation in sustainable development. It serves as a vital intermediary between public and private institutions and marginalized communities, fostering sustainable developmental outcomes.





Suvarna Gavhane
Principal,
Maalavali Primary School.

“

The VU Team not only introduced but also provided comprehensive explanations on sensitive topics such as cyberbullying and the concept of good touch-bad touch, for which we are deeply appreciative. Moreover, the visit from the student team and their engaging interaction regarding the legal profession is bound to inspire our students towards pursuing higher education, particularly in the field of law

”



Aniruddha Yadav
Haveli Taluka Panchayat
Samiti Member.

“

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the VU Legal Aid Clinic for their commendable efforts in setting up camp in our village and sharing innovative ideas. The street plays, coupled with the subsequent explanations, provided a distinctive and engaging means of raising awareness through enjoyable entertainment. The members of our village community now have a resource to turn to for legal queries. As village authorities, we pledge our full cooperation and assure you that we will maintain ongoing communication with the Clinic.

”



Farmer Producer Organizations: Communication in News Media – Theory and Practice

The Government of India has given its approval for the launch of a Central Sector Scheme aimed at creating and promoting 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). The scheme has set the ambitious target of establishing these FPOs by the fiscal year 2027-28. In this context, FPO is a broad term encompassing organizations registered under Part IXA of the Companies Act or the Co-operative Societies Act of respective states. FPOs are established to harness collective strength, particularly in the agricultural and allied sectors, by leveraging economies of scale in both production and marketing. The fundamental idea behind FPOs is to unite cultivators.

However, the concept and activities of FPOs have not received adequate coverage in mainstream media. To address this gap, Sahyadri Farms, located in Nashik, and Vishwakarma University (VU) have joined forces as research partners. They aim to conduct research that addresses the concerns of FPOs regarding their representation in the news media. This project holds significant importance because effective communication plays a pivotal role in disseminating information, building consensus, motivating the audience, and facilitating empowerment and developmental processes.

About Sahyadri Farms

One of the predominant challenges in India has been ensuring the independence and self-sufficiency of small and marginal farmers. The agrarian crisis in India has worsened due to climate change and the widespread use of fertilizers and pesticides. The agricultural value chain in the country is disjointed and fragmented. In response to these challenges, Sahyadri Farms was established in 2010 as a Farmer Producer Company. Its primary objective is to address issues related to scalability, farmer sustainability, and consumer benefits. Sahyadri Farms is unique in that it is 100% owned by farmers, who have equal voting rights irrespective of their landholding size. The company focuses on creating integrated value chains for specific crops through the use of technology and efficient management.

The Project

The project will focus on the need to understand why the media is not giving comprehensive coverage to FPOs and why there is no comprehensive discourse about FPOs in media. Based on the interviews of journalists and FPO members, the project will understand comprehension of journalists about FPOs and what are the media's requirements/ impediments when it comes to coverage of FPOs. The project will facilitate the

need to build a communication ecosystem to promote FPOs as this model is the only option for small and marginal farmers to sustain and needs media support. There is need to bridge the gap between media and FPOs and the project plans training of media reporters to address the same. Comprehensive theories and models in FPO communication are non-existent and the project aims to conduct research on how media (print, electronic and digital) should communicate FPCs, evolve models to disseminate information about FPOs and build a network of journalists/communicators covering FPOs in India.

The Outcome

The project's ultimate objective is to construct a robust model for FPO communication in the media. It will result in the publication

of a handbook tailored for journalists and communicators, providing guidance on how to effectively cover FPOs. Additionally, the project aims to establish a network of well-informed agriculture reporters, specializing in FPO coverage. A comprehensive report detailing FPO coverage and communication will be submitted to the Department of Information and Communication and the Department of Agriculture, Government of India, with the aim of influencing policy decisions in this regard.

References:

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. (2021, Dec 13). Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). The Press Information Bureau. <https://pib.gov.in/FactsheetDetails.aspx?Id=148588>





Pramod Rajebhosale
*CEO, H Square, FPC:
Incubation Center for
Horticulture
(Initiative by Sahyadri Farms)
at Sahyadri Farms.*

“ Indian agriculture is facing increasingly complex challenges on a daily basis, with numerous dimensions that can be difficult for both the general public and the media to comprehend fully. One of the most pressing issues within this ecosystem is the problem of small landholdings. To address this, unity among small farmers is crucial. The adoption of collective or cooperative models holds great promise for bringing sustainability to the lives of these farmers. The recently introduced FPO format has several strengths that can contribute to this sustainability.

However, for this new model to succeed, it is imperative to effectively communicate its benefits to every layer of farming society. This underscores the pivotal role of the media in disseminating information and raising awareness. Recognizing this need, Sahyadri Farms, the largest FPC in horticulture, has taken the initiative to collaborate with Vishwakarma University. Together, we are designing a communication strategy aimed at simplifying the advantages of the FPC model and reaching the grassroots of the farming community through media.

This collaboration will lead to the creation of a unique training project for the media. It represents a pioneering effort, and its success could serve as a blueprint for similar projects in other sectors and industries. In essence, the partnership between Sahyadri Farms and Vishwakarma is not only about supporting agriculture but also about benefiting society at large by enhancing the media's capacity to convey critical information effectively.



Vishwas Patil
*Senior Journalist,
Kolhapur.*

“ The FPO movement is still in the process of taking root, and it's crucial for journalists covering agriculture and rural development to grasp its significance in promoting sustainable development in rural India. The joint initiative undertaken by Sahyadri Farms and Vishwakarma University will undoubtedly aid reporters in comprehending the fundamental aspects of the FPO movement. It will equip them with the knowledge on how to effectively report on FPO-related stories, as well as how to recognize relevant themes and subjects for their coverage.




Our educational philosophy underscores the deep connection between fundamental educational concepts and the cultivation of human capital. We are resolute in our commitment to prepare our students to make a meaningful and positive impact on our nation's long-term development. We remain dedicated to reshaping education to align with our society's evolving needs and aspirations, fostering socio-economic and cultural transformation.

We firmly believe that our educational philosophy is a catalyst for societal and national self-reliance and sustainable development. Higher education serves as the linchpin in reshaping existing development models and paradigms. We are confident that our participatory and holistic development approaches will play a pivotal role in achieving this transformation.

The recognition of our team as the Leadership and Management Team of the Year by THE is a testament to the validity of our efforts. We pledge to persist in our endeavors to make our education system more inclusive and comprehensive.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our students, parents, and faculty members, as well as various institutions and organizations that have joined hands with us on this remarkable and ongoing journey. Together, we continue to contribute to this illustrious path of progress.



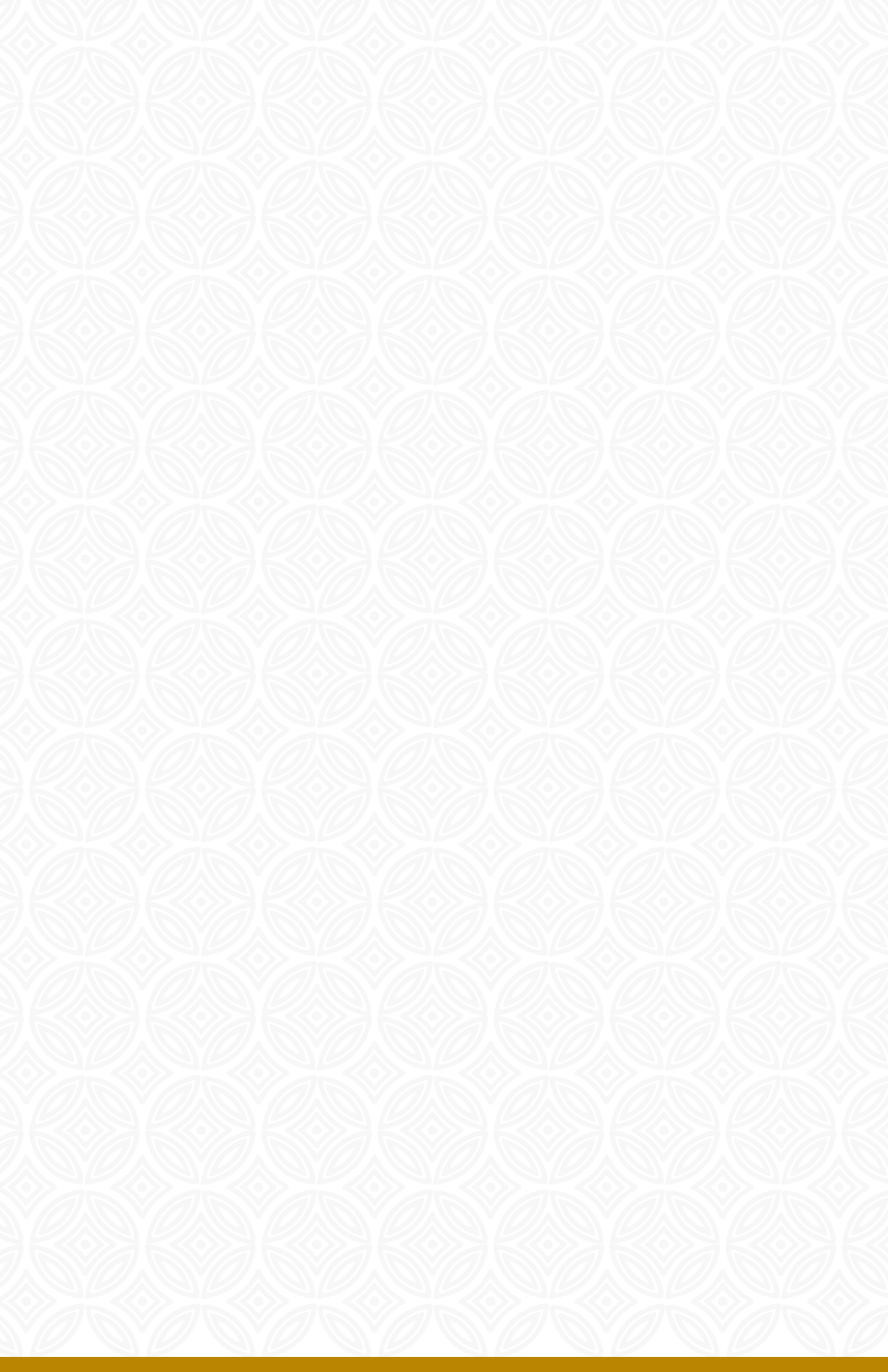


Leadership and
Management Team
of the Year

Vishwakarma University



Awards
Asia 2023





Vishwakarma University, Pune

📍 Survey No. 2, 3, 4 Laxmi Nagar,
Kondhwa (Bk.) Pune - 411048. Maharashtra, India.

✉️ iqac@vupune.ac.in

☎️ **+91 20 2695 0302**

🌐 www.vupune.ac.in

