**This is our draft deck in case it helps you get some context Pankaj** [**https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ZupvnkOEDT\_Rv\_XcDOxyyrN5Eg25eU0nVfN5bxjIb70/edit?usp=sharing**](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ZupvnkOEDT_Rv_XcDOxyyrN5Eg25eU0nVfN5bxjIb70/edit?usp=sharing)

**Website Details**

[**https://pk500.github.io/theCharity/about.html**](https://pk500.github.io/theCharity/about.html)

**Landing Page:**

* *Problem Data*
* *Vision*
* *Mission*
* *Goal*
* *Testimonials*

**About Us**

* Why
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**Join us**

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**Partners/Supporters**

**Our Inspiration**

* Links to some letters and videos that inspire us

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**Content**

**Landing Page:**

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**About Us (All new pages)**

* Why

After 70+ years of independence, there is a lot to cherish as a country. Our founding mothers and fathers conceived an idea of India that was inclusive, bold and courageous. They worked hard to realise that dream, and we have come a long way by walking the path envisioned by them. When we visualize the years of 1930s and 1940s, , we feel the selfless spirit of service and boundless love for the nation that made this possible. Although India has progressed over the years, we still face numerous challenges like- agrarian crisis, Naxalism, a major education and healthcare crisis etc. However, we no longer see an organised effort to address them and/or prepare ourselves for futuristic problems that the 21st century will bring.

Today as a nation, we are crippled by leadership crisis at multiple levels in our system. The institutions of our democracy, seem to lack a moral high ground; there is a dearth of leaders who operate with the spirit of service and have *antyodaya* as their goal. We also witness a lack of coordination and collaborative effort in the four pillars of democracy.

We know that 36% of MPs and MLAs have criminal charges against them; 3.3 Cr court cases are pending and the per capita spending on legal aid is only Rs 0.75; India ranks number 138 in World Press Freedom Report ’18; 20 Cr Indians sleep hungry and 3000 children die of starvation- every day indicating the broken public delivery system. We also know that in India political parties still prefer older party members. In 2014, the Parliament had just 12 MPs under 30, with only 53% of its members under 55; while the average age of an MP was typically above 50.

* How

Indian School of Democracy (ISD) envisions nurturing leaders who will be the epitome of *principled leadership* and serve India with the goal to reach the unreached. In phase I, ISD will nurture young people for political and governance space, and create pathways for them to serve after the program.

We will do this through a year-long residential program, which will be a blend of hard skills, immersions and engagements to understand India in a deeper manner. Our students, aged 25-40 years, will go on to become policymakers, politicians at the village, district, city, state and national level, courageous journalists and legal access/change champions.

**Three foundations of the program:**

* **Relevant hard skills** like policy analysis, negotiations, constitutional law, communications, mobilization, public finance, psephology etc.
* **Inner Transformation** through immersion and practice; development of personal leadership, courageous informed imagination, bolstered spiritual confidence and moral compass
* **A network of peers and mentors,** leading to sustained and collective impact in public space

(Theory of Change &) *Timeline*

**2018-20:** Research to deeply understand:

1. Ecosystem and target audience

2. Program Design

3. Opportunities post ISD

4. Financial and Governance Model

5. Alumni Engagement Model

We will conduct short term programs in 2019 and 2020 to test some modules across the country

**2020-21:** Outreach and preparation for the launch of the year-long program- curriculum, professors, partnerships logistics etc.

**August 15 2020: Launch application for the year-long residential program**

**August 15 2021: Welcome the first cohort of Indian School of Democracy.**

\*These are tentative timelines and subject to change as per our research outcomes.

Team

**Hemakshi Meghani:**

[Hemakshi](https://www.linkedin.com/in/hemakshimeghani) has completed her Master's in Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) as a World Bank Graduate Scholar. She started her journey as a Teach For India fellow in Mumbai and then has worked in the implementation of education policy with Indus Action. She has also worked as a consultant with Boston Consulting Group (BCG) on an education state reform project in Odisha and was a part of two startups in education and socio-political consulting space. While at HKS, she served in leadership roles, which include as the Co-Chair, India Conference at Harvard and on the Executive Committee of Women at HKS. As a Women And Public Policy fellow, she spent her summer with BRAC, Bangladesh to increase legal access for women with their social innovation team. Hemakshi has attended and facilitated various leadership forums across the world and is a trained coach in adaptive leadership. She is very passionate about bottom-up social reform and making democracy work for every citizen of the country.

**Prakhar Bhartiya:**

In 2008 Prakhar founded [Youth](http://youthallianceofindia.org/) Alliance, that aims to nurture empathetic leaders who apply their head, heart, and hands to understand the world and drive change. Youth Alliance designs leadership and experiential learning journeys for young people to raise awareness about self, about careers in social change and inculcate a spirit of service across sectors. In the last 8 years, Youth Alliance has worked closely with around 600 youngsters- among these 35 have started their own social enterprises, 250 have joined development organisations, and many continue to be active volunteers.

Prakhar was the part of the Teach For India movement as the pioneer batch fellow in 2009. He extensively talks about empathic leadership and has been spreading this at national and international forums. His aim in life is to shift the course of Indian politics from caste based politics to politics worthy of the human spirit. He is at SIPA, Columbia University from 2018-20 on a full scholarship to study MPA and build the idea of ISD further.

Advisory Board

**Ujwal Thakar**

Ujwal Thakar has rich and varied experience spanning the banking financial industry and the development sector in India. He is considered a doyen of retail banking in India and also one of the leaders of the movement of professionals into the social space in India. Ujwal was the CEO of Pratham, India’s largest NGO in the elementary education space for six years and later the CEO of GiveIndia which is India’s only web-based philanthropy platform. Ujwal is currently Senior Adviser to KPMG in their BFSI (banking, insurance, and financial services industry) practice, where he brings 28 years of banking industry experience across the nationalized, private sector and foreign banks in India. He has been the country head for the retail banking business in Standard Chartered Bank and BNP Paribas. He has been supporting and building many social enterprises in India.

**Prof. Ashutosh Varshney**

Ashutosh Varshney is Sol Goldman Professor of International Studies and the Social Sciences, and Professor of Political Science at Brown University, where he also directs the Center for Contemporary South Asia. Previously, he taught at Harvard (1989-98) and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2001-2008).

His books include Battles Half Won: India’s Improbable Democracy (2013), Collective Violence in Indonesia (2009), Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India (Yale 2002), India in the Era of Economic Reforms (1999), and Democracy, Development and the Countryside: Urban-Rural Struggles in India (Cambridge 1995).

He is currently working on three projects: a multi-country project on cities and ethnic conflict; political economy of urbanization in India; and Indian politics and society between elections. He served on the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s Millennium Task Force on Poverty (2002-5). He has also served as an adviser to the World Bank, UNDP and the Club of Madrid.

**Prof. Simon Chauchard**

Simon Chauchard is a Lecturer in Discipline in Comparative Politics at the School of Public and International Affairs, Columbia University. He received his PhD from NYU in 2011 and previously taught at Dartmouth.

His research focuses on ethnic politics, voting behaviour, political representation and politicians-citizens relations in India. Recent works have appeared in Political Opinion Quarterly, the American Political Science Review, Comparative Political Studies, and Asian Survey. His book, titled, Why Representation Matters: The Meaning of Ethnic Quotas in Rural India (Cambridge University Press), combines qualitative work and a series of innovative surveys to explore the impact of caste-based reservation policies on everyday intergroup relations in India’s villages. Ongoing projects rely on qualitative, quantitative and experimental methodologies to explore political brokerage and the role that money and other forms of influence play in Indian elections.

**Tara Krishnaswamy**

Tara Krishnaswamy is a Software Director at an MNC in Bengaluru. She is co-founder of Shakti, a pan-India, non partisan citizens pressure group working to get more women into State Assemblies & Parliament. She is also a co-founder of Citizens For Bengaluru, a grassroots people’s movement with landmark campaigns for #SteelFlyoverBeda, mass transit and citizens manifesto in Bengaluru.

On the policy front, she has worked on Lokpal amendments, Justice Verma Committee for Rape Law amendments and presented to multiple Rajya Sabha Standing Committees. She was a speaicl invitee to the 15th Finance Commission workshop on Fiscal Federalism wih Finance Ministers of several states, hosted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. She was a member of the Joint Fact Finding Committee on Andhra Pradesh Special Category Status constituted by Pawan Kalyan.

She is an independent author on federalism, citizenship, gender and caste issues with First Post, The News Minute, Live Mint, News Laundry, Times of India, Hindustan Times etc.

**Testimonials**

1. “ISD is a crucial initiative for India and its political leadership. While a lot of work is done at the policy and systems levels, little is done to work on the "inner core" of people who enter public life- a core based on integrity, deep humility and a spirit of dedicating oneself to service. ISD aspires to work on this and if even moderately successful, it can have a huge impact on our future as a nation. Each of us owes to do the most we can to help make this dream a reality. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to contribute towards this idea in whatever way I can.” - Venkat N. Krishnan

**Join us**

**Team**

We are a fast growing team and offer a rare opportunity to truly nurture moral leadership movement in Indian polity. Foundation of any good organization depends on the strength of the team. It is the team that decides the fate of vision and we are looking forward to building a strong team.

Watch this space we will open up a few positions.

If your heart resonates with what we are envisioning to do, then we would love to hear from you!

**Contribute**

‘Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has’

-Margaret Mead

The quest of transforming democracy and rebuilding faith in leadership is of immense responsibility and we want to work/partner with people who can own the vision and work on it. At this point in time when we are just starting, we believe it is people like you who will want to be with us on this journey.

Below are the ways in which one can contribute to building ISD:

* Volunteer/Intern:

Volunteers/Interns are one of the strongest part of several early-stage organizations. If you think this idea resonates with you, and you want to both learn and contribute, then this is the place for you. We will open the application for the next cycle of in July. Follow this space to know more and if you are interested in post-July opportunity, fill this form and we will reach out to when we open our applications. The duration of this should be a minimum of 2 months and atleast 8-10 hours/week. https://forms.gle/vaZe539YqC3khbmf6

* Ideas

Have had an ‘aha’ moment on how to help us? Don’t be shy, let us know! We continuously have some ‘ideas’ which develop into something powerful too and no one can stop an idea whose time has come.

Share your idea of building a strong democracy here.

<https://forms.gle/bBmeXyy7fR8zXCvP6>

* Collaborate

Our founding fathers and mothers didn’t do it all alone. Though all of us at ISD are passionate achievers, we know that we do not know everything. Surprise yourself with the value you can add to our country, with us

For collaboration write to Hemakshi, hemakshi@indianschoolofdemocracy.org

**Partners/Supporters**

1. India Welfare Trust
2. Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies
3. Lal Family Foundation
4. Thermax Foundation
5. Ujwal Thaker

**Our Inspiration (All new pages) -**

Links to some letters and videos that inspire us

1. <https://www.brainpickings.org/2013/01/30/tagore-gandhi-letters/>
2. <https://scroll.in/article/827301/we-must-re-read-the-essay-that-reminds-us-of-the-time-indias-political-leaders-encouraged-debate>
3. <https://mettacenter.org/definitions/gloss-concepts/trusteeship/>

**Contact**

[contact@indianschoolofdemocracy.org](mailto:contact@indianschoolofdemocracy.org)

**Testimonials**

Ujwal Thakar:

Venkat Krishnan: Principal Trustee, India Welfare Trust

Amit Chandra: Managing Director at Bain Capital Private Equity; Founder and Trustee, Ashoka University

**Landing Page Content**

**Vision:** *Redefining public leadership*

**Mission:** Nurture principled leaders with moral courage and imagination, to work on strengthening four pillars of Indian democracy- legislative, executive, judiciary and media

**Goal:** By 2047, 25% elected representatives in Parliament and State assemblies of India, will be principled leaders working collaboratively to make democracy work for *all* citizens.

**B**

**Vision:** *Redefining public leadership*

**Mission:** Nurture principled leaders with moral courage and imagination, to work on strengthening four pillars of Indian democracy- politics, bureaucracy,  judiciary and media

**Goal:** By 2047, 25% elected representatives in Parliament and State assemblies of India, will be principled leaders working collaboratively to make democracy work for *all* citizens.

**Our Why:**

Four generations back when we got independence we were in extremely poor state. Over decades

Every generation needs leaders who inspire and truly believe in *antyodaya* (uplifting of the weakest section of the society).

A lot of people vote in India but democracy is working only for a few. A large section of India remains deprived of access to basic needs. Public service is the most noble profession, but

We dream of building a powerful, non-partisan institution and nurture leaders that have the spirit of selfless service like the ones who led our country to independence. It took a Mahatma to build a Sabarmati Ashram and we imagine ISD to be 21st century Sabarmati Ashram. We need to put together our collective energy behind building an institution which will nurture the leaders for this generation.

**Our How:**

Indian School of Democracy (ISD) envisions nurturing leaders who will be the epitome of *principled leadership* and serve India with the goal to reach the unreached.

1. Year Long residential program focused on political leadership
2. Short term programs in multiple languages
3. Executive programs for media, bureaucracy and judiciary
4. Immersive journeys

Our flagship year long residential program will be a blend of hard skills, immersions and engagements to understand India in a deeper manner. Our students, aged 25-40 years, will go on to become politicians at village, district, city, state and national level, campaign managers, political aids, political activists etc.

Our programs will have a decade long mentorship support. The gestation period in these fields is long and for a community to truly hold each other, we believe having a group of mentors and peers who reiterate the value system will go a long way in making our vision a reality.

**Three foundations of the program:**

1. **Inner Transformation** through immersion and practice; development of personal leadership and moral compass
2. **Relevant hard skills** like policy analysis, negotiations, constitutional law, communications, mobilization, public finance, psephology etc.
3. **A community of peers and mentors,** leading to sustained and collective impact in public space

**Team:**

**Anita Manoharan**

**Hemakshi Meghani**

**Kailas Gite**

**Prakhar Bhartiya**

**C**

**ISD: 21st Century gurukul for democracy**

**Comparative Analysis: Top Global Universities and new-age Sabarmati Ashram**

The ancient Indian education system was based on the foundations of trust on the teacher, discipline of the student and rigour of the place. Our gurukul system was a family system away from the blood family, where people took care of each other, were also determined to grow, learn and be useful to others. While times have changed, there were merits in that system that can be adapted to today's time,  and used to inculcate the fervour of self-directed learners and the ability to live in a community.

In modern times, few have tried to bring together the learning from the past and use them in the modern context to nurture leaders. Mahatma Gandhi experimented with community living and nurturing self-directed learners through his ashrams, most importantly Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad.

The modern world is changing fast and with the advent of technology, it seems much more connected, fast and ever-changing. In these times, we need to understand the importance of slowing down, to get ourselves rooted in reality and yet be effective in the modern world. We need mindful, empathetic and compassionate public leaders with a strong moral compass and extraordinary courage to surrender for public service. We need to use this technology and not get used by it. Our new-age leaders need to make use of the new age world to extend public service and not fall prey to the noise that the world is surrounded by.

And hence the need for a new age institution that is rooted in the spirit of Sabarmati Ashram and skills of the Harvard. The aim of Indian School of Democracy is not to get stuck in the binary of “or” but to chose “add” and build a 21st Century Sabarmati Ashram, that will serve the people with modern tools and be rooted in age-old principles of service.

If we typically lay down the best features of any Top 10 universities across the world, here is what they stand for:

* Exceptional Faculty and research
* Students with great *academic* credentials (with focus on English speakers)
* Strong alumni connect
* Market credibility and thus acceptance of their alumni in the outer world
* Diverse peer group
* History and Legacy
* Facilities and Infrastructure (library, campus etc.)
* Curriculum and research around the need for current and future market/ global needs
* Exposure to their students (capstone, innovation labs, guest lectures, visits, partnerships etc.)
* Scholarships and endowment

With these skills and exposure, the universities nurture leaders with great technical skills to be part of global market space. The alumni of these universities are set for success for what the world offers but these institutions are ***not designed*** to nurture self-directed learners, who will keep social justice at the centre and be prepared to sail against the storm to keep their sense of idealism alive. In rare cases where the alumni remain the torchbearers of change, it is difficult to say that it is due to the design of their experience in the university, and is often more because of their personal commitment and inner readiness to fight the odds.

**Change Model:** (From a course at Columbia University)

Creating a revolutionary change has four core components:

* Phase 1: Learning to think about change:Identifying and learning about the problem, purpose and readiness for change in society, including dealing with resistance and opposition.
* Phase 2: Learning to prepare for change: Building a team or organization of leaders and a base of support; developing learning capabilities to grow and adapt and the capacity to think, move and act strategically.
* Phase 3: Learning to lead change: Building awareness, buy-in and pressure; engaging and generating energy and commitment; increasing recognition and leveraging power.
* Phase 4: Learning to Sustain Change: Maintaining change; evaluating outcomes; celebrating success, building on setbacks and bouncing back.

Often people or their energy fizzles out after the second phase or maximum it goes till phase three. We need to nurture leaders who reach and live through phase three and four.

**What can a new- age Sabarmati Ashram offer?**

The skills, technical know-how, the credibility that most universities offer are of utmost importance and they can become great tools for leaders who are rooted in unflinching desire for social justice.

A Sabarmati Ashram model, adds following commitment/values to these leaders:

* Commitment and practices for personal transformation
* Habit of discipline
* Space for self-directed learning
* Community to fall back for support and inspiration
* Simplicity, courage and grit to sail through all odds
* Respect for the environment and local wisdom

If we select any global leader from history who has brought about a big social change, these values have been at the centre of it. Be it Gandhi, Mandela, MLK, Mother Teresa or Rosa Parks - all of them were rooted in inner change and thus could sustain social change.

**Way Ahead:**

India is at a critical juncture - the last few decades have been marred with the crisis of leaders that can keep people at the centre of their life. We need people who are committed to public service and also have the skills to navigate the system. ISD imagines to choose the best from both models. We hope to build an institution that has the disciple and soul of Sabarmati Ashram along with the skills of the best universities.

We are of the view that without a rigorous program these skills and values can’t be internalised. The idea of the residential model and living together here on becomes of utmost importance. The idealism shouldn’t just remain idealism, it has to be augmented with the right skills and hence the two-fold approach works the best. The module based trimester system will be a combination of academics and grassroot immersion.

The academic modules will comprise of:

1. Macro skills needed to understand the world and India
2. Micro issues facing India ( history, culture, possible technical and social solutions)
3. Specific hard skills needed to be an effective political and public leader

The following table and a comparative analysis of various types of related institutions. The numeric scores are from 1-10 (10 being the highest) and are rough estimates based on conversations with relevant people. Scores for ISD are aspirational.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **ISPP** | **MIT SOG** | **HKS** | **ISD** |
| **Faculty** | 8 | 5 | 10 | 7 |
| **Students** | English speaking potential policy wonks | Mostly Maharashtrian men; politically diverse | English speaking internationals | Diverse              (politically, economically, geographically, gender etc.) |
| **Alumni connect** | ? | 3  (No alumni program) | 6 | 9  (10 years of support) |
| **Credibility** | 8 | 5 | 10 | 8 |
| **Diversity of student body** | 7 | 4 | 8 | 9 |
| **Infrastructure** | 5 | 7 | 9 | 6 |
| **Curriculum- Academic** | 8 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| **Curriculum- Immersive** | 3 | 7 | 4 | 9 |
| **Residential** | No | No | No | Yes |
| **Personal Practices (Reflection, Physical Fitness, Shram Daan etc.)** | No | No | No | Yes |
| **Community** | ? | 3 | 8 | 10 |
| **Commitment to Personal Transformation** | 2 | 2 | 3 | 9 |
| **Local Grounding** | 4 | 7 | 3 | 9 |