# SRM AP Faculty Share Key Learnings from Academic Visit to Carnegie Mellon University

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A four-member faculty cohort from **SRM University–AP** recently concluded an academic visit to Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), USA, gaining valuable insights into global best practices in artificial intelligence (AI), interdisciplinary research, and student-centric pedagogy.
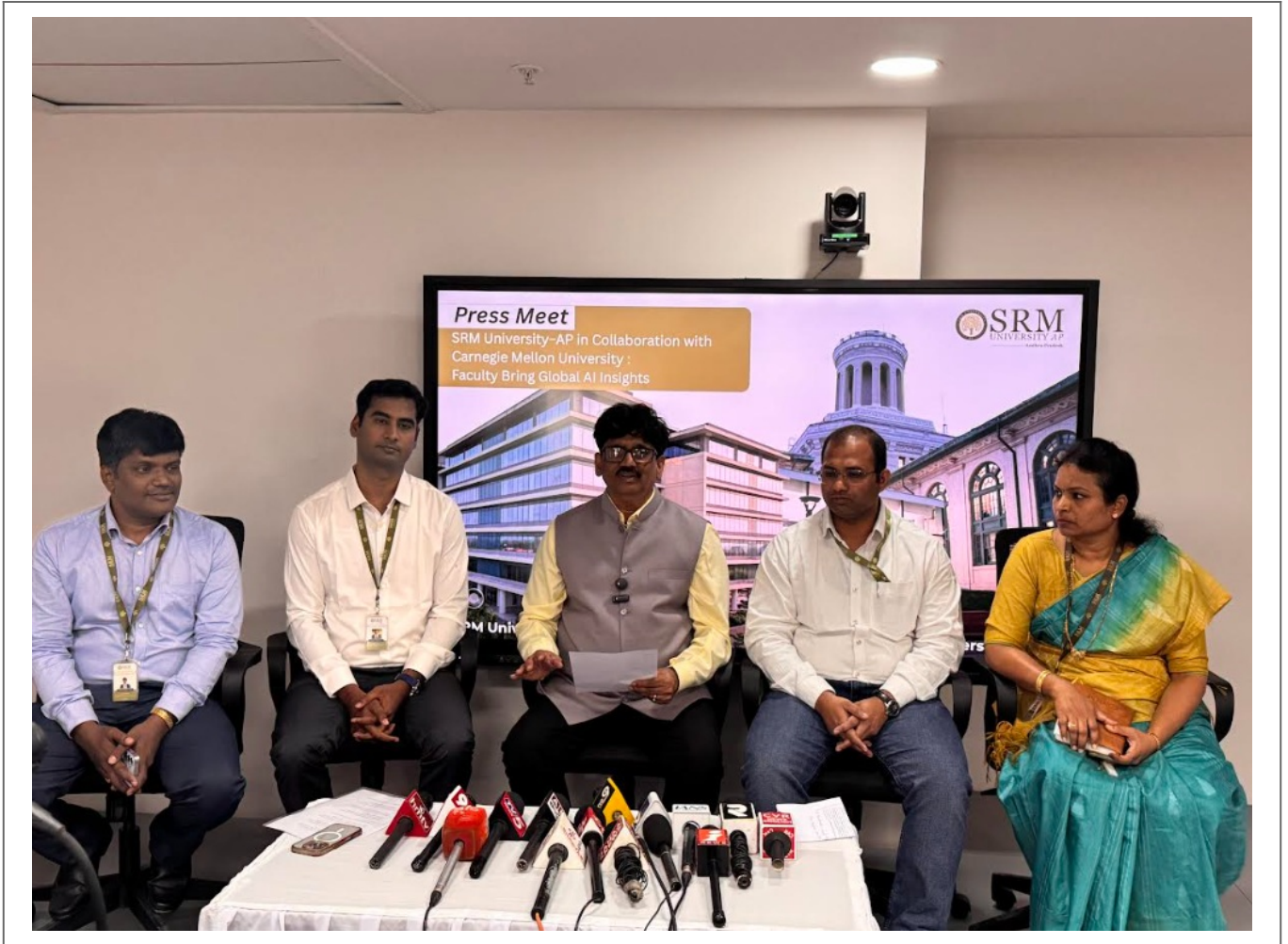
Dr M Naveen Kumar, Dr Sunil Chinnadurai, Prof. Ch Satish Kumar, Dr Ashu Abdul, Dr Saleti Sumalatha (left to right) addressing the media

The first cohort comprised Dr Saleti Sumalatha, Dr M Naveen Kumar, Dr Ashu Abdul, Assistant Professors, Department of Computer Science and Engineering along with Dr Sunil Chinnadurai, Associate Professor, Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering. Together, they represented the domains of computer science, robotics, and AI-driven research.

SRM AP faculty cohort along with University leadership

During their visit, the faculty engaged closely with CMU researchers and academicians to understand how AI is seamlessly integrated into academic programmes, research initiatives, and industry collaborations. Key areas of focus included AI applications in quantum computing, language models, robotics, and interdisciplinary projects addressing real-world and societal challenges.

Speaking about the visit, **Prof. Ch Satish Kumar, Vice Chancellor, SRM AP**, said, *"Our engagement with Carnegie Mellon University offered valuable global perspectives on integrating AI into higher education. Faculty members play a crucial role in systematically embedding artificial intelligence across the curriculum, research initiatives, and institutional strategy. Such international exposure enables us to benchmark our*

practices and further strengthen SRM AP's vision of research-led education."

He also noted that the faculty members were actively involved in research discussions and academic collaborations, which will contribute significantly to meeting global academic and research standards at SRM AP.

Reflecting on collaborative learning practices, **Dr M Naveen Kumar** observed, *"The emphasis on peer programming, Think—Pair—Share models, and collaborative problem-solving creates an environment where students actively participate in learning, enhancing critical thinking and adaptability."*

Sharing her observations on pedagogy and student engagement, Dr Saleti Sumalatha said, *"Carnegie Mellon University follows a deeply student-centric approach to teaching. Methods such as reflection-based learning, critique-based activities, design sprints, pair and mob programming, inquiry-driven discussions, and indirect assessment help students build strong conceptual understanding."*

She added that implementing several of these approaches in her own database courses resulted in a 100 per cent student success rate.

Highlighting CMU's research ecosystem, Dr Ashu Abdul noted that the university places strong emphasis on societal impact and industry relevance. Students across academic levels are actively involved in addressing real-world industry challenges. He cited insights shared by Professors at CMU who

collaborated with Meta, on projects such as compact AI-based language models for speech for language-impaired children, smart eyewear for individuals with memory loss and dementia, and other futuristic innovations.

"*Beyond publishing research papers, CMU prioritises building market-ready prototypes and refining them through user feedback and market research. This application-driven approach plays a key role in producing industry-ready graduates*," he added.

Commenting on advanced research infrastructure, **Dr Sunil Chinnadurai** said, "*The visit provided valuable exposure to cutting-edge work in robotics and AI, particularly hyperspectral robotic vision. This has significant applications in assistive robotics and automation*." He further noted that the interactions led to the initiation of a collaborative research project involving undergraduate students from SRM *AP,* offering them hands-on, industry-relevant experience.

Faculty also interacted with Dr Raj Reddy, widely regarded as the Father of AI in India, who shared insights on strengthening AI laboratories and aligning academic research with industry needs at SRM *AP.* The faculty plan to disseminate these learnings through a Faculty Development Programme to ensure broader institutional impact. The second Cohort has already departed for CMU.

The outcomes of the visit are expected to strengthen AI integration, research capacity, and innovative teaching

practices at SRM University–AP, reinforcing its commitment to globally relevant education and interdisciplinary research.