

Anant Fellows Participate in Singapore International Water Week 2024

Ahmedabad, 12th September 2024: Fellows from the Anant Fellowship in Sustainability and Built Environment recently presented innovative proposals aimed at enhancing the resilience of India's coastal communities at the prestigious Singapore International Water Week 2024. These proposals were developed as part of the "Unbuilding Architecture" module under "The Archipelago Agenda," which was first introduced at the UN Water Conference in New York City in March 2023. This year, the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) hosted the "Condensations" programme, where Anant Fellows Mishal Desai and Gopika Rao actively participated, contributing their insights to a student workshop.

Mishal Desai, a hypnotherapist and farmer from Gujarat with expertise in psychology and clinical hypnosis, and Gopika Rao, an economics graduate from Thiruvananthapuram with aspirations in Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG), represented the Fellowship at the workshop.

Initially established by Pratt Institute (NY USA – has an on-going partnership with Anant), Pace University, and Singapore University of Technology and Design, the Archipelago Agenda brings together stakeholders to develop scalable, nature-based solutions for water scarcity and safety in urban archipelagos. India's Daman/Diu Islands were added to the agenda through Anant National University, the only Indian University partner in the initiative.

Diu, an island region, faces critical challenges such as water scarcity, reliance on mainland resources, and vulnerable water access. As a microcosm of global climate change struggles, Diu offers a unique context for developing resilient living solutions. The Fellows researched Diu's built and unbuilt environments, analysing its architecture, design, and layout within India's development framework. These explorations challenge conventional architectural paradigms and seek sustainable design solutions aligned with the island's cultural values.

Divided into teams focusing on both micro and macro scales, the Fellows created localized interventions and masterplans. Micro-level solutions incorporated traditional knowledge in an integrated design project, while macro-level analyses examined existing and proposed developments to create a comprehensive plan for sustainable development. These proposals, spanning urban and residential spaces, advocated for multi-use areas that promote collaboration, community engagement, and sustainability. The synergy between built and unbuilt environments was central, aiming to address inefficiencies and promote a resilient future.

The Anant Fellowship in Sustainability and Built Environment is Anant National University's flagship one-year residential programme, empowering future solutionaries to design and preserve an equitable built environment. The programme has trained over 160 Fellows from 18 countries across 6 continents, offering hands-on learning guided by experts in academia and industry.

About Anant Fellowship in Sustainability and Built Environment

A global programme that prepares and empowers solutionaries to design, build and preserve an equitable built environment. Since 2017, this one-year residential programme has trained more than 160 Fellows from across 6 continents and 18 countries. This Fellowship was designed by experts in academia and industry practitioners to provide Fellows with a hands-on experiential learning environment. The curriculum is a dynamic combination of disciplines such as urban development and sustainability, art and culture, philosophy, social sciences, science and technology, design thinking, gender studies among others. Over the course of the year, Fellows are challenged to identify, research, design and implement a practical solution to a real-life problem in their local communities. The multidisciplinary curriculum offers learning opportunities that widen the perspective of the Fellows and help build relevant skill sets, regardless of their past educational backgrounds and their future goals. The curriculum introduces concepts in the fields of design, architecture, technology, liberal arts and management amongst others.

About Anant National University

Anant National University, India's first DesignX university, is dedicated to training young designers to devise solutions to problems through creative thinking, fusing contemporary technologies and indigenous practices. Our DesignX way is unique in helping young designers develop a better understanding of the context we live in through community immersion, innovation and collaboration. The core of our pedagogy is sustainable design multiplied by a host of knowledge disciplines and technology to make problem-solving impactful. Our multidisciplinary undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes in design, architecture, climate action and visual arts harness the 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.