

# EDUCATION PLUS

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## Welcome them here

How Indian higher education institutions can attract foreign students



R.W. Alexander  
Lesudasam

For several decades, meritorious Indian students have migrated to pursue higher education overseas. The reverse – foreign students coming to India for education purposes – has largely been of short duration and to complete specific tasks. In its 2022 notification, the University Grants Commission (UGC) encouraged the establishment of foreign universities in India and increased the number of seats in various undergraduate and postgraduate programmes by 25%. The latter aims to enhance enrollment of foreign students in insti-

tutes of higher education in India. Further, the UGC has also asked institutions to adopt a smooth and simple admission process for international students based on the equivalence of entry qualifications. In this situation, it is worth considering what can help attract foreign students to Indian varsities.

### Strategies

The first involves strengthening our traditional arts and cultural studies with appropriate internships. Indian institutions should capitalise on the country's history, culture and traditions by offering programmes and educational trips and exposure to the country's diversity.

Fostering cultural exchange programmes is another way to attract foreign students to India. Apart from present-

ing various aspects of Indian regional cultures, institutions can also encourage foreign students to share details of the food, games, festivals from their own countries.

Finally, institutions need to upgrade the standard of hostels, as these vary depending on the institution. Attention must also be given to the creation of outdoor and indoor sports and recreation areas.

The writer is former Principal and Secretary, Madras Christian College, Chennai, and Pro Vice-Chancellor, HITS, Chennai. Email alexjesu62@gmail.com

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### Free Coaching for DNT Students under the Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED)

An initiative by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. **Eligibility:** Students belonging to De-notified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes willing to pursue coaching for competitive exams such as NEET, JEE Main, CLAT, NDA, TOEFL, SAT, CA-CPT, RRB, Banking, Insurance, State Police, and CPL and have passed Class 12 and have an annual family income must be less than or equal to ₹800,000. Applicants should

not be availing of similar benefits from any other Government Scheme.

**Reward:** Up to ₹120,000 plus benefits

**Application:** Online

**Deadline:** August 3

[www.bds.in/edge/FCDNT2](http://www.bds.in/edge/FCDNT2)

### Kotak Kanya Scholarship

An initiative of the Kotak Education Foundation

**Eligibility:** Girls who have scored 75% or more in Class 12 and are in the first year of UG programmes in NIRF/NAAC accredited institutions with an annual family income of less than ₹600,000

**Rewards:** ₹1,50,000 a year

**Application:** Online

**Deadline:** August 31

[www.b4s.in/edge/KKGS4](http://www.b4s.in/edge/KKGS4)

### Infosys Foundation STEM Stars Scholarship Programme

An initiative of Infosys Foundation.

**Eligibility:** Girls who have completed Class 12 and are enrolled in the first year of UG STEM courses at recognised institutions; second-year B.Arch students and those pursuing five-year Integrated or Dual Degree programmes; Annual family income must not exceed ₹800,000.

**Rewards:** Up to ₹100,000 a year

**Application:** Online

**Deadline:** September 15

[www.b4s.in/edge/ISTS3](http://www.b4s.in/edge/ISTS3)

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

**Motion Education** has launched the Motion Talent Search Exam with rewards ranging from scholarships and free coaching for over 500 students.

**Eligibility:** Students from classes 6 to 10, 11 and 12 (Science stream)

**When:** July 20, August 3, and August 24 (online)

**Deadline:** Up to two days before the selected exam date <https://motion.ac.in/mts2e/>

### Western Overseas Study Abroad

has issued an admission alert for Indian students who wish to pursue Bachelor's and Master's degrees in universities in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the U.K., the U.S. and Europe. It offers end-to-end support including personalised career counselling, university and country shortlisting, SOP and documentation assistance, application submissions, visa processing, and standardised test coaching for exams. More information is available at <https://western-overseas.com/>

### JIRSMUN 2025

JAIN International Residential School (JIRS), Bengaluru, will host its Model United Nations Conference, JIRSMUN 2025. The event will feature six committees and a cultural exchange programme.

**When:** August 29 to 31

Schools can register at <https://tinyurl.com/yet7x4dm>

## SAVE THE DATE

### TEDxABBS

Acharya Bangalore B-School (ABBS) will host TEDxABBS, a TED eve on July 26 to spark conversations around sustainability, environmental conservation, innovation, and green living. Speakers include Srishti Kukreja and Fehi Mohammed, who advocate for conscious and eco-friendly lifestyles; Ram Prasat Manohar, Chairman of BWSSB, who will speak on sustainable urban water solutions; Babu Padmanabhan from Steer World on clean technology innovations; and Shammi Parani from The Science Museum on science communication. The event will also feature veteran environmentalist Dr. Yellappa Reddy; forest and wildlife conservationist Srinivasulu, and Eat Raja, founder of India's first zero-waste juice bar, and Sumesh Nayak, an urban jungle conservationist. To register, visit <https://tinyurl.com/msdsz57z>

### Admissions and Scholarships

Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science has opened admissions for its MBA course with specialisations offered include Finance, Marketing, Human Resources, Hospital Management, Aviation

Management, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Media and Entertainment, and Business Analytics. Merit-based scholarships are available.

**Eligibility:** Minimum 50% marks in any UG discipline and valid scores in CAT, MAT, XAT, or CMAT.

**Deadline:** July 30 <https://apply.hindustanuniv.ac.in>

### The University of Strathclyde

Glasgow, the U.K., invites applications for its M.Sc. Aerospace Engineering starting in September 2025 and January 2026. Scholarships are available. **Eligibility:** A first-class or second-class honours degree (or international equivalent) in Engineering, Physical Sciences, or a closely related discipline. Overall IELTS (Academic) score of 6.5 with no individual band less than 5.5. <https://tinyurl.com/2s7zkexb>

XLR1 has opened applications for the Xavier Aptitude Test (XAT) 2026 which will be held on January 4, 2026.

**Deadline:** December 5. <https://xatonline.in>

### IIT-Gandhinagar

invites applications for a Certificate programme in Foundations of Data Science for Engineers. **Eligibility:** Minimum 60% (6.0 CGPA) in UG in relevant field. Maths in class 12 is mandatory. **Deadline:** August 15 <https://tinyurl.com/4v7bef2s>

## Vishal R. Choradiya

As admissions unfold across universities and colleges in India, one cannot help but notice the aggressive advertising blitz of private institutions and coaching centres. From glowing endorsements of alumni who cracked top-tier competitive exams to slick presentations of rankings and accreditations, higher education is increasingly being packaged and promoted as a premium commodity. These campaigns – ubiquitous across billboards, social media platforms, and even IPL ad breaks – rarely speak of learning, community, or growth. Instead, they sell a vision of education defined by metrics, placements, and prestige.

Setting aside valid concerns raised by scholars about the opaque and often dubious nature of many ranking mechanisms, the deeper issue is what this kind of messaging reveals – and obscures – about our understanding of higher education. In its current form, it reflects a predominantly commodified imagination: education as a product, students as customers, and degrees as guarantees of personal return on investment. Lost in this model is the idea of education as a public good – one that nurtures not only individual potential but also collective responsibility, critical thinking, and civic engagement.

### Narrow vision

At the heart of this commodification lies the increasing privatisation of Indian higher education. Severe and sustained underfunding of public universities has created a vacuum eagerly filled by private institutions and coaching industries. These cater largely to the upper and upper-middle

classes, reinforcing a narrow and exclusionary vision of higher education – accessible primarily to those who can afford it, and tailored towards individual success rather than societal contribution.

Such privatisation has also shaped how we now conceive the delivery of education. The rise of online degrees, micro-credentials, AI-based tutoring, and other forms of “flexible learning” is often celebrated as innovation. However, these tools are frequently deployed within a hyper-individualised framework, where learning is imagined as a solitary activity – on screens, in apps, through automated feedback loops. But education is not a transactional download of information; it is a social, dialogic, and developmental process. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed, with brutal clarity, the hollowness of isolated learning – widespread reports documented sharp de-

cines in engagement, comprehension, and well-being among students across levels.

What is increasingly overlooked is the unique value of physical universities: spaces that, at their best, foster diverse interactions, cultivate critical inquiry, and nurture habits of collective deliberation. These are not incidental features; they are essential to the democratic and transformative potential of education. When we reduce education to a mere skill-building exercise for the job market, we strip it of its deeper purpose: to cultivate thinking citizens, empathetic leaders, and socially conscious individuals.

Certainly, one cannot ignore the genuine concerns driving many families and students to embrace a utilitarian view of education. In a country grappling with chronic unemployment and economic insecurity, the pressure to secure a stable, well-paying job is im-

mense. But what is more troubling is how this instrumental vision is being institutionalised and encouraged by universities themselves. Many are increasingly aligning their curricula, research, and training programmes with the immediate demands of the private sector and prioritising short-term industry needs over long-term social relevance.

This trend is reflected in the rhetoric around “skills-based education”, now a buzzword in policy and institutional circles. While skilling is important, equating it with education risks reducing universities to glorified placement agencies. The ultimate marker of success, as often celebrated in university brochures, is the student's placement in a multinational company with a lucrative salary package. What is absent is any discussion on whether this trajectory contributes to the larger public good or whether it merely serves the

interests of a few. Ironically, while private industry increasingly shapes the objectives of higher education, its financial contribution remains negligible. It is the public that largely funds the production of human capital, only for the benefits to accrue privately. This arrangement is neither fair nor sustainable. It reinforces inequality, exploits public investment, and erodes the possibility of imagining education as a shared societal endeavour.

### Shift in orientation

What is urgently needed, then, is a collective effort to reclaim the social dimensions of higher education – how it is funded, how it is delivered, and to what ends it aspires. This begins with a renewed commitment to robust public investment in universities, not just in infrastructure but also in faculty, research, and student support systems. It also demands a reorientation of our pedagogical models to prioritise collaboration, dialogue, and critical engagement over isolated content consumption.

Most importantly, it calls for a cultural shift: a revaluation of education as a means to build an enlightened, egalitarian, and mutually sustaining society. This vision must resist the seduction of glitzy advertisements and hollow rankings, and instead affirm the transformative power of education to shape not only careers but also communities.

At a time when education is being sold on bus banners and TV slots, we must ask: are we investing in a future built on shared values and knowledge or merely purchasing tickets to personal advancement?

The writer is an assistant professor with the Department of Professional Studies, Christ University, Bengaluru.

## Seek support

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

### OFF THE EDGE

Nandini Raman

I want to do M.Des. Transportation Design. Which colleges in India and abroad are good? Also will scholarships be available? Rohit

Electronics and Instrumentation but campus placements don't seem to be happening. How can I find a job? Or should I do a Master's? Ramesh

Dear Rohit,

Some top colleges in India are the Industrial Design Centre (IDC) and IIT-Bombay, Mumbai; National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad; MIT Institute of Design (MITID), Pune; World University of Design (WUD), Sonipat; Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science (HITS), Chennai; and Strate School of Design, Bengaluru. Abroad, colleges to consider include Royal College of Art (RCA), London, and Coventry University, the U.K.; Umeå Institute of Design (UID), Sweden; Istituto Europeo di Design (IED), Torino, and Scuola Politecnica di Design (SPD), Milan, Italy; ArtCenter College of Design, Pasadena, and College for Creative Studies (CCS), Detroit, the U.S.; and Pforzheim University, Germany.

Scholarships depend on the college, academic merit, and portfolio. Look up the college websites and others such as Tata Trusts, Inlaks Shrivdasani Foundation, Aga Khan Foundation and others for details.

I have a 9.2 CGPA in

Dear Ramesh,

Don't get discouraged. Your academic record is strong and, with a focused, proactive job search strategy, you will find a suitable opportunity. Get on online job portals like LinkedIn, Indeed, and Freshersworld. Visit websites of companies that you are interested in and look for roles and recruitment notifications.

Network and build a professional connection with alumni, industry professionals, and recruiters to learn about leads. Attend industry events. Ensure that your resume emphasises relevant technical skills for the role/s that you apply for by highlighting your projects and internship experience.

Consider off-campus placements, job fairs and recruitment drives.

A Master's depends on your career goals and circumstances. An M.Tech. will help you specialise in a niche area within your domain and enhance your job prospects. Consider taking the GATE, as it will open doors to M.Tech. programmes in top institutes as well as recruitment in some PSUs.

support when you feel overwhelmed. Discuss your concerns with faculty advisors who may be able to guide you. Finally, don't compare your progress with that of others. Everyone's journey is different.

I graduated in Agriculture (2024), but don't have the means to start a business. What opportunities do I have? Vijayalakshmi

Dear Vijayalakshmi, Many state and central government departments of agriculture recruit graduates for Agricultural Officer or Extension Officer roles. Look for notifications for exams such as the Indian Forest Service or from the Indian Council of Agriculture (ICAR) and its research institutes for scientists and research assistants. Opportunities are available in public and private sector banks and in organisations such as National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), Food Corporation of India, and State Seed Corporations. Update your resume and register on job portals like LinkedIn, Indeed, and specialised agricultural job sites. Consider an internship with a company or organisation in your field of interest to gain experience and build connections.

**Disclaimer:** This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your queries to [eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com](mailto:eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com) with the subject line Off the Edge



## Beyond the blitz

Pedagogical models need to be reoriented to prioritise collaboration, dialogue, and critical engagement over isolated content consumption.

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A CH-CHE

**Neerja Birla**

In the lecture halls and corridors of India's higher education institutions, a silent crisis is brewing. Career anxiety – once a concern of final-year students – is now beginning as early as the first semester. The pressure to perform, plan, and arrive has become a defining feature of campus life.

**Unhealthy cycle**

It is no longer enough to be curious or committed. Students are expected to be industry-ready before they have had the chance to explore who they are. Prestigious internships, personal branding, LinkedIn-worthy achievements, and a fear of falling behind are driving many into an unhealthy cycle of self-comparison, burnout, and emotional distress.

A 2024 report from the World Health Organization (WHO) on youth mental health highlights that anxiety disorders are now among the top three causes of illness in the 15 to 29 age group globally. In India, this manifests starkly among college students

who report increasing rates of stress-induced insomnia, panic attacks, and depressive symptoms.

This reflects a deeper problem. In the pursuit of producing future-ready graduates, we may be robbing them of the foundation needed for long-term success: clarity, curiosity, and mental resilience. The years of higher education were once a period for exploration of subjects, of interests, and of the self. Now, they are rapidly becoming a race track with no room to pause, reflect, or even stumble.

The culprit is a convergence of forces. Social media is a stage where curated wins are mistaken for everyday reality. A friend's internship at a multinational company, another's entrepreneurial side hustle, or a peer's academic medal – all broadcast in real-time – can distort a student's self-worth and amplify insecurities. Without context or support, every scroll becomes a comparison, and each chips away at confidence.

In many cases, societal expectations and peer dynamics inadvertently pro-

mote the idea that success is defined solely by outcomes such as job placements or salary packages. While professional achievements are important, they shouldn't overshadow personal growth, resilience, and clarity that young adults develop dur-

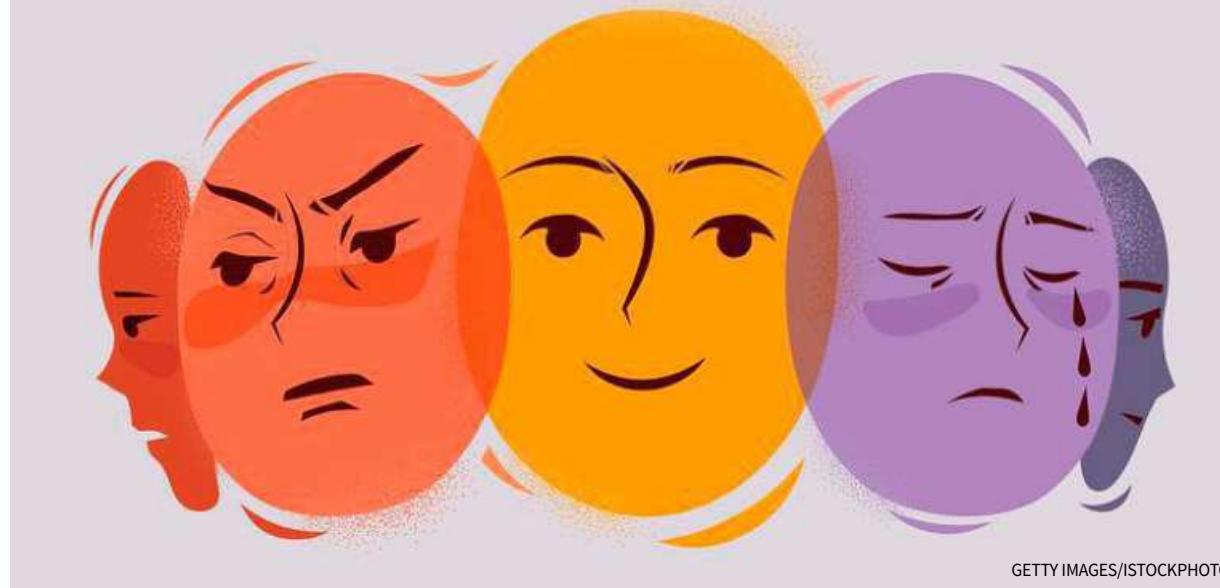
ing their academic journey. When we overlook the individuality of ambition, we risk reducing a multifaceted life phase into a one-size-fits-all definition of success.

**Way forward**

So, where do we go from

## Pause and process

In the pursuit of producing future-ready graduates, we may be robbing students of the foundation needed for long-term success



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improve lifelong wellbeing outcomes.

Second, rest and reflection must be reframed not as luxuries but as vital tools for sustainable success. The relentless hustle culture that has permeated student life needs a counter-narrative that teaches young adults to value pause, process, and play as much as productivity.

Third, universities should invest in safe peer-led spaces where students can share experiences, normalise setbacks, and build collective resilience. Community is often the first line of defence against anxiety. Structured mentorship, open-dialogue groups, and peer listening circles can prevent emotional struggles from escalating into crises.

Fourth, we must help students critically engage with digital platforms. Workshops that build media literacy showing students how online success stories are often highlight reels, not the full picture can create more grounded perspectives. This helps protect mental health while still allowing digital spaces to be used constructively.

Finally, families must evolve in their approach too. Parental expectations, though well-intentioned, can become pressure points when not accompanied by empathy. Conversations at home should go beyond marks and placements, and move toward purpose, interests, and values. Career paths today are non-linear, and success is increasingly defined by adaptability and emotional intelligence traits best nurtured in environments of understanding, not fear.

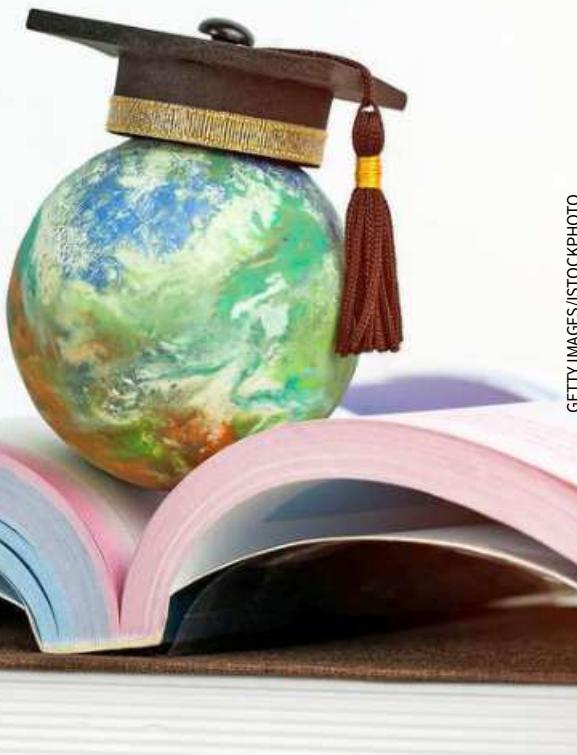
India is home to one of the youngest populations in the world. Our demographic dividend can only be fully realised if our youth are not just professionally capable, but mentally strong and emotionally prepared for the realities of modern life. The cost of ignoring early career anxiety is not just individual; it is national.

Do we want a future generation shaped by anxiety before they can dream freely, or one that has the tools to define success on their own terms?

The writer is Founder and Chairperson of Aditya Birla Education Trust and Mpowers.

## Expand your horizon

A guide for students looking for colleges beyond the U.S.



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**CAREER CUES**

**Richa Dwivedi Saklani**

Indian students have always viewed the U.S. as a top study destination. However, the ongoing visa challenges, growing concerns around job opportunities after graduation, rising costs, and shifting immigration policies are causing anxiety among applicants and parents. With this looming fear of "what next", let's explore destinations beyond the U.S.

**Canada****Pros:**

- Appointment of a new Foreign Minister, Anita Anand, and three other Indian-origin leaders: Maninder Sidhu as Minister of International Trade, and Ruby Sahota and Randeep Sarai as Secretaries of State.
- Recent improvements in India-Canada diplomatic relations.
- Postgraduate work permit for up to three years and an easier pathway to permanent residence than most other countries. There is even an express entry route.
- Diversity, inclusion and a supportive environment for Indian students in the campuses.

**Cons**

- Increased financial documentation requirements and tighter visa rules. Since January 2024, there has been a significant increase in the required proof of funds amount to be shown for the Canadian study permit.

- Increase in the number of visa application rejections due to policy fluctuations
- Rising living costs and competition in large cities

**Germany****Pros:**

- Approximately 2,300 English-taught programmes
- Public universities are tuition-free.
- Up to 18 months post study visa to look for a job.

Ireland

**Pros:**

- Only English-speaking country in the European Union (post Brexit)
- Several major international companies have their European or EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Africa) headquarters in Dublin

**Cons:**

- Cost of living in Dublin
- Weather can be rainy, dark, and very cold in the winter

**Japan****Pros:**

- High-quality education, strong global ranking, and a growing Indian student population
- Universities offering scholarships, English-taught programmes and favourable part-time work policies

**Cons:**

- Recent growth in English-medium liberal arts programmes

**New Zealand****Pros:**

- Safe, student-friendly, and supportive environment
- English-speaking environment makes adjustment easier

**Netherlands****Pros:**

- Many English programmes available in top universities

**Dubai**

- Globally recognised Indian as well as international universities have campuses here
- Easy work permit availability for internships/part-time roles
- Safe, multicultural environment with a strong Indian presence

**Cons:**

- Weather can be harsh, especially in summer
- Restrictions around free speech and modest culture expectations
- Some institutions lack strong global rankings or focus on research

**Japan****Pros:**

- High-quality education, strong global ranking, and a growing Indian student population
- Universities offering scholarships, English-taught programmes and favourable part-time work policies

**Cons:**

- Recent growth in English-medium liberal arts programmes
- Safe, low-crime country

**New Zealand****Pros:**

- Safe, student-friendly, and supportive environment
- English-speaking environment makes adjustment easier

**Netherlands****Pros:**

- Many English programmes available in top universities

**Dubai****Cons:**

- Far from India and a bit disconnected from the rest of the world.

**Content Creation:**

Creating news content, data journalism, recording podcasts and making

short videos will help UG students develop a new-age outlook. This will also help them learn how to use social media tools to promote posts related to news. Journalists from the digital media can conduct workshops to guide students.

**Going to the grassroots:**

Students can be asked to analyse hyper-local news or identify trending stories about their areas. These can then be further classified for in-depth reporting, light stories to engage the community, interviews of community leaders and local authorities for podcasts and videos.

## Law in the age of AI

### Integrating AI into the curriculum offers law students an opportunity to reinvent the strategies by which law can be studied and practised



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view, and management of legal agreements. AI-powered tools analyse vast databases to generate precise, context-aware clauses, automate repetitive tasks and flag potential risks, reducing human error and saving time and allowing one to focus on strategic planning and negotiations.

**Interesting activities**

Not only will AI help build a force of technologically advanced lawyers but will also aid law students in their academics, legal research, case analysis or contract management and extra-curricular activities like creating a moot court problem, designing a crime scene set-up and so on. AI can make law school events more interesting and create a fun learning experience.

Integrating AI into law will enhance and upgrade legal education as well as the profession. Law students should take advantage of the trends backed by a strong curriculum and create a force of techno lawyers

The writer is Founder-CEO, Cubictree

## Beyond the news

How journalism schools can ensure that students develop the skills for required today's newsrooms



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precision. AI-powered tools like natural language processing enable quick parsing of vast legal databases, statutes and case laws. Predictive analytics helps identify patterns in judicial decisions, aiding in outcome forecasting and strategy development.

AI-powered platforms can present summaries of complex case rulings, help look up key precedents, and reduce the scope of human error. For law students, this means a quicker understanding of complex legal concepts, an opportunity to shine in practical exercises like moot courts and more time to focus on critical thinking aspects of the cases.

Contract Automation and Intelligent Drafting leverages AI technologies to streamline the creation, re-

**Fact checking:** The soul of journalism is truth and verified facts. Accuracy and authenticity should be ensured in every aspect of reporting, writing and content creation.

Apart from cultivating observation skills, students must also be taught how to fact check, detect fake news and disinformation and use the relevant tools to do so.

**Shared network:**

Once the stories are ready, the next step is to share them with a large network of people.

Students must learn how to segregate stories on the basis of timeline and importance.

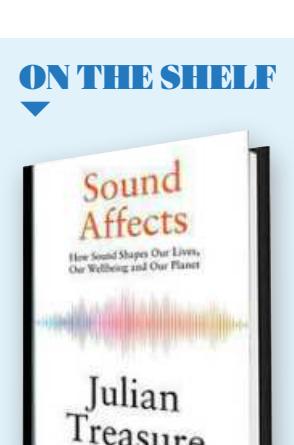
Next comes the uploading, tagging and publishing online and then use social media to amplify the reach.

**Community outreach:**

Student teams can visit the local communities, involve local leaders and opinion makers and create content on a wide variety of changes such as climate change, education, health, transport, art, literature, music and so on focusing on that particular area.

**Going to the grassroots:** Students can be asked to analyse hyper-local news or identify trending stories about their areas. These can then be further classified for in-depth reporting, light stories to engage the community, interviews of community leaders and local authorities for podcasts and videos.

**Content Creation:** Creating news content, data journalism, recording podcasts and making

**Sound Affects**

Scientists have recently discovered that sounds connect us to the world in ways that are every bit as vivid and evocative as visual landscapes. Hearing is the first sense we develop and, as our primary warning sense, it is hardwired into our brains. Yet, in an increasingly noisy and distracted world, most people pay scant attention to the sounds around them, causing them to lose contact with the essential skill of listening. This book is about rediscovering the wonder of sound and understanding how powerfully it affects us and a manual for taking back responsibility for the sounds we consume and the sounds we make.

**Author:** Julian Treasure  
**Publisher:** Hachette  
**Price:** ₹799

The writer is a Kozhikode-based digital journalist who also teaches journalism