The question I want to fathom is as follows. How can design, or perhaps the institutional knowledge of it be put forth to fulfill the aspects of user and system oriented design without affecting the environment? If anything that history has taught us is this, “nothing can stand the test of time.” We can look back at history and find many design blips that could not stand the test of time. Let it be the designs breakthrough like model 302 phone, polypro chair, S chair or the Walkman, which is basically an artifact now, or products such as “think chair” designed to outrun that ideology, as discussed by William McDonough in his book “cradle to cradle: remaking the way we make things.” Have the 3Rs failed to do so or have we failed to implement it?

Though the scope of the ability of design to alter the behavior of a product as per the human needs has always intrigued me, this specific issue holds my interest for reasons more than one. My desire for design was sparked by Computer & Mechanical Engineering Design and the Design and Analysis of System classes I took during my under graduation. Specifically, the Machine Dynamics Laboratory taught me how the static and dynamic behavior of machines is drastically dependent and majorly influenced by design. These courses have since fostered the interest in me towards User-Oriented and Aesthetic Oriented Design.

I believe RCA is a great institute for me to explore the depths of this topic because of its great strength in designing and innovation design in specific, and collaboration with the Imperial College of London adds another feather to the hat of the institute, and reinsures me that it’s the most suitable platform for me to invest my skills and efforts, and give back to the institute in all the ways I can. An integrated program with the broader idea of design, paired with my background in engineering, would facilitate me to tackle those questions. If I do qualify to join this institute, I would be able to work in a growth-facilitating environment and help me utilize the expertise, knowledge, and experience the organization has to offer. A strong background in engineering will give me a solid base from where I can work on exploring and discovering the answers I seek. In particular, I want to build a firm foundation on sustainable designing. In short, I want to combine the analytical way of thinking to design with the logical questioning of the practical knowledge, and tackle the problems of designing.

Throughout my undergrad studies, I have tried to obtain a wide variety of experiences to improve both, my soft and hard skills. I have developed leadership and communication skills, and a strong grip over the theoretical and practical knowledge by participating in several extracurricular activities.

During my undergrad studies in mechanical engineering, I took several courses related to sustainable designing. During that time, I worked on quite a few projects where I had to use this knowledge in order to design and implement systems that are more efficient than the traditional ones. For example, a modified water efficient flush system for the toilet, which got into National Green Design Awards, where we implemented the practical details we learned in our curriculum. I worked with the photography club where I developed my interest in design, arts, and intricate patterns you can find in nature evolved over the years. I also started appreciating the attention to detail, importance of aesthetics, and became more aware of the minute details that one must keep in mind.

As an engineering intern at BHEL and Chennai port, I learned how a product is designed, tested, manufactured, and finally introduced in the market. I also gained experience in design software and photography, and I implemented those ideas and concept in projects such as Designing a low water consumption mechanism for the flush toilet to reduce water consumption (which was recognized by CII), Improving the energy production of the micro-windmills, Tyre wheel removal and replacement system for four wheelers, to name a few. During the course of all of these projects, I was constantly testing my skills to solve the issues we faced, with a human centered approach.

After my undergrad, I was selected for “YOUTH FOR INDIA” rural development fellowship. The decision to take this fellowship was a pivotal part in my life. I worked on a rural development project to improve the lives of people using innovative ideas, solving the problem they faced. I designed, prototyped and tested “The Solar Projector” for night schools programs within a limited period of 13 months of the fellowship. During which I learned how tough it is to design and develop a solution for a problem in hand and it is only harder it is to implement it in real life. Despite of the language constraint and being in completely alien territories, I piloted the product in three states. Despite of little knowledge about the electrical aspects and details crucial for the product, I educated myself on all the required fields, overcame all those problems, and made it. Hence, I truly believe that with your help, coursing, direction I will be able to achieve the goals I have set for myself, I will be able to go farther in that direction, and that is why I chose this program, to be able to improvise upon those ideas.

I truly believe my professional background will allow me to contribute towards research and assistance in college. On top of that, due to my prior experiences in designing, developing and piloting projects on the ground have helped me to learn the whole process from drawing board to the classroom in remote villages.

When I think of a domain that is going to revolutionize the way we interact, I cannot consider any other which will be able to deliver to this extent.