



Government of the Netherlands

**DutchCulture**  
centre for international  
cooperation

**ISHAN  
KHOSLA  
DESIGN**



# DESIGN

# PATAKA!



**THE EXPLOSION OF DESIGN IN INDIA: 2010–2016**



**A REPORT BY ISHAN KHOSLA**



# DESIGN

# PATAKA!



**THE EXPLOSION OF DESIGN IN INDIA: 2010–2016**



**DECEMBER 2016**

**A REPORT BY** ISHAN KHOSLA

Published December 2016

©2016 Ishan Khosla Design, LLP

Research, Text and Design | Ishan Khosla

[Ishan Khosla Design](#)

Editor | Sheeba Bhatnagar

### **TYPEFACES USED IN THIS REPORT**

This report uses both Dutch and Indian typefaces.

Avenir by Adrian Frutiger

Baloo by Ek Type

Fedra Sans by Typotheque

Godna by Ram Keli, Sunita and Sumitra (from the  
tattoo tribal art community in Chhattisgarh, India)

| Ishan Khosla Design LLP (concept, co-ordination,  
vectorisation) | Andreu Balius (type design)

[The Typecraft Initiative](#)

# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>v</b>	<b>FASHION &amp; TEXTILE DESIGN</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>vi</b>	<b>INDUSTRIAL &amp; PRODUCT DESIGN</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>CRAFT-DESIGN</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Trends &amp; Developments</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>SOCIAL DESIGN</b>	<b>23</b>
		<b>EXHIBITION &amp; INTERIOR DESIGN</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TREND 1: AN INDIAN DESIGN LANGUAGE</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Organisations</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TREND 2: GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Design Education</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>TREND 3: GOVERNMENT POLICIES &amp; INITIATIVES</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>NEW DEVELOPMENTS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>TREND 4: THE PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>NEW COURSES &amp; PROGRAMS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>TREND 5 : DIGITAL INDIA</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>GRAPHIC DESIGN</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>TREND 6: DESIGN EDUCATION</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>FURNITURE &amp; PRODUCT DESIGN</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>TREND 7: SOCIAL DESIGN</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>INDUSTRIAL, AUTOMOTIVE &amp; RETAIL DESIGN</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>NEW MEDIA, GAME &amp; ANIMATION</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Teacher Training</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>HUMAN COMPUTER INTERACTION</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Design Education</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>INTERIOR DESIGN</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Design and Illiteracy</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>FASHION &amp; TEXTILE DESIGN</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Design and the Public</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>CRAFT-DESIGN</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Make in India</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>SOCIAL DESIGN</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Smart Cities</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Design Buzz</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Social Design</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>CONFERENCES, EVENTS &amp; FESTIVALS</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Design for Children</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>VENUES</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Craft Management</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>AWARDS</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Archive</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>BOOKS</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Design within Reach</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>MAGAZINES</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Challenges</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>BLOGS &amp; ONLINE RESOURCES</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Local Context</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>DESIGN SHOPS</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Long-term Interest</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>The Dutch USP</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Further Reading</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Buy-Ins</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>About the Author</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>The Corporate Sector</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>Contributors</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Design Professionals</b>	<b>22</b>		
<b>GRAPHIC DESIGN</b>	<b>22</b>		
<b>TYPE DESIGN</b>	<b>22</b>		

---

# Foreword: Inspiring Indian-Dutch Encounters

---



Over the past 18 months we have worked hard on strengthening the cultural exchange between the Netherlands and India in the areas of design, photography, games and film.

We are happy to present one of the results of this programme: *Design Pataka! The explosion of design in India: 2010–2016*. This guide will give culture professionals from the Netherlands insight into the Indian design sector and serve them as a tool for reaching out to their Indian counterparts for joint projects. We would like to express our gratitude to the Delhi-based designer Ishan Khosla for researching, writing and compiling this comprehensive overview of Indian design.

Together with our Indian and Dutch partners and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Delhi, we have initiated a number of events for Dutch and Indian organisations and launched durable bilateral partnerships. We did this because we think the Netherlands and India have something unique to offer one another. Innovative Dutch design can help raise Indian design to the next level. At the same time, India can help the Dutch rethink their business models and products. India has a large consumer market and a young population, which forces Dutch professionals to rethink their business models and design approaches. We feel that if Dutch designers team up with their Indian colleagues, together they

have an opportunity to solve some of the social challenges that India is facing today and help Dutch companies reach out to new audiences.

We have noticed that the Indian design sector has matured immensely since the Dutch Design Fashion Architecture programme, which worked to strengthen the position of the Dutch creative industry in China, India and Germany, ended in 2011. Not only has the Indian creative field grown significantly in size, but more and more Indian designers are finding their own creative voice. There are more design schools than ever before and the Indian public is growing increasingly interested in design products.

The enthusiasm to learn, mutual curiosity and creative energy we experienced during the past 18 months have been inspiring and exciting. We hope that this publication will help you reach out to new colleagues, exchange knowledge, work together and make beautiful new products!

**Veysel Yuce**

DutchCulture

*We promote and support international cultural cooperation*

[www.dutchculture.nl](http://www.dutchculture.nl)

Twitter: @DutchCulture

Facebook: DutchCultureOnline

---

# Introduction

---



We have been asked by Dutch Culture and the Government of Netherlands to prepare a report on the situation of design in India between 2010 and 2016. This document will be an update to the "[Mapping India: An Insider's Guide to Indian Architecture, Design and Fashion](#)," by the Dutch Design, Fashion and Architecture (DDFA) that was a detailed paper on the Indian design scene till 2010.

This report is meant to provide Dutch readers a window into the world of design in India. It provides an up-to-date analysis and informs the audience of the fast changing landscape of the design sector in the country. We look at government policies and initiatives, the importance given to design by the private sector, the situation of design education, the professional scenario, international interest in Indian design; as well as trends opportunities and forums in design.

This paper is meant to provide an unbiased and balanced view of the world of design in India today. In the effort to make the report democratic, the author decided to interview and include diverse viewpoints of some of the leading voices in India today. While some of these professionals are designers; many are practitioners from other fields

such as, the corporate sector, academia, the social development sector and the craft sector.

This report has been made possible through numerous interviews and discussions with some of the leading voices of Indian design today. They have been more than generous with their time and their valuable insights; which we have included, as far as possible, in this paper.

The design disciplines covered are: graphic design including web and interactive design, print and branding; type design; fashion and textile design, industrial and product design (wood, ceramics, metal), craft design and social design. To a lesser extent, exhibition and interior design are also addressed.

We focus on the four major metropolitan cities in India — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Pune. Some additional cities that we believe are key in nurturing future design opportunities. Ahmedabad due to its historic connection to design; Pune owing to its fast-paced growth and the presence of a large number of design studios and institutions; and Jaipur due to the presence of large craft and small-scale manufacturing sector. An added factor for selecting these cities is the rise in the number of design colleges and important design studios over the past six years.

---

# Executive Summary

---



While the design industry in India has been steadily growing for the last twenty years — a tipping point has been reached in the past five to six years — and design in India is literally exploding.

From the importance the government is giving design through its policies and initiatives; to the embedding of design by large private sector corporations and to the sharp spike in the number of new design institutions — design in India is on a high. And this advancement in the design industry is not going to slow down any time soon.

As the country moves closer towards becoming a mature market, there is an awareness that design is not only essential, but it is also indispensable.

There are many factors that are contributing to the expansion of design in the country:

- The Indian Government's MSME [Design Clinic Scheme](#) is perhaps the most extensive example of how even the smallest businesses — in the smallest of towns — are being educated on the meaning, capability and value of design in the country today.
  - The Indian private sector is heavily investing in design by either buying or creating in-house design departments which is enabling them to embed design as part of their corporate governance. Strategic design thinking has become key to the entire gamut of how companies think, create, market and service.
  - The exponential rise in the number of Design Institutions — both government and private in the last six years.
  - The increased interest, involvement and funding of design and culture by international entities.
- Most notably — the Alliance Française — through its Design X Design initiative in Delhi which include a host of talks, panel discussions and exhibitions throughout the year. The British Council has recently concluded the India Tech Summit which looks at design and technology interfaces.
  - In general, the number of conferences, festivals, workshops, pop-ups related to design have mushroomed in the past few years to include a host of design initiatives — not just in the metros, but in smaller cities and towns as well.
  - The massive growth — both in numbers and in value — of online tech companies, especially those specializing in e-commerce and mobile apps is creating a tremendous demand for UI/UX designers.
  - The plethora of cheap Indian smart phone brands is creating an ever larger online community that are more design savvy and engaged.
  - As a result of the "mobile revolution", we see a spurt in the use of social media. This has brought designers, academics, the government and private sector into forums where key issues are openly discussed and taken forward.
  - The effects of post-liberalization and high growth of the early to mid 2000's — where ever larger number of Indians went abroad to not just study engineering or business — but also to study design. This is bearing fruit with their return to India in the last few years. They are a part of the re-emergence of a new creative class that are ready to do experimental, edgy work and engage with cool brands. This is adding a new dynamism to the design profession.

---

# Trends & Developments

---



Here is a look at some of the most important trends emerging in Indian design today. These trends reflect not just the coming of age of design in India but also, the increase of understanding and demand for design by the government, the private sector and academic organisations from both within and outside the country. Anubha Kakroo, a senior brand strategist who worked at Future Group believes that design in India has, today become an end-to-end service. She gives the example of the Royal Enfield showroom, which addresses the entire gamut of design — from strategy and design thinking to the implementation of the brand identity, the collaterals, the space and the service design aspect of ensuring customers are served well and have a consistent brand experience with not only the store but the product itself.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, we notice the remarkable interest in Indian culture, society, and history by many design educators, designers and studios, some of whom work alongside NGOs to make a positive impact on the basic needs of Indians.

## Trend 1: An Indian Design Language

Many design studios in India have been, over the past decade, trying to develop an Indian Design Language based on a greater understanding and appreciation of India's national identity.

### CRAFT HERITAGE

For a long time this was only tantamount to India's rich craft heritage and did not come within the confines of the nascent design profession. While craft still plays a vital role for many designers as a way of exploring new avenues of creation, designers are also looking at other sources for inspiration such as the creation of digital typefaces for India's various indigenous scripts, the design of the rupee symbol, use of traditional modes and processes of architecture to create bold contemporary buildings such as

the Raas Haveli in Jodhpur (Studio Lotus) which manages to infuse a sense of contemporary chic while being clad in the "traditional" material of sandstone. Or, an appreciation of the garments — the way they are stitched and designed to reduce wastage of materials as practiced by the cattle herder communities of Kachchh — which are then delightfully translated into contemporary clothing, bags and footwear by various NGO groups such as Khamir. Craftsmanship in design is also displayed in contemporary stores such as Nappa Dori that pride themselves in bringing back the attention to detail in leather products, are very chic, universal, and not specific to a certain craft community or tradition per se.

India is a vast, diverse country with a complex history and culture. Defining what India is or stands for is challenging enough, let alone what Indian Design is or could be.

### THE SPIRITUALITY OF DESIGN

To understand Indian Design better, it is imperative to understand that India with its diverse cultural landscape can not have a singular definition of design. In India, everything that is made has an emotive, spiritual and social significance. The materials used and the way in which different articles are fashioned, are guided by religious custom. There exists an inherent symbolism in the forms of things. Design in India isn't only about form following function — as almost every object is indelibly tied to an emotional, religious or social background.<sup>2</sup>

### DESIGN IN THE EVERYDAY

Thousands of objects that are used on a daily basis in India, which are often unnoticed because, in fact, they are extremely well suited to local use — in a sense, they were designed before the term existed. This is a huge unexplored area in the vernacular and design in India. Museums such as the Bhau Daji Lad in Mumbai and the Raja Dinkar Kelkar in Pune and the Sanskriti Museum in Delhi, look at these aspects of vernacular objects of India.



## DESIGNING MORE, MAKING LESS

There are certain traits, habits and practices innate to us Indians that are inspiring designers to tell a story, create a communication project, or a line of objects or products around it. [Living Lightly](#) is a way of thinking about life and the act of making that focuses on the Indian habits related to simplicity and living with less. This is used as a metaphor to promote a lifestyle that is about living with a low footprint and in sync with nature. **Design and the Basic Needs of Society**, a conference initiated by Dutch DFA and NID, considered aspects of incorporating village wisdom of community, simplicity and slowness — which has managed to sustain villages for thousands of years — as a guide for urban living through the use of sustainable design that incorporates the minimal consumption of resources.

This addresses a common design ethos in India where nothing is wasted — be it shoes that are repeatedly repaired by a local cobbler or *raffoo* (a way to extend the life of clothes) — possessions are either repaired or reused in some manner or sold to the *kabariwalla* — a person who collects junk and sells it where it can be recycled. The idea of *jugaad*, or improvisation, — is born out of necessity in a frugal society like India and it leads to innovation through the idea of doing more with less.

Similarly, the act of scavenging materials — which is similar to the idea of fixing existing materials or objects in that it prevents wastage and instead is about the respect of material — to create a just about functional “design” object for sitting is also a very “Indian” behaviour as documented in the work [Construct, Deconstruct, Construct](#) by Ishan Khosla, which was created as a part of *Porosity Kabari*. These behaviours which are slowly vanishing from the Indian landscape are in fact about sustainability instead of consumption — aspects that must be understood and put to greater use by design today.

## LOCAL & GLOBAL

Ultimately, as many studios are combining an “Indian Design Language” with a globalised one at various levels. The dilemma is that clients want work that is either very “Indian” or very “international”. The studios that go beyond bollywood and kitsch and internationalism and successfully blend the two are the more edgy. In her book, *India Contemporary Design*, Divia Patel talks about the emergence of new professional studios that “explore the cross-fertilization of local and global identities and strive to ensure that their graphic message communicates effectively, persuades, informs and educates at multitude levels, within India and internationally”.<sup>3</sup>

## Trend 2: Global Partnerships

The past few years have seen a greater engagement from international entities. They are partaking in projects that are not only socio-cultural in nature but based on design or design thinking. These projects occur both within India and abroad, and, are related to understanding and in some cases, promoting, Indian design and culture.

The other noticeable trend is the number of expats setting up design shops in India. Earlier, they would come to India to make designer products for sale in their home countries. But today, many are making India their second home and engaging with the creative community in the country. These entrepreneurs along with the foreign returned Indians are bringing in a strong sense cosmopolitanism into design and the urban centres of Mumbai and Delhi. Some of these designpreneurs include: Fumie Kobayashi from Calico, Mia Morikawa from 11.11, Marlies Bloemendaal from Ministry of the New and Willem Woudenberg from Brand Dialogue.

Additionally, Indian designers are also being invited to show their works in international forums

such as Salone del Mobile, Milan; The London Design Festival and the Victoria & Albert Museum.

## A. WITHIN INDIA

---

### Mapping India's Kumbh Mela, South Asia Institute, Harvard University

The Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences supported research on Religion and Culture at the Kumbh Mela which attracts millions of people from various castes, classes, regions, and even religions of India in one place. Pilgrims come to this festival primarily to bathe in, and worship, the Ganga; commune with spiritual leaders; and enjoy religious entertainment. Members of this team studied these various aspects, and have produced scholarship that contributes to our understanding of this religious festival as well as modern Hinduism more broadly. The book and exhibition, *The Kumbh Mela: Mapping the Ephemeral Megacity*, consolidate research findings of the world's largest religious festival, and serve as an example of interdisciplinary research conducted at Harvard.

---

### Design and the Basic Needs for Society, DDFA, NID Ahmedabad | 2010

The DDFA sponsored, Design for Basic Needs, a round table and conference at NID, where discussions were held on the wisdom of village India — the aspects of simplicity, slowness and community — that are lacking in the urban context — could be re-examined in the framework of the increasing urbanisation and its negative effects such as crime, congestion and pollution. The village was symbolized by Mahatma Gandhi as a place that represented India, and as more and more Indians move to the city, we need to understand how we can learn from villages that have lived in a sustainable manner for thousands of years.

---

### Delhi 2050, DDFA | 2010

Similarly, Delhi 2050, also sponsored by [Dutch DFA](#) and spearheaded by Dutch architect Anne Feenstra, take a serious look at the future India's capital where previous masterplans have failed to predict the intensity and speed of growth, and

where infrastructure has not kept pace with the influx of job-seekers to the city.

---

### Porosity Kabari at Studio X, Mumbai | 2010

*Porosity Kabari* was an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural project, wherein an Indian graphic and object designer worked with an Australian architect and object designer in an intense 3-week long workshop. These designers collaborated in Mumbai's 'Chor Bazaar' (thieves market). Using the bazaar as their only source of materials and making processes. In the bazaar, the designers learned from spontaneous conversation and experimentation with the vendors and craftspeople working in this manic market place.

While the rest of the world struggles with the environmental implications of designed obsolescence and disposable consumption, India is a place where resourcefulness is part of the everyday. The pan-India *kabari* (junk) and *chor* (thieves) bazaars are where many useful things end up at the end of their lives. It is in these bazaars that many useful objects are given a second life – radical transformation at its best.

The short project period, and the ad-hoc making methods adopted by the bazaar workers meant that design decisions were made quickly, and the maker gave shape to those decisions with an immediacy that is seldom experienced in the western context. The complete novelty of these work practices, combined with the exotic material palette found in the Chor Bazaar, forced the designers to adopt new methods of designing and change their practices. The objects created in Mumbai's Chor Bazaar and Studio X formed the *Porosity Kabari* Exhibition.

---

### Ghadai by the Potters of Kachchh | 2015

*Ghadai* is a pottery exhibition conceptualized by the Kachchh-based NGO, Khamir, to showcase the art of the *kumbhars* or potters of Kachchh. The exhibition supported by Hermes while paying homage to the 7000- year old tradition of Kachchhi pottery, comprised new works of pottery especially

commissioned for the show. These pieces were auctioned by Hermes and 80% of the generated income was passed back to the potters themselves. Not only did this project immensely help in giving the potters a sense of pride but the monetary they received enabled some potters to buy a house or send their children to school.

---

### **A.B.C.D.E an open discussion on design process with Droog Lab | 2011**

The fortnight-long, workshop organised by Amsterdam's [Droog Lab](#) explored whether the way informal economies work can be applied to design, and offered a chance to learn about different aspects of slums such as Dharavi. The designers and architects sought to lend form to an abstract diagram, based on a study of Indian mathematics, with the active involvement of the craft producers in Dharavi.

Designers sidestepped traditional notions of design such as "form follows function" and instead, decided to "start anywhere", and then reach a conclusion through a process of improvisation. The traditional notion of form following function is not in sync in the context of the informal economy and the Indian notion of *jugaad*. The intent was also to try and break down traditional hierarchies between designers and makers.

What happens when designers outsource not just the production but the design itself to the producer? Can we learn from such an exchange, and open our mind to new experiences and ideas? Areas of discussion included adaptability as a generator of design, the role of the social bond within economic transactions, the role of the designer in creating a framework for an open-ended production process, the value of open-ended design process and results, the possibility to translate findings to other situations, and possible next steps in this investigation.

This project was a collaboration between Dutch and Indian designers, architects, sociologists and anthropologists.

---

### **Sangam: Australia-India Design Platform | 2011–13**

Sangam is a platform that explores and supports ethical production partnerships between craftspeople and designers. Running between 2011 and 2013, it involved activities in both Australia and India. The first year, focused on craft producers and included events in Melbourne and Delhi. The second year was on designers, and events were organised in Sydney and Ahmedabad. Finally, the focus shifted to the consumer, with discussions in Brisbane and Bangalore. A code of practice for Partnerships in Craft & Design, emerged from the platform, that offers a set of best practices to help promote mutual respect between the parties involved.

---

### **Understanding the Rules of Wrapping | 2017**

#### **Workshop with students from Design Akademie Berlin, Germany at MIT, Pune.**

The author is working on a month-long exchange project where German design students will get to travel across several small towns of India to research and study informal markets, while focussing on the age-old tradition of wrapping which is prevalent in all sorts of ways and all types of materials in the country — from the turban to the *samosa*. They, along with students at MIT Pune will work on developing new and innovative concepts for products, objects or typography, that are inspired by the traditional use of wrapping.

## **B. OUTSIDE INDIA**

---

### **The Victoria & Albert Museum**

Some of the key events related to design in the last six years include, the V&A London's The Fabric of India show, which was the first major exhibition to explore the dynamic and multifaceted world of handmade textiles from India from the third to the 21st century. Curated by Rosemary Crill and Divia Patel, the exhibition featured over 200 objects from the best of the V&A's world-renowned collection, together with masterpieces from international partners and leading designers.

The museum also released *India Contemporary Design: Fashion, Graphics, Interiors* by the India curator, Divia Patel, covering the development of design in India from 2000 to 2013.

---

### India Pavilion at the London Design Festival | 2016

London-based Create Culture launched Indian Design Platform in 2015 in London as the first annual show of its kind to present Indian design to an international audience. The Indian Design Platform engages with design in a wide context — from the functional to the conceptual, the luxurious and collectible. With a special focus on India, Create Culture sets out to further designers, designer makers and master craftsmen through exhibitions, collaborative projects, design residencies, events and workshops.

Now in its third year, Indian Design platform will organise a new exhibition on visual communication that illustrates the ways in which leading graphic design studios are developing the visual language of 21st century India.<sup>4</sup>

---

### India Pavilion at the London Design Festival | 2016

The London Design Fair hosts the largest collection of international exhibitions, designers, brands and country pavilions in one destination during the London Design Festival annually. For this the 10th Anniversary, London Design Fair invited India to be the guest country as there has been an increase in the number of new and independent designers and studios from India making inroads on the global design scene.

Titled, This is India, the pavilion included ten emerging and established India-centric designers and brands across product, textile and furniture; offering a renewed but intimate perspective on established and emerging design practices from India today. Spandana Gopal of Tiipoi to co-curated This is India, alongside Jimmy MacDonald founder & director of the London Design Fair.<sup>5</sup>

## **Trend 3: Government Initiatives & Policies**

### **INDIA DESIGN COUNCIL**

Realizing the increasing importance of design in economic, industrial and societal development and in improving the quality of products and services, the Government of India adopted the [National Design Policy](#) in 2007 through broad consultations with all stakeholders involved. The vision behind initiating the policy was to develop a “design enabled Indian industry” which could impact both the national economy and the quality of life in a positive manner. This has meant the increased embedding of design in government policies and initiatives. The Indian Government announced the establishment of Indian Design Council (IDC) in March 2009 to implement the policy.

“There was a realisation that design would play a major role over the next 20 to 30 years, and that there were only about three design schools in India,” says ISDI co-founder Siddharth Shahani on the origins of the policy. But this transformation is one shaped primarily by economic, rather than cultural, forces — a fact borne out in the wording of the National Design Policy, which recognises design for the strategic role it can play in enhancing national competitiveness.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally in 2014, the Government of India deemed the National Institute of Design (NID) as an “Institution of National Importance”, further giving design its rightful place and emphasis in national policy.

### **GOVERNMENT POLICIES & INITIATIVES**

Many government initiatives such as the creation of the ₹500 crore (€70.35 million) Bihar Museum in Patna by the state government of Bihar, has given increased opportunities in large-scale projects to Indian designers like never before.

Newer developments in the form of a “[National Initiative for Design Innovation](#)”, a policy on new structures of design education and practice passed in 2013, illustrates the Government’s recognition of design as a transformative force.

But perhaps, the most ground-breaking policy of all, has been the [Design Clinic Scheme](#) initiated by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). Initiated in 2009, its impact is just being felt now.

## **“Realising that innovation is the engine for the growth of prosperity and national competitiveness in the 21st century, the president of India declared 2010–20 as the ‘decade of innovation.’”<sup>7</sup>**

"This is nothing but a big revolution," says A. Balasubramaniam. From Sikkim to Salem, from Mangalore to Morbi, (the) seeds of design (that have been sown are reaping rich dividends....Some 200 odd projects have been implemented, besides conducting several hundred awareness seminars for a variety of industry clusters. It's heartening to see small industrialists talking about the benefits of design. And, for once, it was not designers talking to designers on the benefit of design. Whether it is a better microscope from Ambala, a better chaff cutter from Jasdan, a new wooden tea-infuser from Gangtok and baby warmer from Pune; design is slowly and steadily being embedded in all sorts of industries across the nation.<sup>8</sup>

### **Trend 4: The Private Sector**

#### **KEY DRIVER**

If the last six years show anything, they indicate the understanding, acceptance and embedding of design by Indian Private Sector. Design is seen as indispensable and as a tool to harness creativity, efficiency and improve the bottom-line.

Several leading Indian corporations, such as the Apeejay Surendra Group, Ananda Bazaar Patrika (ABP), Asian Paints, Eicher, Tata Group etc., have embraced design as a strategic tool to differentiate and advance their service offerings.

While it is the CEOs of bigger firms who understand that design is not just a facelift — smaller companies are more hesitant in spending on design. The investment in design usually begins with branding and then moves into other areas such as product development and marketing. Additionally, B2B companies are slower to adopt design than a B2C company that is external facing and understands consumer behaviours better.<sup>9</sup>

#### **FROM OUTSOURCE TO INHOUSE**

That Wipro recently acquired a Designit, a Dutch strategic design firm of five hundred people; and Mahindra Group bought Italian automobile design giant, Pinninfarina — goes to not only show the commitment to design by large Indian corporations — but also that Indian design studios have not yet managed to scale up to the levels of their Dutch counterparts.<sup>10</sup>

This is indicative of a new trend, that of large corporations who are interested in building capacity or adding capability — not through outsourcing of design — but of outright purchasing of design studios.<sup>11</sup>

Design assignments are not outsourced anymore. Instead companies with strength and muscle in finance, technology or manufacturing are going all hog and buying off design firms. Small, nimble and creative design firms have been acquired in the past by large corporations, as increasingly, Design is being seen as the new asset for business development.

A visible trend in the job market is the need for young design talent at not only some of India's leading companies, but also in the country's plethora of new tech startups, mobile app and gaming companies as well as e-commerce firms. As Amit Gulati mentions, venture capitalists are more ready to fund a start-up if it has a designer as part of its founding team. Some companies such as Bajaj, Godrej, GVK, Whirlpool India, Future Group, and Samsung India, have created in-house design departments. The Godrej Design Lab is incubating product designers for its Interio line. GVK through the Mumbai International Airport, has invested large sums in design of cultural artefacts for the airport.

We expect such interactions to increase in number and value significantly by 2020, where design will play an even important role in Indian business.

**"Design is steadily making inroads into the Micro, Small and Medium-scale Enterprises, all over the country. From Sikkim to Salem, Mangalore to Morbi, (the) seeds of design (that) have been sown are reaping rich dividends."**<sup>12</sup>

Multinational corporations (MNC's) view India as a large, untapped market for trading their goods and services. They understand that success elsewhere would not necessarily translate to success in India without understanding the complexities of the market and local sensibilities. Global corporations are willing to work with Indian designers to understand the local market, which puts the spotlight on design industry.<sup>13</sup>

## **Trend 5 : Digital India**

India is one of those few countries in the world that simultaneously lives in the first and third worlds, especially in terms of technology. A lot of people in the country are managing to leapfrog technology — those people who did not even have a landline phone connection till now, have managed to jump to smart phones made by some homegrown Indian brands such as Micromax.

### **THE EXPLOSION OF E-COMMERCE**

The year 2010 was a major turning point in India when many talented product and fashion designers switched over to UI and UX due to the tremendous demand and money available for such expertise — especially palpable in the IT cities of Gurgaon, Bengaluru, Pune and Hyderabad. Start-up app and e-commerce companies, such as Jabong, Myntra, Flipkart and Zomato which started sprouting up all of a sudden snapped up a large

number of designers as an investment in their company's growth.<sup>14</sup>

However, since many Indian designers haven't worked on large scale UX projects; companies such as furniture e-retailer, Urban Ladder has to hire experts from the west. As Rajiv Srivatsa, COO and Co-Founder, Urban Ladder, puts it, "a lot more people have worked on larger-scale challenges there compared with a handful in India in the product industry. Our Director of Engineering moved here from the Bay area."<sup>15</sup>

This period has seen several print media publications to shift to online responsive platforms that are available in all form-factors especially mobile phones — to reach out to a growing segment of Indians whose first experience with the internet is via the mobile device. [CatchNews.com](http://CatchNews.com), a part of *Rajasthan Patrika* and [T2online.com](http://T2online.com), the online supplement to *The Telegraph* [owned by Ananda Bazaar Patrika (ABP)] are two recent examples of how large media corporations are going digital with the help of some of India's leading design studios.

Another trend is the rise of e-commerce platforms selling handicrafts and textiles from around the country. Some platforms include [gaatha.com](http://gaatha.com), [jappore.com](http://jappore.com) and [directcreate.com](http://directcreate.com). Directcreate is meant to provide artisans an equal online footing to designers. Customers can buy from designers, a combination of designers and craftspersons, or directly from the craftsperson(s) themselves.<sup>16</sup>

### **DIGITAL ILLITERACY**

From a mainstream, "everyday" perspective, the demonetization drive started by the Modi Government in November 2016 has spurred greater use of design and technology driven apps such as PayTM to be able for larger sections of society to go cashless in a cash starved economy. While only 3% of Indians have credit cards today, a significant percentage of Indians by 2021 will have smart phones.

This provides a great opportunity for the Dutch Government and for Dutch companies to tap into various types of apps for not only urban

India but also a large rural and semi-rural Indian population set to get on smart phones.

However, those on the other side of the digital divide are suffering from lack of information, access and empowerment. Design with Technology (DesTech) have a tremendous power to transform the lives of ordinary Indians. Solutions are needed to help India's huge population, of which 26% is illiterate (the largest illiterate population in the world) and a far greater percentage is digitally illiterate, thus making this a massive social challenge where Dutch expertise via research grants and projects from institutions, government and the private sector can make a huge impact.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

With the advent of social media taking root in India, also around the time of 2010–11, for the first time designers are openly sharing their process, philosophy and projects on various social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. The burgeoning speed with which design related groups are starting and exchanging ideas on these platforms is an indicator how integrated design has become in many spheres of activity. This has helped them gain a wider audience, and forums to discuss issues related to design. One such platform is the Facebook group [Design Educators in India](#) started by Shuchi Mathur, which looks at pertinent issues related to academia, curriculum development and design education in India. Some corporations are taking notice of the work of designers via social media and commissioning these designers installations and projects or starting festivals and other events related to the field of design.

### **TECH GIANTS FUND INDIC SCRIPTS**

Global Tech Co's such as Adobe, Samsung, Microsoft and especially Google, are funding a large number of projects to develop Indic scripts. For instance, Google Fonts is an open source platform for typefaces to be freely used for online media. This is having a positive benefit for many of the regional language news and media companies, who hitherto did not have proper typefaces for the

languages they communicate in. Some regional players such as ABP, recently commissioned a design firm to create a brand and website for T2online. Such companies are also inviting type designers to create typefaces in regional scripts like Bengali, Odia and Tamil.

## **Trend 6: Design Education**

### **EXPONENTIAL GROWTH**

To meet the increasing demand for design by both the private and public sector in India, the number of design institutions is experiencing a phenomenal growth: "from a handful in 2010, the number of design institutions has grown to over 70 by 2016. Given the positive demographics, rising educational aspirations, openness to pursue alternate careers, employment opportunities and increased affordability of higher education, the number of design aspirants is increasing every year. The number of designers required by 2020 in industrial, graphic, communication, packaging and other design domains will be 62,000, provided the design potential is fully realized. Currently, there are approximately 7,000 qualified designers in the country and approximately 5,000 students in design education."<sup>17</sup>

There has been a proliferation of the established colleges such as NID, which has opened new campuses in Kurukshetra and Vijaywada. It has plans to open more campuses in Bhopal, Hyderabad, Jaipur and Jorhat. While some people are celebrating this as a validation of design in India, during this period of rapid increase in the number of d-schools, there has been criticism that NID has grown too quickly and in a short-sighted manner.

According to Shirsendu Ghose, a leading social designer — the opening of several d-schools in small towns has been a lost opportunity. He laments that these institutions are not looking to use the design curriculum to address local socio-cultural and development related issue; but are instead, basing the curriculum on the mother institutions of the large cities of India. This results in students not selecting their college on the basis

of a specialized curriculum, but on the prestige associated with that college. The cream of students would still prefer to go to an NID Ahmedabad or a NIFT Delhi than their regional counterparts in Jorhat or Kangra.

Additionally, many senior design educators and professionals, believe that a new vision is needed to guide decisions related to the future of design education in the country. An initiative called Vision First has been introduced by some leading design minds of the country such as Dinesh and Rashmi Korjan, MP Ranjan, Jogi Panghaal, Jatin Bhatt, Poonam Bir Kasturi among others. [Vision First](#) is an initiative to create a perspective on creating design competencies in India. The idea is to tap the collective wisdom of the vibrant design community and other stakeholders of design in the country and co-create a vision for further actions – whether it is the setting up of new institutions or taking design to those areas where it has never been before.

While the author believes a balance between the commercial realities of design and the social duties and responsibilities of design are required; today there is hardly any attention to local issues, context and interest in the majority of India's numerous design colleges that are mushrooming across the country. These institutions are focusing on the "mainstream", industry-led, global aspects of design, while ignoring the specific issues that might be facing the local communities which they have been built around.

This growth in state-funded schools is matched by a flurry of new private institutions opening, in some cases, with the help of international partners: the Indian School of Design and Innovation (ISDI) – Parsons Mumbai opened in 2013 in collaboration with the eponymous New York college; in 2015, the design department at the UK's Kingston University helped launch the Indian Institute of Art and Design (IIAD) in Delhi; while France's Rubika worked with an Indian business conglomerate to found DSK International in Pune 2008. Meanwhile, the Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology

is collaborating with international institutions such as the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, and has set up international exchange programmes with 34 schools. It also has a number of centres and labs that offer practice and research-based environments for students and faculty from a multitude of disciplines. One such centre is GRIDs — Grassroots Innovation Design Studio. While, Srishti has two new campuses in Pune and Coimbatore, MIT is opening a new campus in Ujjain as part of Avantika University, which claims to be India's first design centered university. There are also new colleges that have just started or in development such as the proposed, The School of Integral Design in Faridabad, which will offer a master's program in communication design, product design, fashion and textiles.

While it is too early to say whether these private institutions will make the same mistake as NIFT and NID, a dire need for design teacher training in the country remains.

## **FORMALIZATION**

There has been a formalization of design with design degrees being awarded for the first time and design colleges becoming part of the university system in India. Some colleges such as Srishti, IDC are also offering a PhD program in Design.

## **DESIGN THINKING GOES UNIVERSAL**

Another major trend in education is the inclusion of design thinking modules within colleges and universities that don't offer a design degree. According to Sangeeta Shroff, a senior design educator, several departments in Ahmedabad University, — such as the — School of Life Sciences and, School of Engineering and Commerce, — have modules on design thinking for their students from seasoned design academicians such as herself. This is a new trend in Indian education which has come from Stanford University which has a "Center of Design" but no design program. A tie-up between Stanford and Ahmedabad University meant that there was a decision taken not to start a design program but introduce design thinking in each of its 11 colleges.



## Trend 7: Social Design

While there is much to celebrate about the current surge of design in India, sadly, as many senior designers lament — the focus of design has moved away from service to the community and people at large, — to a service of industry since the 1990s. This concern has been reiterated by Prof. S. Balaram, Dean, DJ Academy of Design, who believes that priorities are currently skewed as a nation and that there is an overall lack of design responsibility towards general public. He cites the example of a lack of accessibility at India's traffic junctions for unsighted people (of which there are 63 million people in India), or a lack of facilities to enable mobility of differently abled people.<sup>18</sup>

The establishment of India's first program based on Social Design at Ambedkar University, Delhi is a step in the right direction as it reinforces the idea that design, which began as a service to industry, — can be also looked at — as a service to aid in social development of the people of India.

Many people believe that Social Design, also called "Design for Good", — is an important untapped area that will impact the design sector in the near future. The government and private sector in India are just beginning to understand the potential of this sector. The sheer numbers of people who need basic needs and services — such as proper sanitation, clean drinking water, healthcare, electricity, literacy and livelihood generation in rural, semi-rural as well as in the urban villages and slums of India — means that, in addition to the humanitarian need, there is business opportunity for organisations to contribute to this sector. Design especially in terms of design thinking and systems design can play a major role in making a difference.

The following examples are indicative of the potential of design to ameliorate social conditions in India by some of the pioneers in social design.

Lakshmi Murthy of Vikalp Design has been working in the area of women's menstrual health and hygiene for over 30 years. Her work amongst lesser educated communities is a vital contribution to

social design, a field that did not exist when she started out. Her work has been path-breaking because it was not based on a cookie-cutter, top-down approach, but instead, she worked with each community of women individually according to their own needs and understanding.

Since most of these women were illiterate, and with little exposure, the infographics that might be commonplace in the city (such as the symbol for toilet) are not understood.

In the context of village women. Murthy had to engage with them to create a library of images relevant to the rural environment through drawing workshops. She discovered a collective consciousness behind rural signs, and was able to use this to develop a visual system of codes, building picture dictionaries specific to different locations.

Architect Anupama Kundoo has spent 25 years developing low-cost housing in India by engaging with local communities. Despite the recent efforts by the government to build eight million new toilets in rural India, about half remain unused. She believes that these toilets did not try to study the habits, preferences and behavior patterns of the villagers and has developed a toilet that she believes people will install and use because it's customisable, uses less resources, is cheaper and faster to build.

Shirsendu Ghose of Fourth Dimension Services, works on issues related to sanitation, nutrition and livelihood in eastern and north-eastern India. He shares some examples on how "simple" design thinking and logic can help solve major social issues such as toilets in India's villages. While the government is on a drive to create more wet toilets in villages, he cites the ground reality of scarcity of water in villages as the reason he has developed a compostable dry toilet. The compost can be used to fertilize the fields of the farmers. Additionally, in reference to communication, Ghose sites the failure of traditional Behavioral Change Communication (BCC) such as hoardings that try to convince people to change habits or perceptions. Instead, through his practice, he

believes Inter-Personal Communication (IPC), which is a combination of mobile projection and discussions with knowledgeable field-workers are far more effective in creating impact. These aspects are, in his opinion, important for designers to adopt and understand — after all, the medium is the message.<sup>19</sup>

Long before the *Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan* (Clean India Mission) program, Poonam Bir Kasturi, started a landmark initiative called The Daily Dump. Kasturi is a firm believer in the power of design to create change. She used design thinking to develop an entire eco-system that not only took a

huge step towards how to think about and manage waste, but also brought in a sense of responsibility in many people that was lacking before.<sup>20</sup>

Kiran Bir Sethi, a graphic designer from NID started "Design for Change" out of the conviction that children are not helpless, and an optimism that change is possible as is that belief that they can drive change. Children are asked to identify and transform anything that bothered them in their community. They are also encouraged to share their stories of change and impact to inspire other children. While this initiative started in Ahmedabad, it has now spread to over 33 countries across the globe.

---

## Opportunities

India's design scene rarely features on the international design stage, but it's a sector that is going from strength to strength. The country has a strong artisanal tradition, and many young designers are now building on this heritage to create new products that address contemporary tastes and needs.<sup>21</sup>

However, there are a tremendous number of avenues where Dutch expertise could help transform areas of design that are lagging behind.

### TEACHER TRAINING

As Prof. S. Balaram suggests, as the number of design colleges surge in India, there is no interest in creating institutions for teacher training. He cites this as a huge gap in the sector and an opportunity for foreign investment and involvement. The lack of qualified design teachers is having a negative impact on the education of the country's future design professionals. To make matters worse, there is no proper manner in which to judge the efficacy of teachers in the country.

### DESIGN EDUCATION

As the Indian design education market to cover the increasing demand for design in country, there is a huge need for new sorts of curricula that not only have a solid foundation but are agile enough to

be able to respond fast changing field of design where technology innovations seem to be opening up new avenues for designers to work in. Currently, despite the plethora of d-schools in India, many colleges have failed to update their curricula to respond to the contemporary needs of design.

This is an opportunity for Dutch institutions such as Design Academy Eindhoven, TU Delft and others; to get involved in design education in India. India is facing a shortage of designers, and that too, despite the growth in the number of design colleges — the quality of design is diluting considerably.

The Dutch with their experience in design education that is relevant to the times can make a huge difference. Additionally, they will have a captive audience — as students can do exchange programs in the Netherlands. Graduates would be more inclined to work in or with the Dutch as they would be familiar with their methodologies and processes.<sup>22</sup>

However, if the Dutch were to set up d-schools in India, it would be very important to teach design in the Indian context. Some international colleges in India are failing to do so, and are creating "elite designers," who have no context about the

salient issues a majority of Indians face in their day to day lives.

### **DESIGN AND ILLITERACY**

A course on Design and Illiteracy, for instance, could look at the aspect of adult illiteracy in Indian in several ways could be where Dutch expertise can make a difference. One aspect, is about making a person achieve basic literacy in the most efficient manner, the other is about learning from the *dabbawallahs* of Mumbai who are completely illiterate but have managed to create their own signage system to deliver home cooked food to customers, and have a sigma six rating. The third is to address the meaning of literacy today, which is really about being connected to the market directly rather than through troublesome middlemen — artisans and farmers could sell their goods through an online platform, directly to the consumer. For this they need to be digitally literate.<sup>23</sup>

### **DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC**

Unlike most European nations, India doesn't have an endowment for the visual arts from the government. There is a need for funding and support from international organisations to help encourage the appreciation and meaning of design by a broader public. Perhaps there can be such an annual event that includes workshops, exhibitions and talks — organized by Dutch entities to showcase, promote and help engender more Indo-Dutch design and design education partnerships. The Dutch Design Week in Eindhoven is a great example of how design manages to draw a broad spectrum of visitors and create public interest.<sup>24</sup>

### **MAKE IN INDIA**

As this report shows, the last six years has been a sea change in the field of design in India. There are today a large number of capable and successful professional Indian design studios — both small and large — that can be leveraged for design and fabrication work in India with Dutch organisations and companies.

### **SMART CITIES**

While the Smart City initiative can be seen as a good idea to alleviate urban congestion in

India's large cities — a holistic approach needs to be done with the help of urban planners, architects, mobility experts that will ensure the same mistakes — such as vehicular congestion, glass and steel high-rises, pollution — are not repeated. It needs to be seen as an opportunity to rethink and reinvent the meaning of the city — the daily office commute, efficient mass mobility systems etc. The Netherlands is renowned for city-planning and resource management. It has numerous experts and research institutions (such as Sandberg Instituut) that could be involved in such a large-scale and long-term project with the Indian government, and private sector. [Vacant NL](#) is an example of an interesting initiative by Sandberg Instituut proving that thousands of inspiring, vacant public buildings in the Netherlands dating from 17th to the 21st century, can potentially be reused for creative entrepreneurship and innovation.<sup>25</sup>

### **SOCIAL DESIGN**

Although highly relevant in a country like India, Social Design is another area that has a dearth of designers and design institutions working in the area. Social Design uses design and systems thinking to help solve problems related to “basic needs”, such as access to clean drinking water, sanitation, electricity, housing, disaster management, education on cleanliness and disease prevention etc., for 70–80% of the country's population. That that [UN's Millennium Development Goals](#), lists several of these as priority areas to solve, has spurred interest and funding in this area by the government and several international organisations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. While, several Indian NGOs — both large and small — have been working in this field for decades, but there is also a significant role for design to help ameliorate the situation.

There are also in ways technology along with design can be harnessed to impact the lives of a large number of people. For instance, an app that helps artisans understand key principles of design that they could use in their work or expose them to new and interesting trends and materials they could use in their work for a very small fee?

Or an app for partially or fully unsighted people that empowers them to be able to travel easily or cross the street or even look for work? The possibilities are endless. This is one of the most important area of opportunity into the Indian design scene.

### **DESIGN FOR CHILDREN**

Design in school curricula. Given India's large young population, there is a greater need for design and design thinking to be introduced in school curricula around the country. Initiatives such as [Design for Change](#) have empowered children to create change within their communities. [Designing for Children](#), is a proposed conference to take place in 2019 at IDC-IIT, Mumbai. Despite, growing interest, most schools in the country don't offer design thinking programs and are unable empower children to be agents of change.

### **CRAFT MANAGEMENT**

According to Devika Krishnan, while India has a considerable market for craft and a source

of well-produced craft, there is a dire need for managerial experts to help manage many of the craft organisations in various ways — inventory management, systems thinking expertise and marketing of products to the right market via the right channel at the right time, etc.<sup>26</sup>

### **ARCHIVE**

Since India doesn't have a design museum or a design archive, there is a tremendous need to archive materials of value to the design profession. Funding and archiving expertise is needed to fill this gap.

### **DESIGN WITHIN REACH**

India lacks quality design stores such as Design Within Reach in the US. Stores that promote the work of some of the best furniture and product designers in the country, and yet create a demand for good quality furniture and decor that is not way out of reach for most middle class Indians.

---

## Challenges

**P**armesh Shahani is critical of previous Dutch initiatives such as the Dutch DFA program and the Dutch Workspace in Mumbai — citing that they were too short-lived and it seemed to him that the whole program was designed to benefit Dutch designers by opening Indian markets for them and not vice-versa.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

He also felt the Droog Lab project in Dharavi was insensitive to the locals, who are busy at work trying to make money for a day's meal. The impact was none since it was only a two week project, unlike local initiatives that are more context based, such as the Dharavi Biennale by the NGO, Sneha which involves community participation and action.

### **LONG-TERM INTEREST**

Additionally, Shahani adds, "The memory of European colonization is still strong in the country,

and there is bound to be suspicion, if foreign agencies don't come in for the long-haul to make a holistic and genuine difference — rather than do a one-off festival or talk. Indian society is based on building relationships over time and not being too hasty in taking decisions, which is something foreign companies and organisations have to understand and respect."

This is not to make a sweeping statement that all involvement by foreign organisations and governments have not made a positive impact. What has changed in the last six years is that as the Indian design scenario is getting more established it is just a matter of time for it to positively impact various spheres of activity in the country, on its own.<sup>27</sup>

### **THE DUTCH USP**

There are educational institutions from many other countries — such as, Britain, France and the

United States — that, are interested in tie-ups with Indian companies.

The challenge for the Dutch is to be able to operate in their niche area of expertise. For instance, the British are leaders in branding, the Germans in appliance and auto engineering and the Italians in car design. The Dutch USP could be

design process and systems design for which there is a huge demand in India.<sup>28</sup>

### **BUY-INS**

Another challenge that the Dutch can face in India, is that the buy-in to invest for design, is far less, than in the Netherlands, where a large majority of people understand what design can do for them.<sup>29</sup>

---

## The Corporate Sector

**T**he last six years have seen an increase in interest and involvement by some leading Indian corporate houses as well as some MNC's to engender and help promote design in India. Some prominent contributors are mentioned below.

[Apeejay Surendra Group](#) via The Park hotels has been commissioning graphic, product and interior designers from across the country.

[Asian Paints Design Collective](#) has sponsored various design-related at India Design ID. They also have a colour showcase at the Colour Trends Pavilion.

[Devi Art Foundation](#) curates and commissions contemporary art, performances and textile design shows in India.

[Godrej India Culture Lab](#) is a fluid experimental space based out of the Godrej headquarters in Vikhroli that explores what it means to be modern and Indian.

[Godrej Design Lab](#) is a platform for designers to showcase their talent. The lab is a catalyst for design experiments, it strives to achieve a balance between design and efficient manufacturing.

[Gujral Foundation](#) is focussed on contemporary cultural engagements with art, design & architecture, and the performing arts, as its primary

initiative. The foundation runs a newly opened space that is based on an engagement with art, design and culture through talks, panel discussions and various other events.

[GVK](#) is an Indian conglomerate with interests across various sectors of economic significance such as Energy, Resources, Airports, Transportation and Hospitality. It was responsible for the design and construction of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Mumbai International Airport for a total project cost of ₹12,500 crore (€175 million). Launched in January 2014, the airport consists of the [Jaya He Museum](#) — with the most number of artworks in any airport in the world. Dedicated to the cultural ethos of the nation and built by hundreds of craftspersons and designers. The airport is a testament to the importance given to design and culture by large companies.

[Ogaan](#) and [Elle Decor India](#) have launched the annual India Design ID exhibition and conference, in New Delhi, on interiors, home decor and product design.

[Samsung Design Delhi](#) has a large design team that works on its electronic product range. They also outsource design to design studios for their color, material and finishes based on trends from various cities in India.

# Design Professionals

The last six years has seen a tremendous growth in the number and quality of designers and design studios in the country. Not only confined to the large cities, some studios are making a niche for themselves exploring new avenues within the world of design and in smaller towns and cities. Many young graduates, rather than work at a company, are starting their own design studios at a much younger age than many of their seniors. For the report we focus on designers and studios that are path-breakers and leaders in the field but are also working on international projects.

## Graphic Design

### INTERACTIVE, PRINT & BRANDING

[Alok Nanda and Company](#)

[Codesign](#)

[Bombay Duck Designs](#)

[Design Stack](#)

[Design Temple](#)

[Infonauts](#)

[Ishan Khosla Design](#)

[Itu Chaudhuri Design](#)

[Letterpress](#)

[Locopopo](#)

[Lopez Design](#)

[TSK](#)

[Turmeric Design](#)

[Umbrella Design](#)

[Weiden + Kennedy](#)

## Type Design

The study, design and writing on Indic typefaces was initially done by western type designers such as [Dr. Fiona Ross](#) who has made a significant contribution to this field. The last six years have resulted monumental increase in the number of Indian designers working on Indic typefaces.

Multinational companies such as Adobe, Google, Samsung and Microsoft are commissioning the creation of a host of typefaces in Indic scripts; as are certain Indian companies such as Ananda Bazaar Patrika (ABP) which are commissioning regional scripts like Bengali for their publications.

One of the leading type designers working with Indic scripts — Anand Naorem — believes that the biggest challenge of Indic type design today is that they are, “either too calligraphic and classical, or too ‘Latinised’”.

“Unlike the Latin script which has gone through (an) evolution (with many) designers (working on) thousands of typefaces... Indic typefaces haven't had a chance to go through this sort of evolution. What is happening right now is that we have jumped from being too calligraphic/classical to ultra-modern or simplistic resulting in the scripts losing their identity and flavour completely. We need to find

a balance of making contemporary Indic typefaces while retaining its original flavour.”<sup>30</sup>

## CORE TYPE DESIGN

[Brand New Type](#)

[Ek Type](#)

[Geetika Alok](#)

[Indian Type Foundry](#)

[Pooja Saxena](#)

[White Crow](#)

## DISPLAY TYPE DESIGN

[Hanif Kureshi](#)

[Ishan Khosla Design](#)

[Turmeric Design](#)

## Fashion & Textile Design

[Aarti Vijay Gupta Studio](#)

[Aavaran](#)

[Akaaro](#)

[Amit Aggarwal](#)

[Aleta, Brigitte Singh](#)

[Ashdeen Lilaowala](#)

[Bhane](#) Online Fashion

Chandrashekar Bheda

[Injiri Chinar Farrooqi](#)

[Jaya Jaitly](#)

[Kallol Datta](#)

(KA/SHA) Studio

Kashmir Loom

[Malkha](#)

[Manish Arora](#)

[Manish Gupta Studio](#)

[Nachiket Barve Studio](#)

[Neelam Chiber](#)

[Neeru Kumar](#)

[Paromita Banerjee Studio](#)

[Payal Khandwala Studio](#)

[Pero](#)

[Peter d'Ascoli](#)

[Rajesh Pratap Singh](#)

[Rahul Mishra](#)

[Raw Mango](#)

[Rimzim Dadu](#)

[Sabyasachi](#)

## Industrial & Product Design

[Ayush Kasliwal Furniture Design](#)

[Aziz Kachwalla](#)

[Desmania](#)

[Elephant Design](#)

[Eureka Moment](#)

[Fractal Ink](#)

[Future Factory](#)

[Incubis Design](#)

[Kiba Design](#)

[Mukul Goyal](#)

[Rooshad Shroff](#)

[Rhizome Design](#)

[Sandeep Sangaru](#)

[Ticket Design](#)

[Think Design](#)

[Trampoline](#)

## Craft-Design

Craft-Design is a young category of design, where designers are engaged on several types of projects — installations, artworks, site-specific work, products, typography — with collaboration with artisan communities working in the craft tradition of India.

These individuals are graduates of mainstream design colleges like NID, NIFT etc., but are choosing to work in rural areas, follow Festival trade practices like Festival wages and good work conditions, who have workshops or collaborate with artisans skilled in a particular craft from India. They are creating goods for home use but are making it contemporary and sell through boutique stores or Festivals. Through their intervention they are able to push overall quality of work produced that would not be possible in a traditional set up. These are typically small cottage industry type of set up.

[Asian Heritage Foundation](#)

[Ayush Kasliwal Furniture Design](#)

[Devika Krishnan](#)

[Faith Singh, Anokhi](#)

[Ishan Khosla Design](#)

[Medha Ganguly](#)

[Rebecca Reubens](#)

[Sahil & Sarthak](#)

[Sandeep Sangaru](#)

[Shirley Bhatnagar](#)

[SOMA](#)

[Studio Ochre](#)

[Valay Gada](#)

[Varnam](#)

[Woven Threads](#)

[Women Weave](#)

## CRAFT DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS

[Anokhi](#)

[Craft+Design+Society](#)

[Craft Revival Trust](#)

[Craft Development Institution](#)

is focused on the integrated development of the Indian handicrafts sector. Based in Srinagar, Kashmir, its goal is to provide relevant craft education to young people and envisioning employment opportunities that will make it an attractive career option. It endeavours to renew the promise of handmade crafts, give it new direction and drive the handicrafts industry towards inspired change.

[Dastakar](#)

[Dastakari Haat Samiti](#)

[Khamir](#)

[Rahul Jain](#)

[Women Weave](#)

## Social Design

[Anupama Kundoo](#)

[Daily Dump](#)

[Fourth Dimension](#)

[Quicksand](#)

[Vikalp Design](#)

## **SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

[Design for Change](#)

[Riverside School](#)

## **Exhibition & Interior Design**

[The Busride Design Studio](#)

[Creative Museum Designers](#)

[Design Habit](#)

[En Inde](#)

[Everyday Project](#)

[Josmo Studio](#)

[Kahani Design Works](#)

[Khosla Associates](#)

[Rajiv Saini](#)

[Sameep Padora & Associates](#)

[Studio Lotus](#)

[Studio Mumbai](#)

[Serie Architects](#)

[Swarup Dutta](#)

[Wari Watai](#)

---

## **Organisations**

[Association of Designers of India](#)

[\(ADI\)](#) is committed to promoting best practices in this space strengthening and promoting the capabilities of the Indian design profession, as well as amplifying and presenting a unified voice to influence public policy, shape the industry and benefit people at large. ADI is behind the annual Pune Design Festival (PDF).

[Confederation of Indian Industry](#)

[\(CII\)](#) is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and managed organisation, playing a proactive role in India's development process. CII works to create and an environment conducive to the growth of industry in India.

[Design Innovation and Craft](#)

[Resource Centre \(DICRC\)](#), part of CEPT University, Ahmedabad, and functions as an interface to understand and develop regional Space Making Crafts (SMCs) and Space Surface Crafts (SSCs) of traditional and vernacular buildings of India and integrate them in the current Interior Architecture education as well as practice.

[Fashion Design Council of India](#)

[\(FDCI\)](#), a not-for-profit organization, and the apex body of fashion design in India. It is helping create a kinetic space for path-breaking ideas, and offering limitless possibilities with an eye on the future.

[Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry \(FICCI\)](#) is

the apex business chamber of India. It articulates the views and concerns of India's business and industry. It provides a platform for networking and consensus building within and across public and private sectors.

[Flow India](#) creates workshops and learning experiences for children and adults and work with partners to enhance their public programmes.

[India Design Council \(IDC\)](#) is an autonomous body of the Government of India established under the aegis of Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry. It is a national strategic body for interdisciplinary design and is involved in promotion of

design to ultimately make India a 'design enabled country'. IDC is spearheading the national design direction and is working with other government agencies, the design community, industry and education institutions to promote design in business, society and public services and developing design excellence.

[Indian Institute of Interior Design](#)

[\(IIID\)](#) comprises over three thousand members spread around the country in its 11 chapters and four centres. The IIID is a full member of the International Federation of Interior Architects/Interior Designers and the APSDA-Asia Pacific Space Designers Association and an associate of the Japan Design Foundation.

[India Design Association \(InDeAs\)](#) is a pan-India networking, showcasing and events platform for India's design community. It promotes and creates awareness about design in the country. InDeAs presently has a membership of 318, including 8 corporate memberships.



[The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises \(MSME\)](#) is a branch of the Government of India, and is the apex body for the formulation and administration of rules, regulations and laws relating to micro, small and medium enterprises in India.

[National Centre for Design & Product Development](#) was set up by the Development Commissioner Handicrafts (DC-H) Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. The Centre is involved in activities such as market driven design services

with the help of both Indian and international designers, technology, mass production, quality control and merchandising services, sustainable supply chain management system, design training artisans, manufacturers and exporters. It also conducts skill development programs, implements schemes and projects of the (DC-H) in setting up of Design centres, design workshops etc.

[National Design Business Incubator \(NDBI\)](#) is an initiative of NID Ahmedabad, and is the first design-

led business incubator in the country. It supports designers to turn their ideas and concepts into successful competitive businesses, and provides an environment where they can develop the essential business management skills and systems.

The outcome is creation of a new class of entrepreneurs, the Designpreneurs. The initiative is a part of a commitment by NID to build on India's design strengths aimed at translating the dream of "made in India, designed for the world" a reality.

---

## Design Education

For the longest time, starting with the inception of NID Ahmedabad in 1961, there were few design institutions being set-up in India. Most new colleges were government initiatives such as NIFT Delhi which only opened in 1986. In the post-liberalisation era and more so in the last decade with the passing of the National Design Policy in 2007, there has been a sharp increase in both private and government design colleges to meet the growing demand for design in the country.

The meaning and approach to design, and the market has been understood differently by different institutions, and this has defined the parameters for their working. A lot of experimentation has also been going on in the new design schools to strike the

right combination of learning and addressing the market need.

### New Developments

In 2010, the Indian government created the National Innovation Council (NInC) to propose and promote initiatives to create an innovation ecosystem for the country. NInC, recognizing the central role of design in this endeavour, engaged with over 30 design institutions and experts in India and internationally, asking them to propose approaches for the creation of new structures of design education to not only educate a new generation of designers and serve industry, but also bring design thinking to other disciplines of learning and to the public, and serve the social, cultural and environmental needs of the nation.

In early 2012, the Council accepted a proposal by Abhimanyu Nohwar, a Delhi based designer, for the creation of a new Open Design School (ODS) — a multidisciplinary design school that shares its curriculum and learning resources freely online — and a National Design Innovation Network (a nation-wide social network for collaborative problem-solving). For instance, an urban planner can connect with a designer, an anthropologist, and a psychologist — to help design smarter cities, or respond to a call for help in developing a better sanitation system for a remote village.

The Department of Higher Education at the Ministry of Human Resource Development has been implementing the proposal since early 2013, as part of the 'National Initiative for Design Innovation.' So far under

this initiative, the Government has approved the creation of 20 new Design Innovation Centres, an Open Design School, and a National Design Innovation Network. While potentially revolutionary, the impact of this initiative is yet to be seen.

## New Courses & Programs

1. M.Des. Social Design Ambedkar University, Delhi.
2. Interdisciplinary design at Srishti.
3. Design disciplines at IICD taught according to material properties — Hard (metal, stone and wood), Soft (fibre, textiles and paper) and Fired (glass and ceramics) Materials.
4. Service Design at IDC, Guwahati.
5. Universal Design at DJ Academy of Design, Coimbatore.
6. IDC/IIT is the first institution in India to offer a PhD program in Design.
7. Srishti and NID have also started a PhD program in Design.

## Graphic Design

[Avantika University, Ujjain](#)

[DJ Academy of Design, Coimbatore](#)

[Industrial Design Centre \(IDC\) Mumbai](#)

[LISAA School of Design, Bengaluru](#)  
Other campuses: [Delhi](#)

[MRID, Maharaja Sayajiroj University \(MSU\), Vadodra](#)

[MIT Institute of Design, Pune](#)

[National Institute of Design \(NID\), Ahmedabad](#)

[NIFT Delhi](#)

Other campuses: [Bengaluru](#), [Bhubaneshwar](#), [Chennai](#), [Gandhinagar](#), [Hyderabad](#), [Kangra](#), [Kannur](#), [Kolkata](#), [Mumbai](#), [Patna](#), [Raebareli](#), [Srinagar](#)

NIFT offers a B.Des in Fashion Communication which addresses communication, branding, marketing, and the business aspects related to the world of fashion.

[Pearl Academy](#), Noida  
Other campuses: Mumbai, Delhi

[Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology, Bengaluru](#)  
Other campuses: Pune

[Sushant School of Design, Gurgaon](#)

[United World Institute of Design \(UID\), Gandhinagar](#)

## Furniture & Product Design

[Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology \(CEPT\) \(Ahmedabad\)](#)

[DJ Academy of Design, Coimbatore](#)

[Industrial Design Centre \(IDC\) Mumbai](#)

[LISAA School of Design, Bengaluru](#)  
Other campuses: [Delhi](#)

[MIT Institute of Design, Pune](#)

[National Institute of Design \(NID\), Ahmedabad](#)

[Pearl Academy](#), Delhi  
Other campuses: Mumbai, Jaipur

[Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology, Bengaluru](#)

[Sushant School of Design, Gurgaon](#)

## Industrial, Automotive & Retail Design

[Avantika University, Ujjain](#)

[Centre for Product Design and Manufacturing, IISC, Bengaluru](#)

[DYP-DC Centre for Automotive Research and Studies \(Pune\)](#)

[Industrial Design Centre \(IDC\) Mumbai](#)

Other campuses: [Instrument Design & Development Centre, IIT Delhi](#) | [Design Programme, IIT Kanpur](#) | [Department of Design IIT Guwahati](#) | [Department of Design IIT Hyderabad](#)

[National Institute of Design \(NID\), Ahmedabad](#)

Other Campuses: Bengaluru, Gandhinagar

[MIT Institute of Design, Pune](#)

MS Ramaiah University of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

[School of Planning & Architecture, New Delhi](#) Other campuses: [Bhopal](#)

## New Media, Game & Animation

[DJ Academy of Design, Coimbatore](#)

[Industrial Design Centre \(IDC\) Mumbai](#)

[MIT Institute of Design, Pune](#)

[National Institute of Design \(NID\), Ahmedabad](#)

Other Campuses: Gandhinagar, Bengaluru

[Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology, Bengaluru](#)

Other Campuses: Trivandrum

## Human Computer Interaction

[Department of Design IIT Guwahati](#)

[Industrial Design Centre \(IDC\) Mumbai](#)

[LISAA School of Design, Bengaluru](#)

Other campuses: [Delhi](#)

[National Institute of Design \(NID\), Ahmedabad](#)

[Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology, Bengaluru](#)

Other Campuses: Pune, Trivandrum

## Interior Design

[Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology \(CEPT\), Ahmedabad](#)

[DJ Academy of Design, Coimbatore](#)

[LISAA School of Design, Bengaluru](#)

Other campuses: [Delhi](#)

[National Institute of Design \(NID\), Ahmedabad](#)

[Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology, Bengaluru](#)

Other Campuses: Pune

[Pearl Academy](#), Noida

Other campuses: Jaipur, Mumbai, Delhi

[Indian School for Design and Innovation \(ISDI\) Parsons, Mumbai](#)

[United World Institute of Design \(UID\), Gandhinagar](#)

## Fashion & Textile Design

[MRID, Maharaja Sayajiroj University \(MSU\), Vadodra](#)

[NIFT Delhi](#)

Other campuses: [Bengaluru](#), [Bhopal](#), [Bhubaneswar](#), [Chennai](#), [Gandhinagar](#), [Hyderabad](#), [Jodhpur](#), [Kangra](#), [Kannur](#), [Kolkata](#), [Mumbai](#), [Patna](#), [Raebareli](#), [Srinagar](#)

[LISAA School of Design, Bengaluru](#)

Other campuses: [Delhi](#)

[United World Institute of Design \(UID\), Gandhinagar](#)

## Craft-Design

In India, the design discourse has to begin with the source of all our architecture, textiles, products — that have evolved over millennia — and that source is our rich handicrafts and handlooms. As the second largest employer after agriculture the sustainability and promotion of crafts will have a huge impact on the standard of living of a large percentage of people in India as well as help conserve a living artistic tradition and culture for future generations.

In India, many crafts are languishing or lost, due to a host of reasons from poor infrastructure, non-marketability or poor understanding of the market. Additionally, some major clothing chains are under-cutting crafts such as hand embroidery, with cheap copies that are machine-made and mass-produced. Craft Design is a way in which a designer can manufacture and produce their products while sustaining — and ideally upgrading the crafts and the livelihoods of the craftspeople.

To create a sense of sensitivity towards this aspect, certain Indian Institutions are now teaching 'Craft Design' and related specialisations.

Craft is a part of programmes in Product Design, Textile Design and Fashion Design in many colleges. While most institutions teach Craft Design to students from non-craft backgrounds — craftspeople also need exposure and to be able to add value to their offering and provide not only hand skills but also their ideas on design. Some institutions such as Indian Institute of Craft and Design (IICD) also teach design to craftspeople and their children — which is an important step to complete the cycle as many designers, especially textile designers learn to weave — it is also important that the weavers, embroiderers and block printers of tomorrow learn about design.

[Department of Design, IIT, Guwahati](#): Product Design

[IDC, IIT Mumbai](#): Industrial Design

[IICD Jaipur](#)

[Indian Institute of Carpet Technology, Bhadohi](#)

[Indian Institute of Carpet Technology, Srinagar](#)

[MRID, Maharaja Sayajiroj University \(MSU\), Vadodra](#)

[NID, Ahmedabad](#): Textile Design, Apparel Design

[NIFT, Delhi](#): Fashion Design, Textile Design

[Srishti, Bengaluru](#): Design for Community and Self

## Social Design

Shirsendu Ghose, a social designer, is critical about the way design is being

taught in India today with regards to the involvement of designers with artisan communities. Ghose believes that the interaction of students and colleges with a particular cluster of artisans is on a very short-term and project basis with the outcome based on a “designed” product. To make a real impact, he says, one not only has to work in the field — over a period of months and years, not days and weeks — but the course also has to be more systems based. By this he means that there needs to be a deeper understanding and interest in terms of, what is the income, savings and, raw materials of the artisan today. And what challenges they face in terms of crop failures affecting their raw materials or the

cost of transport of their crafts to various parts of the country or the time they spend selling their crafts at Festivals versus that time used for making more products. The design intervention then, needs to be in terms of using logical and systems thinking to try to overcome these challenges and increase their standard of living. It has to be a much more holistic approach than the way most designers are working with craftspeople today.

[School of Design, Ambedkar University \(AUD\), New Delhi](#)

Recently, India’s first design program focussing only on Social Design, was established at Ambedkar University in Delhi. The idea is that design

which began as a service to industry, can be also looked at, especially in a country like India, as a service to aid social development of the country. The school draws from its distinct position within a Humanities and Social Sciences University to amalgamate core attributes of design with socially complex issues, needs and sectors. AUD hopes to prepare design students to engage in challenges of visualising new services, systems, interfaces, products and enterprises.

Universal Design at [D.J. Academy of Design, Coimbatore](#)

[Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, Bengaluru](#)

---

## Design Buzz

### Conferences, Events & Festivals



As mentioned in the report, design in India is gaining influence and traction in all walks of life. It is then, no surprise that the number of design related events — conferences, exhibitions, festivals, talks and venues showcasing design, have grown tremendously in the past six years. The number of design-related events has risen from a handful just a few years ago to at least 25 that vary in frequency, scale, quality, subject matter, location and most of all, their target audience. While some events are design focussed and more “commercial”

and “mainstream” in nature, others such as Unbox Festival are making a niche by being more holistic in their approach as they treat design as one of the many tools needed in the contemporary discourse related to systemic issues such as urbanism, social development and impact.

These events are not only held in the major metros of India but even smaller cities like Jaipur where Rajesh Kejriwal’s Kyoorius Designyatra was held this past year. He believes that, while the quality and scale of the new breed of design festivals can vary, overall the growth in these events is a great thing for the industry. “It helps keep the design world out there. In particular, when they’re regional it helps designers

who can’t afford to keep travelling to Delhi or Mumbai for events.” Kejriwal goes on to add that, “In five years we’ll become a very evolved design community... the growing economy and the proliferation of digital will help that.”<sup>31</sup>

Then there are events such as India Design ID and Amazon India Fashion Week that are more like tradeshows than design conferences. Ultimately, each of these events in the design calendar is contributing tremendously to the understanding, dissemination and adoption of Indian design — not just within the country — but also outside it. Previously, these events mainly catered to the converted, but today, these events are filled with people from

backgrounds outside design who are attending these platforms to better explore how to leverage design to increase efficiency, productivity and sales in their companies and to better understand how the process of design works.

## DELHI

Today, Delhi is the main design hub in India. In terms of design colleges it is lagging behind cities like Ahmedabad, Pune and Bangalore, but the presence of international cultural organisations such as the British Council, Alliance Française and the presence of a large number of designers especially in graphics, fashion and textile helps spur numerous design-led initiatives in the city. Here are some of the key spaces and events in town.

[Amazon India Fashion Week](#) is a fashion and trade platform. The event is organized by FDCI, and stages a plethora of professionals from diverse fields: choreographers, makeup and hair artists, stylists, bloggers, media professionals, etc. The floor is also open to indigenous crafts, modern luxury, and cultural anecdotes.

[Design X Design](#), a joint initiative of Alliance Française de Delhi and Studio IF, and is aimed at raising interest and understanding related to facets and fields of design for students, designers and the general public. It holds varied events, such as bi-monthly talks, panel discussions and the Domain Expose. There is an annual 20 Under 40 exhibition featuring a cross-section of

upcoming young designers from across the spectrum of design.

[India Art Fair](#) is a platform for modern and contemporary art and portal to the region's cultural landscape and visual arts. It provides a platform for innovation across disciplines and exchanges.

[India Design ID](#) by Ogaan and Elle Decor, is an annual event, that focuses on architecture, interiors, home decor and products. It is spread over four verticals – ID Exhibit, ID Symposium, ID Satellite and ID Talks. These verticals initiate a design conversation and bring together the design community to share their experiences, knowledge and make design more accessible to the public.

[India Design Summit](#) is a platform to create a partnership between design and organisations leading to innovation and increased economic competitiveness.

[Living Lightly](#) is a resource fair for sustainable lifestyles that focuses on the life of the *maldari* or herder — which is a life of simplicity. The fair primarily supports textile and allied crafts and promotes a lifestyle that is about living with a low footprint and in sync with nature.

[Made in India by Be Open](#) consisted of three aspects — *Samskara*, an exhibition that celebrated the fusion of Indian handicrafts and contemporary fashion; talks that looked at the future of making in a globalised world and a student competition to look at the ultimate Indian object for the future.

[Tex-Styles India](#) is a trade event that draws participants from India and buyers across the world.

[Unbox Festival](#) celebrates interdisciplinary collaborations, with the festival being the central manifest for inspiration, dialogue and hands-on action. It brings together creative, academic, and development professionals.

[Windmill Design Festival](#) is a small, intimate affair featuring about 15 designers. The festival is rooted in the Windmill community in Aya Nagar.

## MUMBAI

[India Design Forum](#) includes talks and seminars by world renowned experts and designers who address issues related to the social and commercial relevance of design.

[Make in India Week](#) showcases the potential of design, innovation and sustainability across India's manufacturing sectors.

## KOLKATA

[The India Story](#), sponsored by the Neotia Trust, is an annual curated showcase of the best of contemporary Indian fashion, furniture and products.

## PUNE

[Pune Design Festival](#) is organised by a non-profit body, the Association of Designers in India. PDF promotes design to industry and the wider public and covers sectors such as architecture, museums, medicine, automotive design, fashion, business and education.

## HYDERABAD

[UXINDIA](#) is India's biggest international conference on user experience design. It is a platform to build and sustain the implementation of design thinking for better living by bringing educational institutions, industries and international alliances together.

## KOCHI

[Kochi Muziris Biennale](#) started as an artist-initiated organisation to engender widespread appreciations for the arts. Since its inception the festival has also included design, performance and other mediums of creative expression.

## COIMBATORE

[Universal Design Conference](#) the first international conference on the aspect of Universal Design and Development by DJ Academy of Design (DJAD) and the British Council was held in India in 2015. The objective of the conference was to inform and influence the practicing designers, architects, urban designers, design teachers students about the importance to learn as well as practice Universal Design to benefit people of India and create a much needed social integration.

## MULTI-CITY

[Designday](#) is a platform for designers to meet, be inspired and discuss and solve problems together. Events are held in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore.

[Kyoorius Design Yatra](#) is a national platform for design community in India that also features international speakers. It focusses on visual communication, including advertising, branding, retail and typography.

While usually held in Goa, the 2016 edition was in Jaipur.

[Typoday](#) supported by IDC Mumbai, is the only annual conference on typography, type design and issues related to type — in South Asia. Each year, the event is hosted by a different design college. For instance, the 2016 edition was at Srishti Bengaluru, while the 2017 will be at the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.

## Venues

### DELHI

[Bikaner House](#) hosts a series of events related to contemporary visual arts and culture, such as exhibitions, talks and panel discussions.

The [British Council](#) provides access to English language training and learning for both students and teachers, and enables opportunities to study in the UK.

[Gujral Foundation](#) hosts a range of events such as talks, panel discussions on a bi-monthly basis at Meherchand Market.

[India Habitat Center](#) facilitates interaction, with its range of facilities, between individuals and institutions working in diverse fields.

[India International Centre](#) as a cultural institution initiates dialogue, and exchange of new ideas and knowledge. Activities conducted range from lectures, seminars, panel discussions, international and national conferences to a variety of cultural events of music, cinema, performing and visual arts, both classical and folk.

### [India Islamic Cultural Centre](#)

promotes discourse based on mutual understanding and amity. It prides in being a liberal and progressive venue for varied conferences and programmes.

### [Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts \(IGNCA\)](#)

is a government-funded arts organization under the Union Ministry of Culture that hosts a range of festivals, events and exhibitions such as the recently concluded Living Lightly or the Made in India design showcase.

[Japan Foundation](#) contributes to the implementation of activities for international cultural exchange, and to promote a socio-cultural understanding of the Japanese among interested individuals.

[Max Mueller Bhavan](#) (Goethe Institut) is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany. It promotes knowledge of the German language and provides cultural and educational programmes that encourage inter-cultural dialogue and involvement.

[The National Crafts Museum](#) has over 35,000 rare and distinctive works, reflecting the continuing tradition of Indian craftspeople through painting, embroidery, textiles, various crafts of clay, stone and wood.

[Pragati Maidan](#) holds various genres of events and trade Festivals that caters to the needs of the people.

[Sanskriti](#) consists of three galleries devoted to Indian pottery, textiles and everyday objects. It also offers residencies and short-term classes in ceramics as well as hosts a

range of events and exhibitions on its campus.

[The Yarn Club](#) hosts talks, panel discussions and exhibitions specific to textile and fashion design.

## MUMBAI

The [Bhau Daji Lad Museum](#) showcases the city's cultural heritage and history through a rare collection of Fine and Decorative Arts. The permanent collection includes miniature clay models, dioramas, maps, lithographs, photographs, and rare books that document the life of the people of Mumbai and the history of the city from the late eighteenth to early-twentieth centuries.

[Ministry of the New](#) is a new and innovative co-working space in the heart of Fort which started in April 2016 by the Dutch design entrepreneur, Marlies Bloemendaal.

[Studio X](#) is an open space for experimental design and research run by the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation of Columbia University

[NCPA \(The National Centre for the Performing Arts\)](#) is a multi-genre culture venue, which is committed to preserving and promoting India's rich and vibrant artistic heritage in the fields of music, dance, theatre, film, literature and photography. It also showcases new and innovative work by Indian and international artists from a diverse range of genres including drama, contemporary dance, orchestral concerts, opera, jazz and chamber music.

## JAIPUR

[Albert Hall](#) with its architecture, woodwork, display and exhibits is a

testament to the preserved Indian arts, crafts and architectural forms. It is a museum and an exhibition space. The building itself is an integral part of the display, with its Indo-Saracenic architecture and stone ornamentation, a source of reference for varied classical Indian styles of design from Mughal to Rajput.

[Anokhi Museum of Hand Printing \(AMHP\)](#) is an archive and museum of hand block making and printing. It is located in a magnificently restored *haveli*, or mansion in Amer, near Jaipur. The museum displays a varied selection of block-printed textiles alongside images, tools and related objects — all chosen to provide an in-depth look into the complexity of this ancient tradition. AHMP strives to inform textile specialists and general public alike. The museum focuses on refining their practice, and also education and community (artisans) development.

[Diggi Palace](#) is a beautiful space in the heart of Jaipur and can be used to host various types of events. It hosts the annual Jaipur Literature Festival.

[Jawahar Kala Kendra](#) is a multi-arts centre, built by the Rajasthan government with the purpose of preserving Rajasthani arts and crafts. JKK's architecture is based on the concept of Indian astrology and resembles the square-grid plan of Jaipur city. The main building contains administrative block, an ethnographic museum, temporary exhibition galleries, open-air theatre, air-conditioned theatre, an arena, library, dormitories, and a coffee house.

## KOLKATA

[Maker's Loft](#) is Kolkata's first 'makerspace' where designers, techies, tinkerers, hobbyists, artists and artisans come to create amazing products. A 'makerspace' is a combination of an enabling community and physical space where professionals, students and hobbyists get access to professional tools, learn how to use those tools, meet and collaborate with other talented individuals to make things that matter to them and their community.

## AHMEDABAD

[Calico Museum of Textiles](#), a premier textile museum of the country, is one of the most celebrated institutions of its kind in the world for its distinguished and comprehensive collection of textiles and artifacts. The Calico collection along with those of Sarabhai Foundation's collection of outstanding Bronzes, Pichhwais, Jain art objects and Indian miniature paintings are housed at the Retreat complex of the Sarabhai Foundation. Both the Calico Museum and the Sarabhai Foundation have major collections and an extensive programme of publications.

[VECHAAR \(Vishalla Environmental Centre for Heritage of Art, Architecture and Research\)](#) was established in the 1980s as a utensils museum. The brainchild of architect Surender C. Patel, it is an effort to cherish and preserve our rich cultural heritage and rare artistic skills and wisdom of our craftsmen. It is an extensive study of utensils from a thousand years ago to present times, that have evolved over different periods of history as a result of our

changing needs and environment. The range varies from leaves or a gourd jug, to modern stainless steel and glass utensils. The metal utensils cover everything from brass, copper, bronze, zinc to German silver.

## BENGALURU

[Chitra Kala Parishad](#) is a center for visual discourse. It is also a learning space for students and visitors and hosts a Fine Arts College offering UG, PG and Research programmes in Visual Arts.

[Jaaga](#) is a innovatively designed space acts as a social gathering place and a space for anyone to showcase. The work displayed mostly has social, political, environmental or artistic value. Jaaga works towards nurturing innovative ventures by providing the space and the core infrastructure and by involving the community.

## PUNE

[Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum](#) has a collection of over 20,000 priceless artifacts which mirror the everyday life of India. These objects are useful to study in terms of India's vernacular design and craft tradition as well as from an anthropological standpoint.

## Awards

[CII Design Excellence Awards](#) | Indian Design & Innovation

[CSS Design Awards](#) | Website Design

[EDIDA Awards](#) | Interior and Product Design

[Good Design Awards](#) | Home Decor and Furnishings

[I Design Awards](#) | Design, Innovation and Product Manufacturing

[IDF Awards](#) | Design Award Program

[Kohler Bold Design Awards](#) | Design for Hospitality, Residential, Public Institution and Retail

[Kyoorius Awards](#) | Comprehensive Awards covering multiple platforms and channels

[Trends Excellence Awards](#) | Architecture and Design

## Books

Ranjan, M. P. Pandya, Ghanshyam. Iyer, Nilam. [Bamboo and Cane Crafts of Northeast India](#). National Institute of Design, 1986. This is a seminal work completed after extensive travel and research in all the seven northeastern states of India.

Jaitly, Jaya. [Crafts Atlas of India](#). Dastakari Haat Samiti, 2012

Dahiya, Rajesh. [Dekho](#). Codesign, 2012.

An anthology of conversations with designers in India, that looks at the development of design in India and highlights approaches that are unique to designing for India.

Ranjan, Aditi. Ranjan, M. P. [Handmade in India: A Geographic Encyclopedia of India Handicrafts](#). Abbeville Press, 2012.

Mathur, Saloni. [India by Design: Colonial History and Cultural Display](#). University of California Press, 2007.

Patel, Divia. [India Contemporary Design: Fashion, Graphics, Interiors](#). Roli Books, 2014.

Caulfield, Fiona. [Love Guides](#) (Love Jaipur, Love Delhi, Love Mumbai, Love Goa etc). 2007

Ranjan, M. P. [Mission Paper for IICD Jaipur](#). 2008.

## Magazines

[Architectural Digest India](#) a source of subject matter concerning Indian and international architecture and design.

[Creative Gaga](#) magazine looks at animation, contemporary art and illustration and graphic design.

[Domus India](#)

[Elle](#) and [Elle Decor India](#) are lifestyle magazines that focuses on fashion, beauty, health, decor and entertainment.

[Home and Design Trends](#) explores products, design concepts and commercial projects that include hotels and restaurants, upcoming luxury residential properties or iconic architectural cities.

[Kyoorius](#) is one of the leading design magazines and platforms for design in India. Kyoorius carefully curates features on contemporary design and innovation in India.

[Marg](#) is one of India's oldest visual arts magazine. Though primarily focussed on art, culture and crafts of India — it offers inspiration to designers looking to understand, appreciate and engage with Indian culture and heritage. The June 2016, volume of [Marg](#) by Mayank Mansingh Kaul is titled, [Cloth and India: 1947-2015](#).

[Motherland](#) was launched by Wieden+Kennedy to go beyond addressing stereotypical general interest issues and provide an in-depth perspective on trends, issues



and ideas — all emanating from contemporary Indian subculture.

[Platform Magazine](#) explores the creative industry through features on art, design writing, film, music, photography, style and other creative genres.

[Pool](#) is a magazine that has been brought out by designers to create a unified platform for creative inspiration. Pool's editorial team is an eclectic mix of young designers, writers and design enthusiasts from various parts of the world.

## Blogs & Online Resources

[Create Culture](#) organizes and curates projects with a focus on contemporary design from the Indian sub-continent. Based in London, Create Culture organizes exhibitions, collaborative projects and workshops to promote designers, designer-makers and craftspeople.

[Design Educators in India](#) is an important social media based forum with senior members from the design and academia fraternity that discuss key issues and challenges related to design education in India.

[Design and Education in School Curriculum](#)

[Design for India](#)

[Design in India](#)

[Design Pataki](#)

[D'source](#) is a web portal and a project on 'Creating Digital-learning Environment for Design' also called 'e-kalpa' is sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resources, Government of India as part of the National Mission in Education through Information and Communication Technology.

[Garland](#) is an e-magazine based out of Australia that also covers various aspects of art, craft and design in India and the greater Asia-Pacific region.

[Google Cultural Institute](#)

[Honey Bee Network](#)

[Indian by Design](#)

[India Design District](#) is a Facebook group that showcases interior design and lifestyle products from India's premium design districts; connecting consumers with the designers behind the brands.

[India Design Mark](#)

[India Design Report by CII](#)

[India Pavillion at London Design Festival 2016](#)

[Tiipoi Blog](#)

[Vision First](#)

## Design Shops

[Chumbak](#) sells a fun and quirky range of fun souvenirs based on contemporary urban India. It looks at themes such as traffic jams, cows on the street and converts that into a graphic pastiche.

[Cinnamon](#) regularly has exhibitions, either show casing a particular designer (be it fashion or product) or sometimes a material which has explored through a new design sensibility. The store's collection emphasizes Indian design with a large selection of unique quality merchandise.

[CMYK Bookstore](#) is based in Delhi and specialises in visual arts and books and magazines.

[Kulture Shop](#) is an online store that aims to fill the gap between "talented designers and savvy lifestyle shoppers" by promoting and selling artworks, products and books by designers.

[Napa Dori](#) is firmly rooted in Indian origins and literally translated means 'leather and thread'. Napa Dori specializes in leather products and stationery and is inspired by Indian sensibilities.

[People Tree](#) retails handmade, recycled hand printed *khadi* clothing, accessories and bags.

[Play Clan](#) fuses graphics with craft. They use an illustrative style to create collections across Fashion, Home, Accessories and Art, unraveling traditional folklore with a contemporary reinterpretation.

[Tiipoi](#) a London based brand and design studio that brings together handmade and industrial production in India.

---

# Notes

---

- 1 Interview with Anubha Kakroo, by phone. December 2016.
- 2 Mansasa Prithvi, Create Culture, "The Diya", Slide 4, <http://indiandesignplatform.com>.
- 3 Divia Patel, *India Contemporary Design: Fashion, Graphics and Interiors*, (Victoria & Albert Museum, Roli Books 2014).
- 4 Arpna Gupta, [Create Culture](#).
- 5 "This is India", <http://www.londondesignfair.co.uk/press-releases/india>, (June 17, 2016).
- 6 Debika Ray, "Where is Indian design education today?", Slide 5, <http://indiandesignplatform.com/>.
- 7 National Innovation Council, Online, [http://innovationcouncilarchive.nic.in/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=36:decade-of-innovation&catid=7:presentation&Itemid=8](http://innovationcouncilarchive.nic.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36:decade-of-innovation&catid=7:presentation&Itemid=8).
- 8 "[Design makes a big impact in small industries](#)", *Design Thoughts*, (December 31, 2016), <https://designdesh.wordpress.com/2016/12/31/design-makes-a-big-impact-in-small-industries/>
- 9 Interview with Anubha Kakroo, by phone. December 2016.
- 10 Interview with A. Balasubramaniam, by phone. December 2016.
- 11 A. Balasubramaniam, "Design is the New Asset", *Design Thoughts*, (August 1, 2015), <https://designdesh.wordpress.com/2015/08/01/design-is-the-new-asset/>.
- 12 A. Balasubramaniam, "Design makes a big impact in small industries", *Design Thoughts*, (December 31, 2016), <https://designdesh.wordpress.com/2016/12/31/design-makes-a-big-impact-in-small-industries/>.
- 13 Hridaysh Deshpande, "*The Future of Design Education in India*", British Council and NID. November 2016.
- 14 Interview with A. Balasubramaniam, by phone. December 2016.
- 15 "Boom time again: Expats make a beeline for India as economy reviving, start-ups buzzing.", (July 3, 2015) <http://www.firstpost.com/business/boom-time-again-expats-make-a-beeline-to-india-as-economy-reviving-start-ups-buzzing-2322942.html>.
- 16 Email correspondence with Rajeev Lunkad. November 2016.
- 17 Hridaysh Deshpande, "*The Future of Design Education in India*", British Council and NID. November 2016.
- 18 Interview with Prof. S. Balaram, by phone. December 2016.
- 19 Interview with Shirsendu Ghose, by phone. December 2016.
- 20 A. Balasubramaniam, "Women in Design", *Design Thoughts*, (March 3, 2016), <https://designdesh.wordpress.com>.
- 21 Indian Design Platform, Slide 10, <http://indiandesignplatform.com/>.
- 22 Interview with Anubha Kakroo, by phone. December 2016.
- 23 Ishan Khosla, "Design Education in India: A Master's Thesis", (May 2005), <https://ishankhosla.wordpress.com/2012/02/11/design-education-in-india/>.
- 24 Interview with Parmesh Shahani, by phone. December 2016.
- 25 "Temporary Programme 2011–2013", Online, <http://sandberg.nl/vacant-nl>.
- 26 Interview with Devika Krishnan, by phone. December 2016.
- 27 Interview with Parmesh Shahani, by phone. December 2016.
- 28 Interview with Anubha Kakroo, by phone. December 2016.
- 29 Interview with Anubha Kakroo, by phone. December 2016.
- 30 Email correspondence with Anand Naorem. December 2016.
- 31 Aarti Betigeri, "Festive Spirit", Slide 7, <http://indiandesignplatform.com/>.

---

## Further Reading

---

[Charles and Ray Eames in India](#),

Saloni Mathur

[Design Education in India: A Master's Thesis by Ishan Khosla](#) [2005]

[Design in India](#)

[D'Source Resource on Craft](#)

[The Future of Design Education](#),

British Council and NID

[India Design Mark](#)

[Mapping India: An Insider's Guide into Architecture, Design and Fashion](#) by

Dutch DFA

[National Design Policy](#) [2007]

[A Partnership of Contrasts: Why the Dutch can be so important for India and vice-versa](#), Dutch DFA Annual Report, 2010. Ishan Khosla

---

## About the Author

---

Ishan Khosla is a designer, teacher and image-maker, currently living in New Delhi, India, where he has been heading [Ishan Khosla Design](#) (IKD) since 2008. Ishan is committed to building strong ties between the Netherlands and India. He was invited to the Netherlands in 2010 by the BNO, and, in 2011 by Dutch DFA to help create partnerships and links with Dutch designers, organisations and educational institutions. He subsequently wrote, [A Partnership of Contrasts](#) for the Dutch DFA 2010 Annual Report. Since his invitation, Ishan has worked on several Dutch design initiatives such as [Here, There, Everywhere](#) by Droog Lab at Dharavi, Mumbai in 2011, and, [Delhi 2050](#) by Anne Feenstra. In 2015, while

working on the graphic design for the Bihar Museum, IKD invited Dutch design studio, Mijksenaar to work on the wayfinding aspects of the museum. IKD has also hosted public talks for Dutch designers — such as, [Jurgen Bey](#), [Roel Stavorinus](#) as well as students from the [Design Academy Eindhoven](#). Ishan continues to seek partnerships with Dutch designers, organisations, educational institutions and the government.

IKD has developed the first tribal digital typeface. Based on *godna* (tattoo) art from Chattisgarh, and designed in collaboration with three tribal women (Ram Keli, Sunita and Sumitra) from the marginalised

tattoo art community of the Gond tribe in central India. This work will be shown at *Crossing Visions* at Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan. Ishan's work has been exhibited since 2000 and includes exhibitions such as [Fracture: New Directions on Contemporary Textiles](#) at the Devi Art Foundation; *Edge Condition*, London and *Common Ground* at Gallery OED Kochi. Some of his work belongs to the permanent collection at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney and has been published in various books including *Typographic Universe*, *Found Type*, *Asian Graphics Now!*, *India Contemporary Design: Fashion, Graphics, Interiors* by the Victoria & Albert Museum.

---

## Contributors

---

The author would like to thank the following experts who contributed greatly to many of the key aspects mentioned in this report. Their expertise and insights have greatly helped to enrich this report.

A. Balasubramaniam | Product Designer [January Design](#)

Abhimanyu Nohawar | Product Designer [Kiba Design](#)

Amit Gulati | Product Designer [Incubis](#)

Anand Naorem | Type Designer [Brand New Type](#)

Anubha Kakroo | Brand Strategist &

Educator

Arpna Gupta | Design Curator [Create Culture](#)

Devika Krishnan | Craft Specialist & Revivalist

Divya Ramachandran | Professor Raffles Millennium International

Lakshmi Murthy | Social Designer [Vikalp Design](#)

Dr. Madan Meena | Artist & Folklorist

Parmesh Shahani | Thinker [Godrej India Culture Lab](#)

Rajeev Lunkad | Founder

[directcreate.com](#)

S. Balaram | Dean [DJ Academy of Design](#)

Sangita Shroff | Design Educator

Shirsendu Ghose | Social Development [Fourth Dimension Services](#)

Shuchi Mathur | Designer & Educator | [Ekadha](#) | [Design Educators in India](#)

Sucharita Beniwal | Textile Design Faculty [NID Ahmedabad](#)

Willem Woudenberg | Brand Specialist [Brand Dialogue](#)