



Shikshana Prasarak Mandal's
Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management
Development and Research (PGDM)
Mumbai | Bengaluru



ACBSP Region 10 Conference Report

Venue: WeSchool, Mumbai, India

Date: February 27 and February 28, 2025

Introduction

The ACBSP Region 10 Annual Conference 2025 on the theme “**Bridges Across Borders: Collaborative Strategies for Academic and Professional Success**” was successfully conducted on February 27 and February 28, 2025, at WeSchool, Mumbai, India, jointly organized by WeSchool, Mumbai & Bengaluru campuses, under the aegis of their governing trust – SP Mandali, a renowned educational trust. The conference served as a distinguished platform for academic scholars, industry professionals, and students to engage in meaningful discussions on contemporary business trends, technological advancements, and innovations in education.

With over 250 registrations from individual authors comprising academicians, research scholars & students, the two-day conference brought together participants from several South Asian countries and showcased around 120 research and entrepreneurial ideas under “Best of Regions”, “Student Showcase”, and “School of Thought” competitions. This significant engagement reinforced WeSchool’s commitment to a promoting research-driven & entrepreneurship-driven academic culture and global knowledge exchange. The Region 10 winners of these competitions will be eligible to participate at the ACBSP Annual Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, competing against participants from other 10 ACBSP regions, worldwide.

Inauguration Session

The inauguration session featured prominent speakers who provided valuable insights into pressing global business challenges. The Chief Guest for the conference was **Hon’ble Justice Dr. D. Y. Chandrachud, Former Chief Justice of India**, a highly respected and distinguished legal fraternity personality known for his visionary leadership and transformative judgments. Honorable Justice Dr. D Y Chandrachud delivered an insightful and impactful address, emphasizing the transformative power of education. He mentioned that the education sector and the corporate world must work together to equip students with real-world skills, bridging the gap between knowledge and application. He praised the role of conferences like the ACBSP Region 10 Conference in playing a vital role in fostering dialogue between academia, industry,



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and policymakers. He further mentioned that digital innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity are key drivers in shaping a better tomorrow. As the digital economy grows, he highlighted the emergence of legal and ethical challenges and the need to develop a smart and transparent legal framework. He shared his belief that true progress lies in inclusion and that no nation can thrive by leaving any section of society behind. While highlighting the need for DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion), he also highlighted affirmative action's role in enabling equitable opportunities to all sections of society, access to legal systems, and role of various stakeholders, including the private sector.

The Guest of Honour, **Mr. Boman Irani**, an **Indian Actor and Director**, brought a unique perspective on the power of learning. Reflecting on his journey, he shared that it was an absolute honor for him to be part of the event, which celebrated perseverance, education, and the power of storytelling. He recalled being a shy child who often felt out of place, but eventually finding his 'stage'—a place where he could truly blossom. He emphasized that education and experience shape individuals, empower them, and help break barriers. Mr. Irani spoke about the absence of shortcuts in life, explaining that every job, struggle, and setback teaches invaluable lessons. He highlighted the importance of deeply desiring something and working relentlessly for it while surrounding oneself with people who believe in it. He encouraged the audience to keep learning, keep growing, and find their stage to shine, as when the right moment came, they would be ready.

Prof. Dr. Uday Salunkhe, **Chair-Elect of ACBSP Region 10 and Group Director of WeSchool**, emphasized the institution's pursuit of academic excellence in his address. As the Group Director of the host institute, Prof. Dr. Salunkhe highlighted that the theme of the conference was highly relevant in today's evolving world. He explained that WeSchool's brand identity reflected their core belief in interdependence, co-creation, and togetherness. He also noted that ACBSP played a crucial role in raising academic standards and empowering students with the skills needed for success. He further emphasized that their journey had been fueled by collective belief and collaboration, and the institution remained committed to fostering innovation, excellence, and inclusive growth.

Mr. Jeffrey Alderman, **President & CEO of ACBSP, USA**, highlighted the significance of collaboration during his address. He expressed that it was a privilege to be in India and that Indians had always embraced him as part of their family, which he described as the 'We' of WeSchool, the institution that organized the event. He further emphasized that at ACBSP, they believed true progress came from collaboration, and the conference theme



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embodied that vision. Mr. Alderman noted that the conference was more than just a gathering; it served as a bridge connecting institutions and thought leaders with a shared mission of empowering students, driving innovation, and shaping a future without borders. He pointed out that opportunities like this were rare and that when institutions united with a common purpose, they didn't just exchange ideas—they built pathways for success, fostering a global community dedicated to lifelong learning and transformation.

Dr. Uttara Sok, Chair of ACBSP Region 10 and Vice President for Internal Quality Assurance and Internal Audit (IQA-IA) at CamEd Business School, Cambodia, commended WeSchool's commitment to collaboration during her address. He expressed that WeSchool truly embodied the spirit of 'We' by fostering collaboration, innovation, and growth. He also noted that as technology, particularly AI, rapidly transforms education, the need for collaboration has never been greater. Dr. Sok emphasized that this evolution enhances learning, drives knowledge exchange, and unlocks new opportunities, contributing to collective growth. He highlighted that the event served as a dynamic platform for collaboration, recognizing talent and contributions, while also fostering excellence through competitions and other activities. Dr. Sok concluded that together, the participants were shaping the future of education in an interconnected world.

Advocate Shri S. K. Jain, Chairman of the Managing Council at Shikshana Prasaraka Mandali, Pune (the governing trust of WeSchool), and Chairman of the College Development Committee at WeSchool, Mumbai, emphasized the importance of adapting to change in his address. He highlighted that while practices from the 1970s may still hold relevance, they must evolve to suit today's environment. Advocate Jain pointed out that adapting to change comes with its challenges, and conferences like the ACBSP event played a crucial role in driving that transformation. He stressed that business, trade, and academics must keep pace with industry needs, global practices, and emerging disruptions. He also noted that professors must equip students to lead in this dynamic landscape, ensuring a balance between ethical values and innovation. Advocate Jain concluded by mentioning that the ACBSP conference at WeSchool, with insights from industry stalwarts, provided the knowledge and strategies necessary to navigate change and shape the future.

Tracks on Research Ideas and Entrepreneurial Ideas

With around 120 presentations on research ideas and entrepreneurial ideas across multiple tracks, the event fostered a healthy exchange of knowledge. The tracks on research



presentations comprised two categories, the *Best of Regions* and the *Student Showcase*, to bring together academic excellence from different international participants. The research presentation tracks covered various topics such as cross-border research collaborations, industry-academia partnerships, leadership in innovation, sustainability, digital transformation, and innovative pedagogy. The event witnessed an impressive display of scholarly contributions from diverse participants from countries including Cambodia, India, and Vietnam.

The presentations on entrepreneurial ideas were featured in the *School of Thought* competition, which recognizes the most innovative and impactful business pitches from students. From an initial pool of submissions, the finalists for this competition were shortlisted through an online evaluation by startup mentors and successful entrepreneurs. These finalists received mentoring sessions conducted by WeSchool before competing in the Region 10 finale.

The following is a summary of the number of presentations across the various tracks/competitions:

Presentations	Domestic	International	Total
Best of Regions	21	5	26
Student Showcase	79	1	80
School of Thought	14	1	15

The **Region 10 winner/ runner-up** for the three competitions are as mentioned below:

	Faculty member/s Names	Title/Theme of the Presentation	Name of the Institute
<i>Best of Region 10 Competition</i>			
Winner	Dr. Vinh Pham	Determinants of consumers' adoption of energy-efficient appliances: a case-study in Vietnam	FPT University, Hanoi
Runner-up	Dr. Lishin Moothrey Joshy; Prof. Dr. Radha Thevannoor	Thriving Beyond Borders: Exploring the Impact of Cultural Intelligence on Boundary less Careers of Indian Academicians	SCMS Cochin School of Business, Cochin
<i>Student Showcase Region 10 Competition</i>			
Winner	Kundana Kanksha Sambangi; Jayant Pal	Bridging Psychological Factors & Digital Tools in Personal Investment Management: A Global Perspective	WeSchool, Mumbai
Runner-up	Pratishtha Upadhyaya; Dheeraj Zope	Enhancing financial literacy for sustainable investment decisions: An educational approach	WeSchool, Mumbai



School of Thought Region 10 Competition			
Winner	Sahil Jain, Bhavya Mehta; Guneet Kohli	MEDZAP: a healthcare technology platform designed to improve patient experience by addressing key hospital inefficiencies.	WeSchool, Mumbai
Runner-up	Vinay Ramkumar; Umang Adwani	Banano: a sustainable stationery company using banana fiber to create eco-friendly products.	WeSchool, Mumbai

Special Sessions and Panel Discussions

In addition to the research tracks, the conference featured a range of engaging activities, including interactive panel discussions and networking sessions that fostered deeper collaboration between academia and industry. Experts shared valuable insights into the future of business education, focusing on adaptive learning strategies and the integration of digital tools into academic curricula.

To reinforce ACBSP accreditation procedures, **Mr. Jeffrey Alderman**, President/CEO of ACBSP, USA, and **Dr. Steve Parscale**, Chief Accreditation Officer, ACBSP, led a detailed session on ACBSP Accreditation & Procedures. Additionally, the conference hosted a masterclass on entrepreneurship, titled ‘Idea to MVP,’ by **Dr. Christopher Speicher**, Director of International Graduate Programs and Director of Entrepreneurship at Marywood University, Scranton, PA.

A panel discussion moderated by Mr. Alderman, with ACBSP Region 10 Leadership, explored the conference theme, offering cross-border perspectives on collaborations, internationalization, and innovation. By prioritizing research, entrepreneurship, management education, and business innovation, WeSchool continues to strengthen India’s presence in global academia.

Valedictory Session

The conference concluded with a grand valedictory ceremony and prize distribution, centred around the theme. This session brought together distinguished guests, faculty members, and attendees from across South Asia to celebrate the power of collaboration in education and beyond.

Dr. Venugopal Reddy, IAS Officer and Additional Chief Secretary of the Department of Higher Education, Government of Maharashtra, was the Chief Guest for



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the valedictory session. He praised the significant impact of the ACBSP and expressed his appreciation for WeSchool's efforts in organizing a program of such importance. Dr. Reddy acknowledged the valuable opportunity the event provided for educational institutions, emphasizing its benefits for the participants. Additionally, he recognized Prof. Dr. Uday Salunkhe for his leadership in hosting the event.

Dr. Rajesh Gawande, IFS, Regional Passport Officer and Head of Branch Secretariat in Mumbai for the Ministry of External Affairs, was the Guest of Honour for the valedictory session. In his address, Dr. Gawande highlighted the importance of global collaboration, focusing on the role of connecting countries and societies. He emphasized the value of linking young minds with the world and the educators who shape them as a means of fostering international connections and understanding.

The conference concluded with the announcement of the winners in three categories: "Best of Region," "Student Showcase," and "School of Thought." These winners, representing various countries from Region 10 and different states across India, will now have the honor of representing Region 10 at the prestigious ACBSP Annual Conference 2025 in Las Vegas, USA. In addition, WeSchool extended its support by sponsoring the runners-up in all three categories, recognizing and encouraging both faculty and students.

Cultural Evening

On February 27, the conference featured a session titled "Immersive India," a cultural evening designed to showcase India's rich heritage, culture, and art. During the event, WeSchool students performed various dance forms, including folk dances and regional dance performances, and a musical rendition. The evening was attended by Consul Generals, Honorary Consul Generals from several consulates in Mumbai, the ACBSP Leadership team, AIMS Leadership team, corporate professionals, conference participants, WeSchool alumni, and faculty members. The event also served as a platform for dynamic networking sessions, offering a well-rounded and engaging experience for all attendees.

Conclusion

Overall, the ACBSP Region 10 Conference 2025 successfully reaffirmed its commitment to advancing research, innovation, and industry collaboration. Reinforcing decades of excellence, the conference at WeSchool showcased visionary discussions, pioneering research, and high-impact partnerships, setting new benchmarks for academic and industry synergy and elevating



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the global landscape of business education. The event highlighted the importance of interactive sessions, global partnerships, and bridging the gap between academic theory and practical implementation. As ACBSP continues to redefine the future of management education through accreditation, knowledge exchange, and global collaboration, the conference underscored the need for continuous learning, knowledge-sharing, and sustainable business practices in shaping the future of business and education.

List of Eminent Speakers Featured at the Conference

- Inaugural Chief Guest: **Honourable Justice Dr. D Y Chandrachud**, Former Chief Justice of India
- Inaugural Guest of Honour: **Mr Boman Irani**, prominent Indian Actor & Director
- Valedictory Chief Guest: **Shri Venugopal Reddy**, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Higher & Technical Education, Maharashtra Government
- Valedictory Guest of Honour: **Dr Rajesh Gawande**, Regional Passport Officer & Head of Branch Secretariat
- **Mr. Jeffrey Alderman**, President/CEO, Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs, USA
- **Dr. Steve Parscale**, Chief Accreditation Officer, ACBSP
- **Dr. Christopher Speicher**, Director of Entrepreneurship, Marywood University, Scranton, PA
- **Dr. Uttara Sok**, Chair ACBSP Region 10 & Vice President for Internal Quality Assurance and Internal Audit (IQA-IA), CamEd Business School, Cambodia
- Association of Indian Management Schools (AIMS) Leadership
- SP Mandali's Leadership Team