

Anant National University and Penn GSE Host ICERM 2025 to Develop India-based Indigenous Research Project

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Anant National University, in collaboration with the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, United States (also known as Penn GSE), hosted the Indigenous Consciousness Education Research Methodology Convening on 25-26 July 2025 at the Anant campus. The convening brought together leading scholars, education policy experts and practitioners to explore Indigenous Consciousness research methodologies, establishing the foundation for an India-based research project – Indigenous Consciousness Methodology Education Research Project (ICER).



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The convening marked a significant step in advancing Indigenous Consciousness Methodologies, an approach that honours local knowledge systems, prioritises community-engaged practices and fosters sustainable, equitable educational frameworks. Through ICER, set to be launched for the academic year 2025-2026, Anant aims to inform the design and development of education policy by ensuring that Indigenous perspectives remain central to shaping impactful and culturally responsive learning models.

This initiative is closely aligned with the vision outlined in India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates for inclusive, locally grounded education models that preserve and promote indigenous knowledge systems.

Launching the convening, **Dr Sanjeev Vidyarthi, Provost, Anant National University**, observed, *"Anant National University is a diverse and dynamic institution on the move where creative ideas evolve into purposeful action and where students learn to lead meaningful change in our rapidly changing world. Indigenous knowledge forms an integral part of our design pedagogy, and this convening perfectly aligns with our*

educational philosophy that integrates indigenous knowledge and contemporary design practices."

Dr Leland S McGee, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Penn GSE and Senior Associate Director, GSE Office of Student Success, University of Pennsylvania and a SCoPE Scholar at Anant National University, said, *"Indigenous knowledge systems are often associated with only the tribal communities. However, they form an integral part of the traditional knowledge of countless communities across the world. Through this convening, we aim to explore how indigenous knowledge and its impact can help us better design education, policy and systems for the betterment of future generations."*

"The intent of the convening was to interrogate, expose and undo the dangers and desires of colonisation in education through indigenous consciousness. We focused on bringing all the stakeholders of education into conversation, including policy-makers, teachers, researchers and students. Collectively, we aspire to contribute to creating an educational framework that listens deeply, acts justly and honours all," added **Dr Diti Vyas, Associate Professor | School of Creative Practices and Entrepreneurship (SCoPE), Anant National University.**

The convening advances Anant's collaboration with Penn GSE, expanding efforts in global education innovation. Anant and Penn GSE previously hosted The Future of Learning Collaborative in 2023, which led to the launch of an influential White Paper as an urgent call to redesign the global education system in response to sweeping changes that are reshaping human existence.

Through the ongoing partnership, the two universities foster cooperative research, facilitate international exchanges, enhance the quality of learning, extend the reach of both institutions and collaborate on the exchange of academic materials and initiatives that advance matters of mutual

academic interests.

A leading Ivy League institution, the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (Penn GSE) has a century-long tradition of producing education leaders driven by innovation, research and social impact. Penn GSE actively partners with schools, universities and communities around the world to improve educational access and equity.

As part of its mission to promote global engagement in all its forms, the University of Pennsylvania, through Penn Global, administers a competitive global engagement grant programme. This initiative provides resources to faculty and staff to support a broad range of research, teaching, service and engagement activities both globally and in specific focus countries and regions.

With this convening, Anant has taken another major step toward equitably inclusive education, ensuring that Indigenous knowledge systems receive due recognition and representation in research and policy discourse. This effort reinforces Anant's vision to drive innovative, locally relevant education methodologies and materials rooted in India's vibrant local cultures, regional diversities and national aspirations.

About Anant National University

Anant National University, India's premier design university, is dedicated to training students to devise solutions for global problems. The X in Design X is the symbol drawn from mathematics, representing enhancement. This new learning approach multiplies traditional design pedagogy with liberal arts disciplines, emerging technologies and knowledge drawn from hands-on community experiences to help understand our world better and to devise impactful solutions.

Our multidisciplinary undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes in design, architecture, climate action and visual

arts harness knowledge from various disciplines and traditional practices to integrate it with cutting-edge technology to address diverse challenges. We train our designers to become solutionaries – revolutionary thinkers with a solution-oriented mindset.

Anant National University has been recognised as the Centre of Excellence by the Government of Gujarat, highlighting our efforts to provide our students with world-class education, innovative pedagogy, high employability and enhanced entrepreneurial and research opportunities. Anant has also received the prestigious '**5-Star Rating**' in the category of Architecture and a '**4-Star Rating**' in the University category in the Gujarat State Institutional Rating Framework (GSIRF) 2023-24. These recognitions reinforce our commitment to creating a world-class institution of great eminence and excellence.

