

**CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
AND INNOVATION**



**Mahindra  
University**

Global Thinkers. Engaged Leaders.

***NEWSLETTER***

**Mar 2024 | Vol 3, Issue 1**

***Sustainable  
Future:  
Innovating  
for Change***







Sustainable development requires human ingenuity. People are the most important resource.

-Dan Schechtman



## Introduction

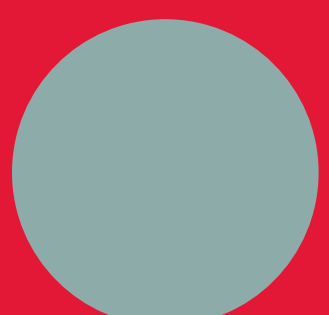
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The Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Mahindra University focuses on fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation among students. The center aims to inspire, educate, and empower students to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations and turn innovative ideas into impactful ventures. In this dynamic realm, the center harnesses the power of innovation to address pressing environmental challenges while fostering economic growth. From groundbreaking startups to established enterprises, the center's initiatives bring sustainability and cutting-edge technology together. With a focus on forward-thinking solutions, the center empowers entrepreneurs to lead the charge towards a more sustainable future. Join us as we revolutionize industries, transform communities, and pave the way for a world where innovation thrives hand in hand with environmental stewardship.

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## EIC 2024 Board Members

A Student driven platform known as 'Entrepreneurship and Innovation Cell (EIC)' executes various programs and activities related to entrepreneurship & innovation throughout the year. The board members of EIC 2024 are as follows:



Varuni Vangaveti  
President



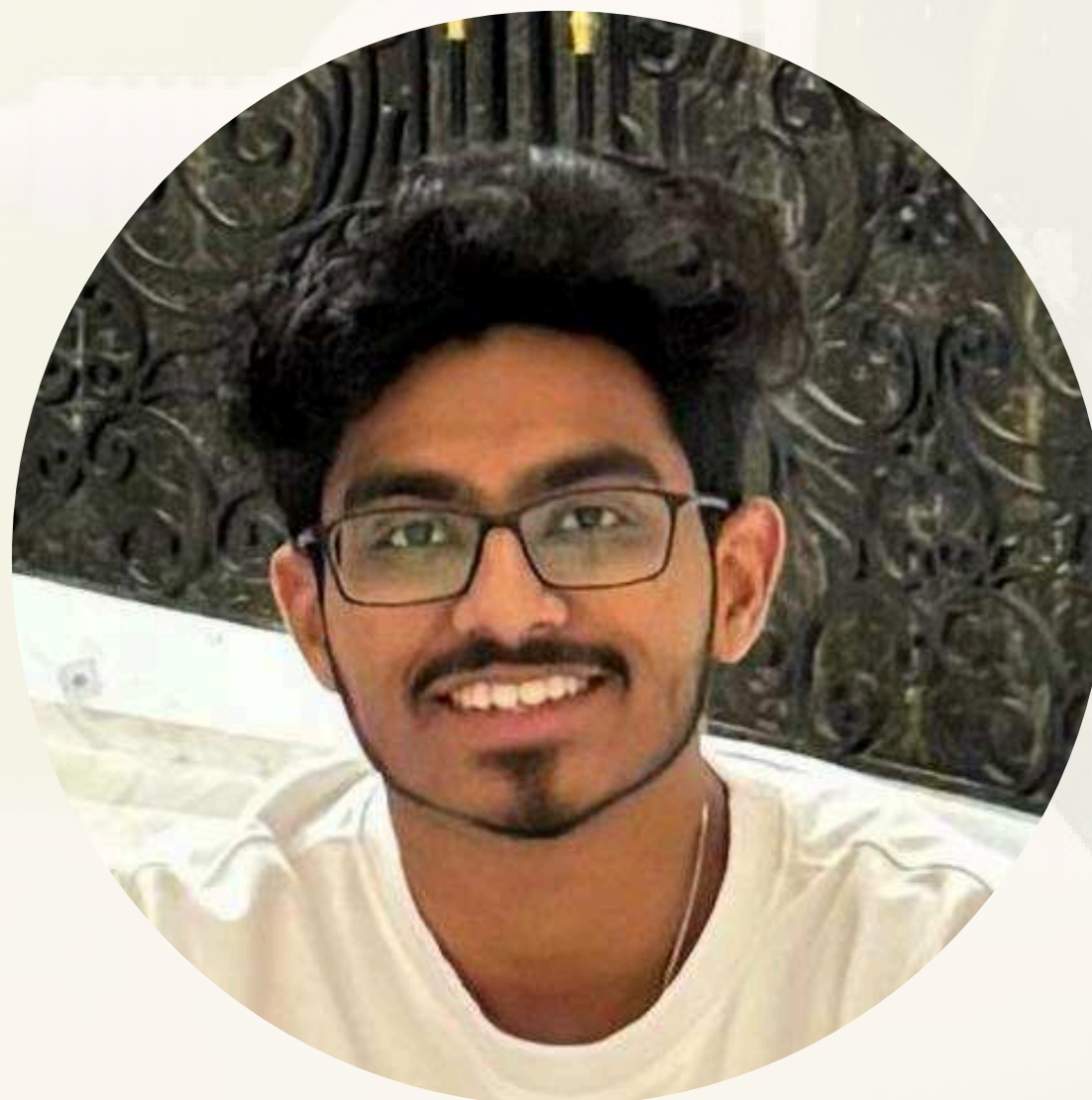
Sanjit Gorantala  
Vice President  
(School of Management)



Vishwesh Palakuri  
Vice President  
(School of Law)



Abhishek Pratap  
Vice President  
(School of Engineering)



Nitin Sai Pendem  
Secretary



C Shanmukha Padma kumar  
Marketing Head



Divya Reddy Padigapati  
Special Project Head:



Karthik Raj Gupta  
Special Project Head



Shancy Mishra  
IIC Student Coordinator

## EIC Activities

### Orientation Program



The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Cell (EIC) of Mahindra University, in collaboration with Institution's Innovation Council (IIC), hosted its orientation on August 27, 2023. Led by the club's organizing team, the event aimed to foster a supportive environment for prospective startup founders by providing skills, tools, and the encouragement for nurturing creativity & problem-solving abilities. Students from diverse backgrounds were inspired to explore business-prospects early in their academic careers.

### Think Tank Throwdown

The "Think Tank Throwdown" was held on September 12, 2023, as part of Mahindra University's Entrepreneurial Summit. Students competed to design the summit's logo and name, shaping its identity. Their creativity was recognized with a cash award of Rs.5,000.



It fostered ownership, connection, and pride among students, reflecting the university's collaborative spirit. The competition unleashed creative potential, encouraging fresh ideas aligned with entrepreneurship. For aspiring entrepreneurs, it offered a platform to contribute to the summit's branding which emphasized innovation. Ms. Amrutha Varshini Sundaram was declared the winner. Her design captured EntrepX's inventive essence, reflecting the university's collaborative and innovative ethos.

## Launch of EntrepX Logo



The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Cell unveiled the logo of **EntrepX**- Mahindra University's entrepreneurial summit on November 22, 2023 at the hands of Mr. Anand Mahindra, the visionary leader of the Mahindra Group.

EntrepX, stands for "ENTREpreneurship eXpo," and embodies the university's commitment to fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit among students and the broader community by bringing together visionaries, thought leaders, and successful entrepreneurs.

The idea behind the logo is to promote diversity and collaboration of individuals with unique ideas and perspectives. The logo also induces the idea of eco-friendly initiatives, motivating the audience with its spirit- "Innovation, Inspiration, Imagination".

The different colours denote youthful energy, with red, pink, purple, orange, blue and green representing passion, inspiration, ambition, confidence, trust and growth. All of these characteristics are extremely important and it is the equal balance of all these traits that determines the quality of an entrepreneur.

## Battle of Brands

EIC in collaboration with IIC, hosted the "Battle of Brands" event on November 22, 2023. The event promoted competitive spirit, creativity, and hands-on learning among students. Participants honed critical thinking and public speaking skills while gaining insights into brand building, marketing strategy, and market dynamics. The event provided a forum for strategic thinking, practical knowledge application, and networking. Student teams debated with each other about various brands across industries, showcasing their analytical prowess and market understanding. Overall, the event facilitated dynamic discussions, educational growth, and appreciation for the complexities of branding and marketing in today's corporate landscape.



## Symposium

EIC organized a dynamic and inspiring 'Symposium' on February 10, 2024, aimed to create a platform that connects its members from various universities in Hyderabad and to explore new opportunities of collaboration. 70 students belonging to the E-cells of 17 universities from Hyderabad participated in this event. This event provided an engaging platform for networking, learning, and showcasing innovative ideas. The daylong event kicked off with an inaugural ceremony graced by our Vice-Chancellor Dr. Yajulu Medury, Head of CoE, Dr. Rajkumar Phatate, and the Mentor at EIC, Dr. Sonal Singh. Their insights and experiences set an inspiring tone for the day ahead.

One of the key highlights of the symposium was the interactive networking session, where participants engaged in candid discussions about the challenges and successes of running entrepreneurship cells in their respective universities. Following the networking session, participants explored AIC Mahindra e-Hub, a vibrant incubator for entrepreneurs, and were inspired by a student startup showcase. Witnessing the journey and achievements of fellow student entrepreneurs fuelled motivation and provided valuable insights for those looking to pursue their own ventures. The symposium also featured captivating competitions like the 'Battle of Brands' and 'Lost in an Island' challenge.



The event culminated with closing remarks, celebrating the achievements of the day and emphasizing the importance of continuing to pursue entrepreneurial goals. Cash prizes were awarded to outstanding performers in the competitions, recognizing their exceptional skills and innovative thinking. The symposium was not only a testament to Mahindra University's commitment to nurturing talent but also a demonstration of the broader impact such events have in inspiring and empowering future entrepreneurs. It provided a comprehensive platform for participants to connect, learn, and showcase their talents, leaving them equipped with renewed determination to navigate the entrepreneurial landscape.



## Ideastorm at Mahindra University

EIC hosted an exhilarating 48-hour event called Ideastorm, as part of the annual university fest Aether on 14th February 2024. This immersive experience guided participants through the entire entrepreneurial process—from ideation to pitching. The event commenced with a captivating panel discussion featuring Mr. Venkat Kumar Tangirala, Managing Director of Wind Stream Energy Technologies, and the Founder & CEO of Green Hermitage. These seasoned entrepreneurs shared insights from their journeys, emphasizing sustainability and detailing how they built successful businesses in this domain.

After this enlightening session, participants dove into developing their ideas. Over the course of one day, 25 teams tackled diverse problem statements, refining their concepts and pitch decks. Concurrently, Dr. Debopam Chakrabarti, an expert from the School of Management, led a design thinking bootcamp, equipping participants with practical tools to improve their ideas.



On the final day of Ideastorm, 12 finalists presented their innovative concepts before a panel of judges. Each team had 7 minutes to pitch their ideas, followed by a Q&A session for judges to assess their potential.

Three exceptional teams emerged victorious, each receiving cash prizes worth Rs. 20,000 in recognition of their outstanding ideas and presentations. The result of the competition is as follows:

Winners: Team Name: Sac Fertilizers- Chirag goyal & Shrivatsh

First Runners Up: Team Name: Narcbust- Jai & his Team

Second Runner Up: Team Name: Prithvi Quest- Mr. Gunnin Pandranki

The Ideastorm experience proved enriching for all participants, offering a glimpse into the entrepreneurial world. Participants were challenged to think like entrepreneurs, making critical decisions under tight deadlines and pressure—a skill set crucial for future ventures. Overall, Ideastorm was a resounding success, leaving participants inspired and equipped with invaluable skills and insights to thrive in the dynamic world of entrepreneurship. It reflects Mahindra University's ethos of nurturing innovative thinkers and future leaders within the entrepreneurial landscape.



## Trash to Treasure



The "Trash to Treasure" event held on 6th Oct 2023 promoted sustainability and entrepreneurship by encouraging creative solutions to environmental challenges. It emphasised on reducing wastage, reusing, and recycling to mitigate the environmental impact of waste. Participants were urged to think innovatively, in the task of transforming discarded materials into profitable goods. The event also highlighted the commercial potential of waste-to-product technologies. Welcoming individuals passionate about environmental conservation, the event provided a platform for sharing ideas and creations.

The event featured interactive sessions, product development workshops, and mock pitches, culminating in a competitive final pitch. Winners were selected based on product viability and innovation, with a cash prize of Rs 10,000 (award). A panel of judges evaluated products for their use of waste materials and proof of concept. Ultimately, the event underscored the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation in addressing environmental challenges, promoting a culture of sustainability among students.

## Webinar on Significance of Modern Solutions



On 15th Oct 2023 a webinar by the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) paid homage to Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's legacy, emphasizing the fusion of social and academic innovations with entrepreneurship. Dr. N. Mythili from the Indira Mahindra School of Education opened the event and stressed on the importance of innovative solutions in tackling societal and educational challenges. Keynote speakers underscored the necessity of fostering an entrepreneurial mindset in education, equipping students for the evolving job market while addressing pressing issues. Discussions revolved around educational and social innovations, including the transformative impact of technology and the role of social entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs shared their success stories, inspiring attendees to be catalysts of change. The webinar provided a platform for networking and learning. It showcased actionable insights to promote innovation in education and society.

## EntreprX'24

### Empowering Tomorrow's Innovators: Insight into Mahindra University's Annual Entrepreneurship Summit



On the vibrant morning of March 7, 2024, in the bustling corridors of Mahindra University's convention center, the air crackled with anticipation, as the prestigious EntreprX-Annual Entrepreneurship Summit unfolded its vibrant tapestry of innovation and entrepreneurship. Orchestrated by EIC, this summit celebrating the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation, stood as a beacon for aspiring entrepreneurs, seasoned business magnates and venture capitalists. With a rich amalgamation of activities ranging from interactive exhibitions to insightful panel discussions, the summit encapsulated the essence of innovation, collaboration, and empowerment.

### Enlightening Keynote Addresses

At the heart of the summit lay EnterpX-24, a dynamic platform that bridged the chasm between visionaries and investors, fostering an ecosystem where ideas could flourish. From modest start-ups to seasoned entrepreneurs, EnterpX welcomed all, embodying the university's commitment to nurturing entrepreneurial spirit. The summit was graced by luminaries whose insights and experiences illuminated the path for budding entrepreneurs.

From Mr. C. P. Gurnani's sagacious reflections on navigating the corporate landscape to Mrs. Anuja Mahindra Sharma's poignant message of balance and resilience, and Mr. Rajiv Vaishnav's witty anecdotes and profound wisdom, each keynote address left an indelible imprint on the audience, inspiring them to embark on their entrepreneurial journey with courage and conviction. Their words resonated with the audience, igniting a spark of passion and determination.



## Business Ideation Challenge: Cultivating Creativity and Impact

One of the highlights of the summit was the Business Ideation Challenge, an arena where aspiring entrepreneurs showcased their ingenuity by presenting innovative solutions to real-world problems. Under the discerning gaze of an expert jury, these aspiring entrepreneurs navigated the intricate terrain of entrepreneurship, refining their ideas and honing their pitching skills to vie for recognition and rewards. In this competition, 20 teams were shortlisted from the nearly 60 applications that came in from various regions, for the pitching section. The challenge not only rewarded creativity but also served as a testament to the university's commitment to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

1st Prize: Pica Pool (Prize Money : Rs. 50,000/)

2nd Prize: Echo (Prize Money : Rs. 25,000/)

3rd Prize: Stylin (Prize Money : Rs. 15,000/)

Consolation Prize:

A. I. Pro Trading (Prize Money : Rs. 5000/)

Prithvi Quest (Prize Money : Rs. 5000/)



## Panel Discussions

Panel discussions served as crucibles of thought-provoking discourse, delving into the nuances of entrepreneurship in the contemporary landscape. From redefining entrepreneurship through the lens of gender equality to exploring the transformative power of technology, these discussions offered invaluable insights and sparked meaningful conversations. Industry leaders shared their experiences, challenges, and triumphs, enriching the collective understanding of entrepreneurship and innovation.



The first panel discussion, titled "From Stilettos to Startups: How Women Are Redefining Entrepreneurship," brought together three remarkable women who are reshaping the entrepreneurial narrative. Ishita Sawant, CEO of Meolaa, Devidutta Dash, CEO of Lemme Be, and Ritika Jayaswal, CEO of Nourish Mantra, took the stage to discuss the transformative role women are playing in the field of business. They articulated how female entrepreneurs are breaking stereotypes, fostering inclusivity, and driving innovation across diverse sectors.

In the second panel discussion, titled "Tech Entrepreneurship Igniting Innovation Everywhere," the spotlight shifted to the transformative power of technology in driving entrepreneurial endeavors. Vaibhav Tandon, CEO of All Is Well, Shivkumar Janardhanan, CEO of Ykrita Lifesciences Private Limited, and Srikanth M, CEO of Optimile Logistics Private Limited, shared their insights on how technology has become a catalyst for innovation across various industries. They discussed how startups are leveraging emerging technologies to disrupt traditional business models and create new market opportunities.



The third panel discussion, titled "Demystifying the Art & Science of Fund Raising" provided invaluable insights into the intricacies of raising capital for entrepreneurial ventures. Chandran Krishnan, MD & CEO of Campus Angels Networks, Rathnakar Samavedam, CEO of Hyderabad Angels, Emmanuel Murray, Investment Director at Caspian, and Sirish Puppala, Venture Partner at Silverneedle Ventures, elucidated the art and science of fundraising. They shared practical strategies, best practices, and real-world experiences to demystify the fundraising process. From navigating investor expectations to crafting compelling pitches, the panelists offered a comprehensive guide to securing funding.



## Cultural Culmination: A Celebration of Diversity and Creativity in collaboration with Kalakriti



As the sun dipped below the horizon, the summit culminated in a captivating cultural extravaganza, featuring a mesmerizing performance by Bhutte Khan Manganiar's group from Spicmacay. Against the backdrop of Rajasthani folk music, attendees reveled in the celebration of creativity, collaboration, and camaraderie, forging lasting bonds and memories that transcended the boundaries of entrepreneurship. In retrospect, Mahindra University's Annual Entrepreneurship Summit was more than just an event—it was a celebration of ideas, innovation, and ingenuity.



Through EnterpX, the Start-up Expo, the Business Ideation Challenge, and a myriad of engaging activities, the summit provided a platform for aspiring entrepreneurs to learn, collaborate, and grow. As attendees departed with hearts full of inspiration and minds buzzing with ideas, they carried with them the torch of entrepreneurship, ready to illuminate the path to a brighter, more innovative future.

## Start-up Expo: A Showcase of Ingenuity

The Start-up Expo, a focal point of the summit, provided a stage for budding ventures to showcase their products and engage with potential collaborators and customers. From a large pool of applicants (around 60 applications), fifteen startups were selected to participate in the Startup Expo, where they showcased their innovative products and engaged with potential investors.

Through visually captivating displays, live demonstrations, and engaging presentations, entrepreneurs brought their visions to life, igniting curiosity and fostering meaningful collaborative connections. Moreover, from fledgling startups seeking guidance to established enterprises scouting for strategic partnerships, EnterpX provided a fertile ground for collaboration, nurturing an ecosystem where ideas could thrive and innovations could flourish.

1st Prize: Alien Innovations (Prize Money : Rs. 50,000/)

2nd Prize: Next Skills 360 Ed tech (Prize Money : Rs. 30,000/)

3rd Prize: Rukart (Prize Money : Rs. 20,000/)



## AIC Mahindra Updates

### Unveiling of AIC Mahindra Logo



**AIC Mahindra** logo was officially unveiled on March 7th during the inaugural ceremony of **EntrepX** - the entrepreneurship summit of Mahindra University.

**Mrs. Anuja Mahindra Sharma**, who is not only a board member of Mahindra University but also a guiding figure in its strategic vision, unveiled the logo. She was joined by **Dr. Yajulu Medury**, Vice Chancellor of Mahindra University, **Mr. Ismail Akbani**, CEO of AIC Mahindra, **Dr. Rajkumar Phatate**, Head of the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI) at Mahindra University, and **Ms. Sreeparna Chowdhury**, the Incubation Manager at AIC.

**AIC Mahindra e-Hub Foundation** is an Atal Incubation Centre established by Mahindra University with the support of the Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, Government of India. Transitioning from its origins as the Mahindra e-Hub, AIC Mahindra is now a testament to the university's commitment to nurturing future leaders.

### Collaboration with Campus Angels

**AIC Mahindra** has recently entered into a partnership with **Campus Angels Network**, an angel financing network that invests up to one crore rupees in startups originating from academic campuses that have achieved Product-Market Fit.

This collaboration, formalised on March 7, 2024, with a Memorandum of Understanding, aims to strengthen the support system for student and faculty entrepreneurs at Mahindra University.

The agreement was signed by **K Chandran**, MD & CEO of Campus Angels Network, and **Ismail Akbani**, CEO of AIC Mahindra. The partnership is intended to facilitate mentorship, support, and early-stage funding for student ventures, paving the way for innovation and business success within the university setting.

## Mahindra RiseUp



Mahindra e-Hub, now operating as **AIC Mahindra**, conducted the **Mahindra RiseUp** program from November 2023 to April 2024 for startups at the MVP stage. Attracting 153 applications from across India, the program narrowed down to 15 startups through a meticulous selection process.

The program kicked off with an immersive five-day residential boot camp hosted at the Mahindra University campus, which **Dr. Shanta Thoutam**, the then **Chief Innovation Officer** of the Telangana State Innovation Council, inaugurated. Here, the founders engaged in sessions aimed at refining their MVPs, strategizing market entry, crafting sustainable business models, and navigating the intricate world of startup finance.



One of the distinctive features of the program was an online simulation, which provided the participants with a taste of managing a business in a competitive setting and reinforced their decision-making skills. The mentor clinics offered the startups actionable insights and advice from seasoned entrepreneurs and investors.



The subsequent four months saw the startups undergo extensive virtual training and mentoring. The virtual interactions covered a gamut of essential business facets such as finance, digital marketing, intellectual property rights (IPR), and legal aspects. Moreover, participants were tutored in the art of pitching - a critical skill for any entrepreneur.



As the program neared its culmination, participants reconvened at Mahindra University in early April 2024. This phase was dedicated to pitch practice, where each startup received individualized feedback from mentors. The preparation during this critical phase was intense and focused, setting the stage for Demo Day.

On April 4th, the startups showcased their innovations to a panel of investors from esteemed firms like **Hyderabad Angels, Caspian, Succeed Ventures, and Navikarna Ventures**. Mahindra RiseUp is more than a program; it is a journey of growth, learning, and real-world application. It embodies the spirit of innovation and demonstrates AIC Mahindra's commitment to fostering a thriving startup ecosystem in India.

## I-NDUCT: A Lab-to-Market Program in collaboration with IIT Madras

As a significant step towards fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship at MU, AIC Mahindra, in collaboration with the Gopalkrishnan Deshpande Centre for Entrepreneurship (GDC) at IIT Madras, recently concluded the I-NDUCT program. This one-month hybrid initiative was designed to equip faculty and research scholars with the tools and knowledge required to translate academic research into market-ready solutions.

The program started with a three-day intensive workshop at the Mahindra University campus, inaugurated by our Vice-Chancellor Dr Yajulu Medury.

The workshop, led by expert instructors from the GDC team, engaged 10 participating teams in a series of hands-on training sessions. Each team, comprising a faculty lead and 2-3 PhD or Masters students, delved into crucial topics such as fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, vision setting, crafting and presenting vision boards, identifying core capabilities distinct from the product, and navigating market opportunities.

Following the workshop, the participants embarked on a four-week journey of virtual mentorship under the guidance of GDC mentors. This phase was instrumental in helping conduct thorough primary and secondary research for their startups, which included ecosystem mapping and stakeholder interviews. The dedicated mentorship ensured the teams were well-supported throughout their exploration and research phase.

The culmination of the program on February 28th was marked by in-person presentations by each team, where they showcased the progress of their startup initiatives.

To further the impact and reach of the program, an open house session was organised on March 27th, allowing the wider university community to gain insights into the program's achievements. The session, graced by the presence of the honourable Vice Chancellor and the Deans of Mahindra University, featured a virtual address by **Prof. Krishnan Balasubramanian**, an Institute Chair Professor at IIT Madras and a seasoned entrepreneur with the foundation of six startups. The event provided a platform for some I-NDUCT cohort teams to present their startup progress, sharing their journey and learnings with the audience.





## AIC Mahindra Mentor Spotlight



**Emmanuel Murray**

Mr. Emmanuel Murey brings over 40 years of invaluable experience in agriculture, rural credit, and microenterprise finance to his role as Investment Director at Caspian.

He is passionate about nurturing small and emerging businesses. Through his leadership of LeAF Fund, he focuses on investing in early and growth-stage ventures in the food and agriculture sector with a strong emphasis on social and environmental impact.

Beyond his role at Caspian, Mr. Murey actively contributes to impactful organizations while serving on Caspian Debt's Credit Committee. With a keen interest in fostering India's food and agricultural startup ecosystem, he is an avid angel investor in social enterprises. Mr. Murey's extensive credentials include certifications in rural management, development studies, banking, finance, and company law.



**Praveen Dorna**

Mr. Praveen Dorna is the driving force behind Product and Growth at PublicVibe- a proud subsidiary of Verse, the parent company to revered platforms such as Dailyhunt, Josh, and PublicVibe.

With a passion for entrepreneurship and innovation, Mr. Dorna has led ventures like Sociohub and StartupByte, uniting online communities and fostering collaboration in the Indian startup ecosystem.

Armed with an MBA in Entrepreneurship from Babson College and over 15 years of diverse experience, he brings a wealth of knowledge to his role, navigating the intricate business landscape with finesse.

Mr. Dorna's dedication to technology, marketing, and entrepreneurship makes him a valued asset to the PublicVibe team, embodying the spirit of innovation and leadership in every endeavor.

## AIC Achievements

### Nidhi Prayas Grant from Govt. of India



AIC Mahindra incubated Startups- Extrive Innovations and Harvested Robotics have been awarded a Startup Grant of Rs 10 lakhs each under the Nidhi Prayas scheme of DST, Govt of India. Extrive Innovations received the grant through IIT Hyderabad while Harvested Robotics was selected for the same by Kerala Startup Mission. With this grant, both the teams will be able to build their prototypes faster and get national-level recognition.

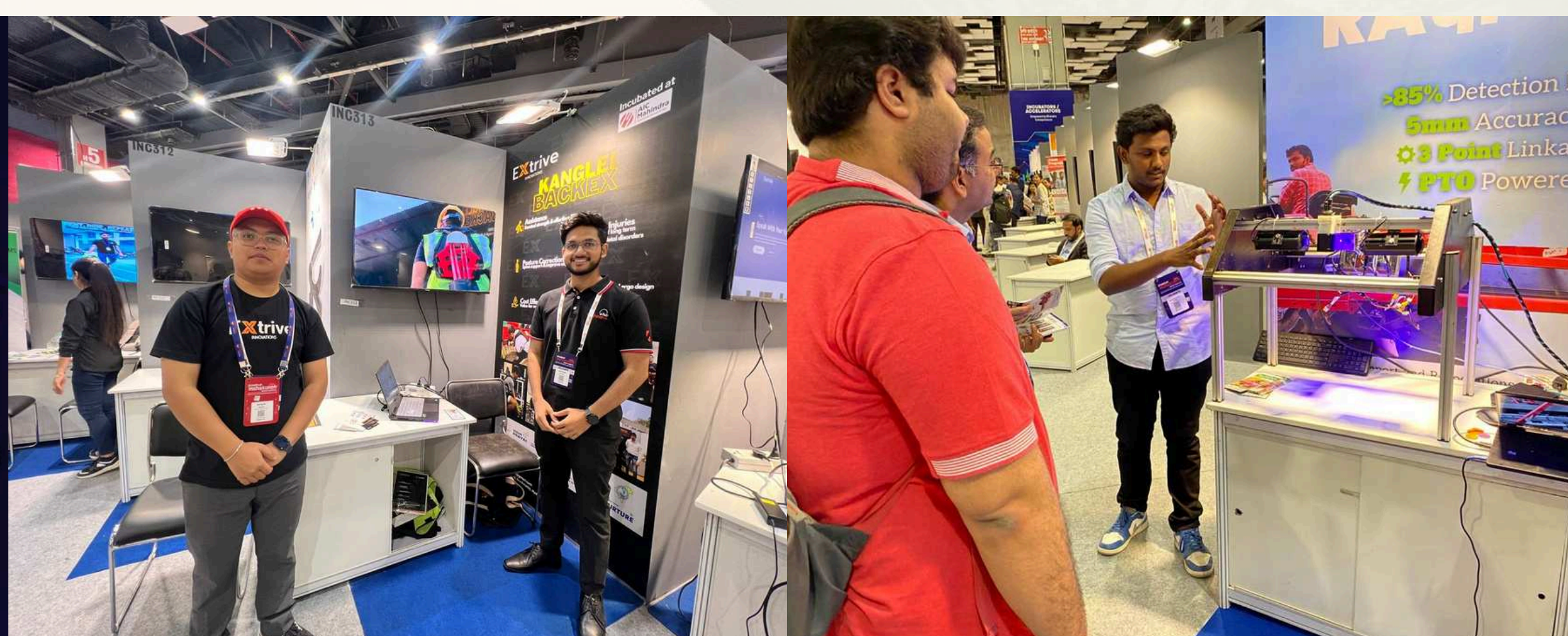
### Extrive Innovations won the 1st Prize at IIM Kolkatta



Extrive Innovations, founded by our students- Ronak Oinam, Abhishek Pratap, Prem Ningombam, and Yashaswi Matla won the 1st position in the IDEA HUNT Competition recently held at IIM-Calcutta, jointly organized by Maruti Suzuki India Ltd and IIM-Calcutta.

A total 378 teams registered for the challenge and 17 were shortlisted for the final pitch; out of which the team Extrive Innovations emerged as the Winner. The Prize consists of Rs. 50,000 in cash and a certificate.

### Startup Mahakumbh 2024



Harvested Robotics and Extrive Innovations were nominated and sponsored by AIC Mahindra to participate in the Startup Mahakumbh held from 18th Mar to 20th Mar 2024. India's biggest celebration of startups that spanned over three action-packed days, culminated at Bharat Mandapam and ITPO, Pragati Maidan. With 2000+ startups, 10+ thematic pavilions, 165+ investors, 110+ unicorns, 300+ incubators & accelerators, 392+ speakers, 26+ states, 14+ country delegations, 1306 exhibitors, and 48,581+ business visitors, the event served as a dynamic catalyst for the startup ecosystem. Further, the event became the center stage for collaboration and networking, with more than 3868 future entrepreneurs coming together and interacting with investors, other entrepreneurs and industry experts via masterclasses. Both the Startups were able to build connections and interact with industry experts, fellow entrepreneurs and investors.



## Innovation, Design, and Entrepreneurship (IDE) Bootcamp by Ministry of Education, Govt of India

AIC Mahindra is proud to have played a role in the Innovation, Design, and Entrepreneurship (IDE) Bootcamp, hosted by the **Ministry of Education**, Government of India's Innovation Cell, in collaboration with the **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** and the Wadhvani Foundation, from January 29th to February 1st, 2024. With over 250 attendees, including Smart India Hackathon winners, their faculty mentors, and academics keen on promoting innovation, the boot camp served as a vibrant platform for facilitating exchange of knowledge and mentoring on entrepreneurial endeavours.

Central to this event was the contribution of **Mr. Ismail Akbani**, CEO of AIC Mahindra, who was invited to be the Master Trainer for the entire boot camp. His sessions, covering design thinking, lean canvas, competition analysis and customer discovery, were integral to the boot camp's agenda. Leveraging on his prior experience as a Nodal Officer and Master Trainer at a similar boot camp organised by the Ministry in Pune last year, Mr Ismail played a pivotal role in orchestrating the overall schedule and sessions.

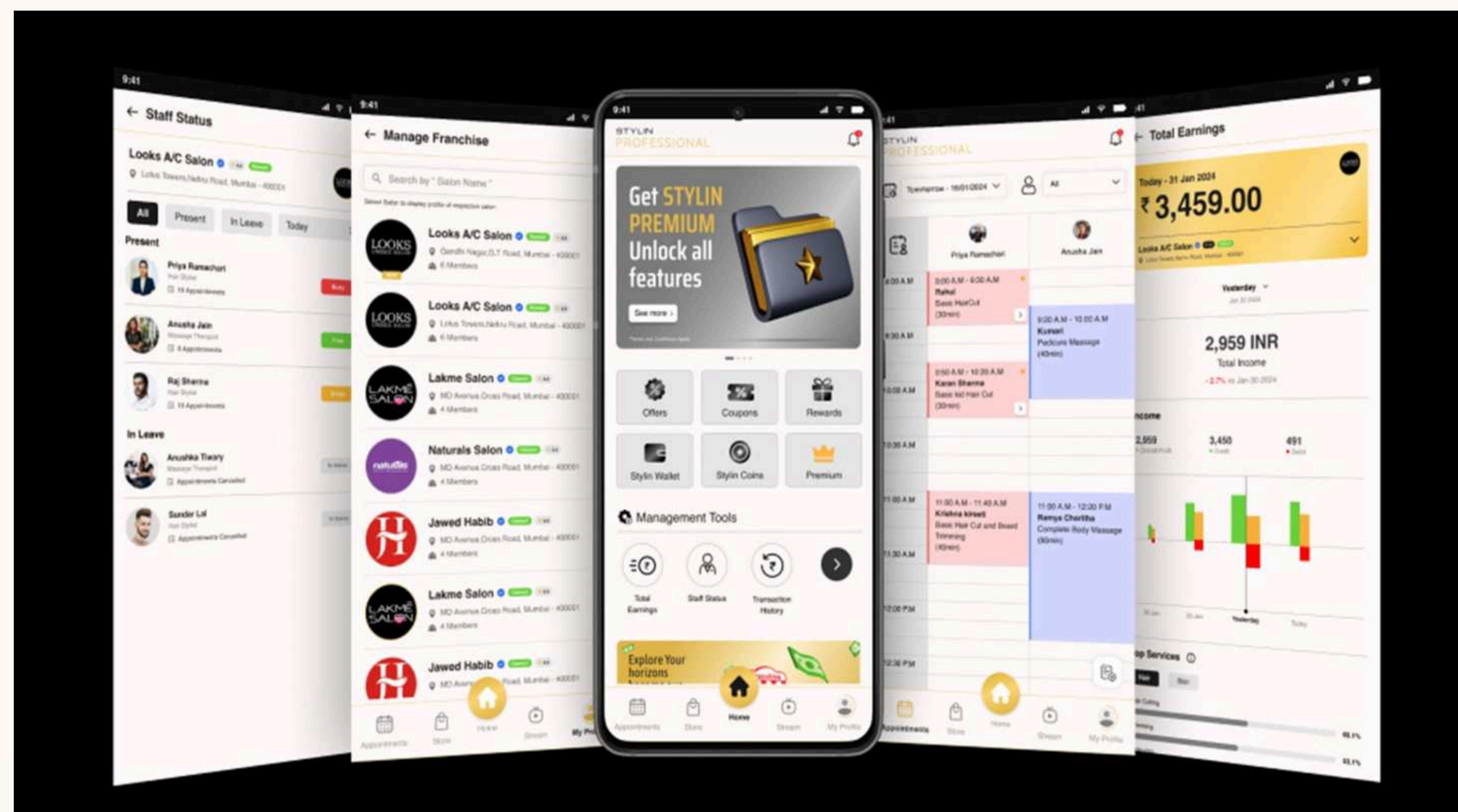
The bootcamp also spotlighted the thought leadership at AIC Mahindra with **Mr. Keerthi Kadam**, Associate Professor of Practice at Mahindra University, delivering a guest lecture on customer retention strategies. His insights from real-world entrepreneurial experience offered practical approaches to engaging and sustaining customer interest, a critical aspect of entrepreneurial success.

The event also included a panel discussion featuring founders from startups nurtured within AIC Mahindra's ecosystem, including **Mr. Abhishek Pratap** and **Ms. Yashaswi Matla** from EXtrive Innovations, **Mr. Ashok Gore** from Rural Rise and **Mr. Yuvraj K** from Padverse. Moderated by **Mr. Ismail Akbani**, members of the panel shared their experiences as student entrepreneurs, focusing on balancing academic responsibilities with their entrepreneurial endeavours, and the impact of mentorship on their journeys.

An integral part of the program was the **visit to the AIC Mahindra**. This provided an excellent opportunity for the bootcamp participants to explore the incubation center, understand the support mechanisms in place for startups, and interact with some of the incubated companies. This visit helped to showcase the tangible ways in which AIC Mahindra supports emerging startups, from ideation to execution.



## AIC Mahindra welcomes new Incubatee Startup- STYLIN



AIC Mahindra recently incubated **STYLIN**- a cloud based enterprise software which enables salon and spa franchise owners to easily manage and streamline their operations. The software provides them AI-driven data insights so that they may leverage actionable insights that ensure business growth and assure 2X the financial success. It also provides extensive add-ons to help end users discover the salon best suited to their specific needs. Other features include discounts on some beauty services, transparent pricing, authentic reviews and customer support that is active 24/7, in order to enhance overall user experience and provide unparalleled value to both users and professionals. It also provides virtual try-on experience of beauty services through the integration of AR technology, so that the end users can choose the best suited style.



### M Hemanth Kumar, Co-founder

As a passionate startup enthusiast with a strong foundation in sales and marketing, Hemanth brings an unique blend of business development and marketing techniques to the table. With a background in BTech (Mechanical Engineering) from NIT Agartala, he also has experience in manufacturing. Now, as he embarks on building STYLIN, his goal is to enhance the experience of the customer and the business professionals in the salon industry with his business and leadership skills.



### M V Sai Priya, Co-founder

She is a driven beauty enthusiast and professional make-up artist. She graduated from NIT Allahabad in BTech Information technology. Currently, building STYLIN- aiming to revolutionize the salon industry with a seamless customer experience through the integration of cutting-edge technology. She previously worked as an Advanced Analyst at Ernst and Young. Her keen interest in business development has driven her to seek opportunities that allow her to leverage her analytical expertise to drive innovation and success for emerging businesses, particularly startups.

## Faculty Achievements

### Prof. Rajkumar Phatate

#### Faculty Development Program on Integrated Business Simulation

Mahindra University in collaboration with Institute of Management Technology (IMT) - Nagpur conducted a 3-day intensive Faculty Development Program on using 'Integrated Business Simulation' between 1st and 3rd February, 2024 at IMT Campus in Nagpur.



The objective of this program was to train the faculty members of business and management schools in using experiential learning pedagogy and in turn enhance student engagement. The program used a comprehensive simulation- Marketplace designed by Dr. Ernest Cadotte of University of Tennessee-USA.

Dr. Rajkumar Phatate, Professor & Head of Centre for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Mahindra University and Dr. Rajnandan Patnaik, Professor of Strategy & Dean, IMT- Nagpur were the master facilitators of the program. A total of 18 participants from 8 different business schools including IMT, Symbiosis, GITAM etc, successfully attended the program.

#### Babson Collaborative Summit-2024



During the Babson Collaborative Summit-2024 held in Mumbai on February 14th, Prof. Rajkumar Phatate delivered a session on "Using Games in Entrepreneurship Education."

In the session, Prof Phatate helped participants set goals, build confidence and persuasion skills, tying them to successful performance through game-play. He provided a uniquely hands-on experience at honing critical entrepreneurial competencies like setting goals, being independent and nurturing confidence. The exercise demonstrated the role of entrepreneurship educators in building the confidence of the students.

He also shared teaching notes to enable members to recreate his impactful session in their own classrooms. Reinforcing the connections between competencies like goal-orientation and self-confidence with outcomes through experimentation was masterful.

The summit was attended by a global audience of 65 entrepreneurship educators from 28 Collaborative member institutions in 23 countries. Prof. Phatate's interactive game highlighting key entrepreneurial competencies was an extremely memorable and impactful experience.

## Mr. Ismail Akbani

### Panel Discussion at Babson Collaborative Summit – 2024



**Mr. Ismail Akbani** (CEO of AIC Mahindra) moderated a panel discussion on **“Indian Entrepreneurship Development - Policy Initiatives, Institutional Mechanisms, and a Changing Landscape”** during the Babson Collaborative Summit 2024.

This session was organised to discuss Indian entrepreneurship in the pre and post-independence era. It particularly focused on post-independence policy initiatives, strategies, and the roles played by partners of various entrepreneurial ecosystems.

**Dr. Abhinav Chaturvedi** (Associate Professor, CEI, MU) was one of the expert speakers on the panel. Other speakers included Mr Manish Mathur (Benett Hatchery) and Dr Vikram Shete (Atlas University).

The audience, comprising of 60+ educators and experts from 23 countries, was very appreciative of how India has moved from necessity-based entrepreneurship to an approach which is more opportunity-based.

The speakers highlighted how the focus on strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem played an important role in making India one of the fastest-growing economies and the 5th largest in the world.



## Prof. Keerthi Kadam



### National Academic Immersion Program Mar 2024

Mahindra University organized The National Academic Immersion Program (NAIP) for MIT World Peace University- Pune students from 27th Feb 2024 to 7th Mar 2024. 100 students along with 3 faculties from MITWPU attended the 10 days program where knowledge sessions and various fun & sports activities were conducted on a daily basis.



The objective of this program was to provide engaging, innovative, and exemplary experiences to the MITWPU students coming to Mahindra University. This Program would shape students' learning experience and advance their motivation & achievement through exposure to nationally reputed institutions. Mr. Keerthi Kadam, Associate Professor of Practice at Centre for Entrepreneurship & Innovation coordinated the program along with a few PhD student volunteers.

Faculty members from various schools of Mahindra University contributed to the success of NAIP. Dr. Rajkumar Phatate, Dr. Anirban Ghosh, Prof. Sanjay Singh, Dr. Debopam Chakrabarti, Dr. Rahul Dass, Dr. George Varghese, Dr.. Abhinav Chaturvedi, Dr. Sonal Singh, Dr. Rajib Roy, Mr. Ismail Akbani and Mr. Keerthi Kadam conducted sessions on innovation, sustainability, news analysis, strategic management, investments, management consulting, marketing, branding, and design thinking.

During the program an industrial visit to Boodan Pochampally saree weaving hub was organized where students learnt about the traditional geometric patterns in "Paagadu Bandhu" (Ikat) style of dyeing. Students were also taken to the T-Hub and T-Works where they learned how Tech Startups operate and collaborate. Attempting to explore the city, students were taken out for sightseeing to Chowmahalla Palace, Birla Mandir and Charminar.



The program culminated with a special university-wide event called EntreprX where students from Mahindra University and MITWPU attended keynote speeches and panel discussions about entrepreneurship & innovation, where founders of startups from different parts of India shared their real life experiences building Startups. Students also got a chance to interact with 15 entrepreneurs who were showcasing their products. The icing on the cake was an evening that was filled with performances by artists from Rajasthan.

## Dr. Sonal Hukampal Singh

### CONGRATULATIONS, SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Dr. Sonal H. Singh received the 2023-2024 Babson Academy Scholarship to attend the Price-Babson Symposium for Entrepreneurship Educators that took place at the Babson's Wellesley Massachusetts Campus from May 12-16, 2024. One of her collaborative researches on "The 3-M Framework of Circular Entrepreneurship in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector" was presented in the 4th Conference on Managing Tourism Across Continents (MTCON23) held on March 15-18, 2023, Istanbul, Turkey.

## Prof. Abhinav Chaturvedi



Prof. Abhinav Chaturvedi recently visited Barefoot College, Tilonia with a few students pursuing BBA at Mahindra University. Established in 1972 by Bunker Roy, this 50-year-old organization has been tackling rural poverty through initiatives dealing with solar energy, women empowerment, sustainability practices, night schools and hands-on skills training for communities for decades. The organization is working to make the community sustainable and self-sufficient.

One of the remarkable projects was the initiative for barefoot solar engineers. This program seeks to support women who are battling against the odds and struggling with illiteracy or limited literacy skills. Each year, numerous women from nearby villages and around the world come to Barefoot College to participate in a six-month training program. They receive training on fabricating, installing, repairing, and maintaining solar technology systems. These skilled women provide their communities with solar power. So far, 1600 solar mamas have been trained from 96 countries solar electrifying 60,000 houses. Apart from solar mamas they have many other projects such as Kabaad Se Jugaad, rain water harvesting, nursery, and puppetry.

During their visit, They had the privilege of meeting the current CEO, Ms. Sowmya Kadambi, who served as the Director of the Society for Social Audit, Accountability and Transparency, for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Her dedication extends beyond national borders as she actively establishes a social audit network in various countries like Iraq and Brazil, further amplifying Barefoot College's global impact.



## Centre for Entrepreneurship & Innovation Welcomes



**Mr. Keerthi Kadam**  
Associate Professor of Practice

Mr. Keerthi Kadam has been a Serial Entrepreneur for over 22 years. He has built several startups from scratch and has helped companies earn over \$10 Million in Annual Revenue. He is an advocate of Community Building and Sustainable Energy. Previously, he taught Entrepreneurship to 1000s of students at several B-schools as a visiting faculty. He is passionate about Startups and has mentored 100s of Startups with strategies that have helped them scale their businesses. He has an MBA from University of North Alabama, USA.

At Mahindra University, Keerthi will focus on mentoring Startups, hand-holding them through Go-to-Market strategies and marketing tips and tricks.

Dr. Rajib Roy completed his Ph.D. from IIT (ISM), Dhanbad. At IIT(ISM), he worked on analyzing young science and technology (S&T) student's entrepreneurial intention development. Specifically, he focused on studying how various psychological and socio-psychological factors affect S&T students' intention to pursue an entrepreneurial career at the country's topmost technological institutes. His Ph.D. thesis is titled "Developing a Framework for Measuring Entrepreneurial Intention among Science & Technology Students in India." Post PhD, his first assignment as an Assistant Professor was with Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad. Before joining Mahindra University, he was working with NMIMS Mumbai, as an Assistant Professor (Business Environment & Strategy).



**Dr. Rajib Roy**  
Assistant Professor

## PARADISE BURNT DOWN: VALLEY OF ASHES REVISITED

Inside the diverse amalgamation, elegant creatures and species live  
O! Heavenly creator save us, save us from the evil curse,  
How fast this fiery dust blights the plights of poor fellows  
Each of them losing their vitality; hamstrung in horror of death;  
Oh! Who could be our saviour other than you, in entire Universe?  
For no one realizes this Paradise is going ablaze overnight.

A land of love, bliss, celebration and absorbing winegrower  
Had now turned into valley of grey ashes, in minutes of actions,  
How rapid! Fiery tongue of the flame is bullying wild oaks;  
Reminding cliché of years, worst season dripping from white firs  
O! Fallen Angel, save, save, save this dale, from cauldron of fire,  
Lakes screaming for, another art to be flourished, and cherished.

Dusty lives are visible in the brown sky, in waves of embers  
Passion could not find igniting desires in hot orange flames  
To fulfil thy wish of happy pastoral life, hard to determine  
Perhaps all good souls disappear from the deadliest woods;  
Folk's bucolics spirits once, appeared in vineyards across Lake Country  
Now, climbing to death vale in scorching light across Sacramento River.

Oh dear! Forest fairies tune thee magical wand;  
To revive again, valley of flowers and nature love,  
Where sunrise enlighten our day from the mountains,  
Where no old smoke can create a chimera of dark knowledge,  
Let demoniac slack his wild games, to bring devastation  
To the Paradise, where peace and love for humanity dwells!

Priyanka S Raj





“Sustainability is part of our  
‘rise’ philosophy. You  
cannot rise if you take  
more from the community  
than you put back.”  
Anand Mahindra

