

For Immediate Release

The First UNESCO Chair on Museums in the Asia Pacific Region and Second in the World

Ahmedabad/Paris/Brisbane, XXX 2021: Launched by UNESCO in 1992, with a vision to promote international cooperation and networking between universities and research institutions, the UNESCO Chairs Programme inducted in 2021, the **UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Museums and Sustainable Heritage Development**, anchored in the **International Centre for Inclusive Cultural Leadership** at Anant National University (AnantU).

The UNESCO Chair on **Inclusive Museums and Sustainable Heritage Development** is the first on Museums in the Asia Pacific region. It is second worldwide after Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris. Serving as a think tank and bridge-builder between academia, civil society, local communities, research, and policy-making this Chair will promote and support the development of museum policies in the region. Designed to promote excellence and innovation, the Chair will establish new modes and modalities of locating culture in sustainable development. AnantU through this facility will provide critical direction to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) with a focus on the built environment and inclusive design. Moreover, it will establish a nexus of collaborations that will benefit institutions across the Asia Pacific region.

Chair holder Professor Dr Amareswar Galla, an accredited facilitator of UNESCO, says that being inducted into the UNESCO Chairs Programme enables knowledge-sharing on a range of themes underpinning the four pillars of sustainable development – cultural, economic, social and environmental. Facilitating UN SDGs, the chair will help build capacities and capabilities in the development of UNESCO and UN Standard Setting among the countries of the region. This will allow the Chair to advocate the UN Agenda 2030 and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) focus on responsible heritage tourism and post pandemic poverty alleviation.

Commenting on the induction as the UNESCO Chair, Professor Galla said, “It is a matter of great pleasure and pride at being inscribed in the UNESCO UNITWIN Network. We look forward to establishing global partnerships and collaborations around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and contribute significantly to UNESCO’s priority areas on Education, Natural and Social Sciences, Culture and Communication. We aim to provide the cultural leadership that is much needed in the region for addressing the paradigm shift from conventional museology to a global centre for excellence and knowledge generation for museums.”

“The pandemic has resulted in new threats to the level of vigilance required to secure museums and heritage sites. The 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Cultural Property provides the framework to address this situation and it is imperative for State Parties to work with greater national coordination and on a multilateral and regional basis with their neighbours,” he further stated.

“I warmly welcome Prof. Amareswar Galla, UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Museums and Sustainable Heritage Development into our UNESCO family in India. He has over three decades of working with UNESCO globally and one of the few that has engaged first hand with all the six international standard setting cultural instruments of UNESCO”, said Eric Falt, Director and UNESCO Representative in New Delhi.

About Anant National University:

Anant National University, is located in India's first UNESCO World Heritage City of Ahmedabad. It aims to bridge the gap between contemporary socio-economic challenges and sustainable solutions through design thinking. It promotes holistic design education with a liberal arts perspective. The academic experience at the university focuses on developing the self, while simultaneously building domain expertise and providing industry exposure.

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