



# ATHARVA

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**Edition 86**

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We are delighted to bring you this edition of the SCIT magazine, a reflection of the vibrant culture, academic spirit, and dynamic events that define our institute.



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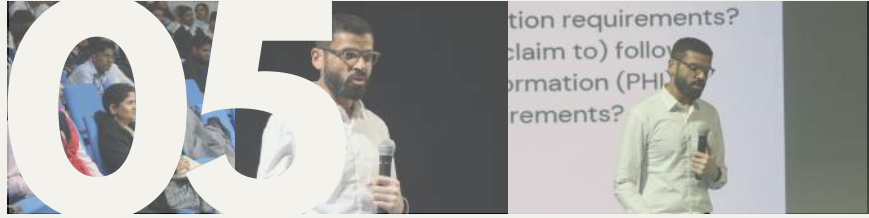
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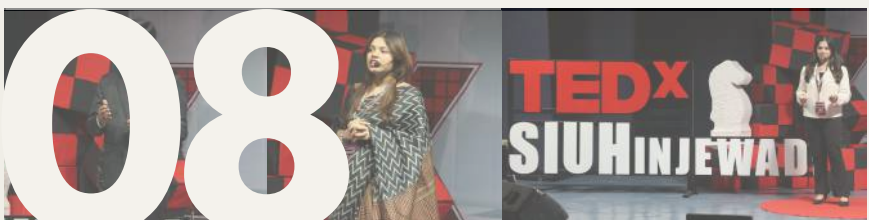
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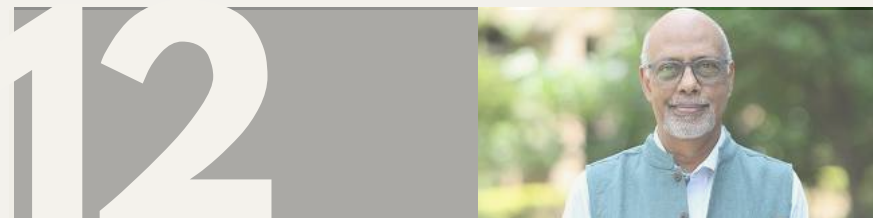
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# EDITOR'S NOTE

*January at SCIT was a tapestry of inquiry, expression, and collective purpose—each event adding a distinct thread to the month's narrative.*



The year began with colour and creativity as Graffiti 2026 transformed the campus into a vibrant stage for music, dance, theatre, and cybersecurity challenges. Days later, Dattansh 2026: NavDrishti gathered industry leaders to reimagine the future through agentic AI, digital twins, and ethical innovation. Dr. Ramesh Subramoniam offered a global perspective on sustainability and circular economies, tracing AI's evolution while grounding optimism in caution. A leadership talk by Mr. Dilip Ghosh and Mr. Imran Shaikh reframed cybersecurity as a business enabler, urging students to think beyond code. Mr. Prasad Narayan then decoded the corporate landscape, distilling decades of wisdom into the 4 Fs of life: Find, Forgive, Focus, and Fuel. Amidst this intensity, the 77th Republic Day brought SCIT, SCMHRD, and SIIB together in a solemn celebration of constitutional values, unity, and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. TEDxSIUHinjewadi 2026 followed, its speakers and performers charting The Knight's Path—a leap beyond the obvious toward purpose and conscious change. The month closed with Privathon 2026, where industry leaders explored privacy as a strategic responsibility, and a GRC workshop by alumnus Ojas Dedhiya equipped students to navigate India's evolving cyber regulations. This edition also carries forward the voices of our community through Faculty Spotlight and Senior Scoop, offering glimpses into mentorship, balance, and the quiet discipline of growth. And in Star Alumni, we trace a journey shaped by vision, reinvention, and an enduring connection to this institution. January was not merely a series of events—it was a statement of who we are. As we move forward, may we carry with us the questions raised, the ideas exchanged, and the belief that meaningful change begins at the intersection of knowledge and conscience.

# Graffiti 2026: Empowering Expression and Excellence at SCIT

Graffiti 2026, the annual cultural festival of Symbiosis Centre for Information Technology (SCIT), was conducted over two dynamic days i.e. 10th and 11th January 2026, bringing together students through a diverse range of cultural, technical, and creative events. The festival began with a warm Inauguration marked by the traditional lamp lighting ceremony, symbolizing knowledge, positivity, and new beginnings. Dr. Kanchan Patil, Deputy Director, SCIT, addressed the gathering and highlighted the role of cultural platforms in student development. Colonel S. K. Mishra, Campus Administrator, SCIT, appreciated the campus decor, which added charm and vibrancy to the festive atmosphere.

Day 1 featured engaging events such as Cybersense and CTF, which tested analytical and cybersecurity skills, along with Mystery Room and Power Play, focusing on teamwork and problem-solving. Nautankishala, a theatre competition, and Qala Darpan, a creative showcase organized by the Eklavya Committee, provided a platform for artistic expression. The day concluded with an energetic Battle of Bands, celebrating musical talent.

Day 2 began with Model United Nations (MUN), encouraging debate and diplomacy. Events such as Decoded, Case War Arena, Uncharted, Foosball, and Clutch 47 added competitive and intellectual excitement. Nritya Dhaara, a dance showcase organized by the Symbeats Committee, highlighted rhythmic excellence. Adv[IT]iya, a unique finale, brought together winners from all major Day One and Day Two events, creating a grand platform of champions.

The festival concluded with Pro Night, featuring a soulful performance by The Black Sheep band, followed by an electrifying DJ set by DJ Paranox. Graffiti 2026 was successfully hosted by the students of SCIT, reflecting strong coordination, creativity, and commitment, and setting a high benchmark for Graffiti 2027.

- Soumen Sahoo



# Sustainability, Supply Chains, and the AI Future: Insights from a Global Perspective

On January 16, 2026, SCIT hosted an insightful guest lecture for both batches of DS&DA, featuring Dr. Ramesh Subramoniam, Professor of Practice in Operations Management and Director of Undergraduate Research at the Naveen Jindal School of Management, University of Texas at Dallas, USA. The session was introduced by Dr. Vijayakumar Bharathi S, Professor at SCIT.

Dr. Subramoniam began by establishing sustainability as the core theme, introducing the concept of the 5 R's: Refuse to buy, Reduce waste, Reuse, Recycle, and Recover. He clearly distinguished between the linear economy and the circular economy, emphasizing the critical role that reuse and recycling play in environmental preservation.

Shifting focus to supply chain disruptions, he posed a thought-provoking question on the biggest change in the automobile industry, highlighting the transition from mechanical features to technology-driven experiences. He discussed how COVID-19 significantly intensified supply chain conversations in the US, supported by examples such as the Lockheed Martin F-35 supply chain, Lenovo, and Dell. He also explained the sharp rise in shipping costs of a 40-foot container from China to the US West Coast, detailing cost components and delay-related charges.

The lecture further explored the evolution from Industry 1.0 to Industry 5.0, creatively personifying Industry 5.0 with AI as the brain, 5G as fuel, IoT as the nervous system, and Blockchain as the immune system. Dr. Subramoniam traced AI's journey from ML to GenAI, cautioning against exaggerated hype by comparing it to "snake oil," and discussed where AI adds value, becomes overhyped, or turns harmful. He noted 2026 as a potential year of AI agents.

Concluding with career insights, he discussed AI-driven opportunities, job vulnerability, and the shrinking relevance window of degrees. The session ended with an engaging Q&A. Dr. Bharathi delivered the vote of thanks, and Dr. Kanchan Patil, Professor & Deputy Director at SCIT, presented a token of gratitude.

- Ishank Gupta

# Dattansh 2026: NavDrishti – Reimagining the Future

The 8th edition of Dattansh, SCIT's annual academic conclave, was successfully organized by the Guest Lecture Committee – DSDA, SCIT, on 17 January 2026 at the SIC Auditorium. The event began with a warm welcome by the hosts, followed by the ceremonial lamp lighting in the presence of Dr. Dhanya Pramod, Director, SCIT, and the distinguished speakers, seeking the blessings of Goddess Saraswati. The theme "NavDrishti – Reimagining the Future" was unveiled through an engaging teaser, setting the tone for discussions on agentic AI, innovation, and digital transformation. In her welcome address, Dr. Dhanya Pramod congratulated the DSDA students on the successful 8th edition of this flagship conclave and emphasized the growth of Data and AI, governance, and the importance of responsible and ethical innovation.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Pradeep Chatterjee, Chief Executive Officer, Inno AI Labs (IAL) and Chief Guest, who spoke on digital twins, strategic AI foundations, analytics-driven innovation, synthetic data to address data scarcity, and the ethics of intelligence with a focus on transparency and explainability. He was felicitated by Dr. Ajey Kumar, Associate Professor, SCIT. This was followed by a session by Mr. Jai Sisodia, Managing Director, Cycore, and an alumnus of SCIT, who shared insights on AI governance, real-world use cases, ethical considerations, and structured governance frameworks. He was felicitated by Dr. Dhanya Pramod, Director, SCIT.

The conclave further featured Mrs. Shraddha Surana, Principal Data Scientist, who presented a product demonstration on Dhaani, addressing AI risks and mitigation strategies, and Mr. Vijaykumar Jangamashetti, Staff Cloud Consulting Architect, Google, who conducted an interactive session on The Agentic AI Revolution powered by Gemini on Google Cloud. They were felicitated by Dr. Pradnya Purandare, Assistant Professor, SCIT, and Dr. Nisha T N, Assistant Professor, SCIT, respectively. The winners of the Unstop events, Samadhan – Resolving India's Tomorrow and DataVerse Decipher & Design, were also announced.

The event concluded with the vote of thanks by Dr. Ajey Kumar, Associate Professor, SCIT, acknowledging the speakers, judges – Dr. Tamal Mondal, Assistant Professor, SCIT; Dr. Sirshendu Arosh, Assistant Professor, SCIT; and Dr. Shaji Joseph, Associate Professor, SCIT, organizing team and the Guest Lecture Committee – DSDA, followed by a group photograph capturing shared learning and collaboration.

- Divyansh Vyas





# Dattansh 2026 Workshop: Operationalizing AI Governance

As part of Dattansh 2026, the annual academic conclave of SCIT, the Guest Lecture Committee – DSDA, SCIT organized a focused workshop on Operationalizing AI Governance on 17 January 2026 at the SIC Auditorium. Designed as a standalone, hands-on learning session, the workshop aimed to help students understand how AI governance frameworks move beyond theory and are practically implemented within organizations.

The workshop was conducted by Mr. Jai Sisodia, Managing Director, Cycore, and an alumnus of SCIT, who emphasized that AI governance should begin at the design stage and not be treated as a post-deployment corrective measure. He explained that organizations must think about governance from day one, irrespective of the frameworks they adopt, and ensure that risks are managed proactively rather than reactively.

Through real-world examples, Mr. Sisodia explained how organizations can manage AI risks within a structured timeline by maintaining clear AI asset inventories, classifying data appropriately, and governing the use of SaaS tools. He introduced the concept of Software Bills of Materials (SBOMs) and demonstrated how publicly available SBOMs can help organizations gain visibility into their AI systems. He also highlighted the importance of defining clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for incident response, vulnerability management, decommissioning, onboarding of new tools, and data classification, supported by AI security tools.

The session further addressed the role of communication, audits, and continuous improvement as part of a mature governance approach, reinforcing the idea that governance is an ongoing process rather than a one-time setup. The workshop concluded with Mr. Jai Sisodia being felicitated with a token of appreciation by Prof. Dr. Vidyavati H. Ramteke, Assistant Professor, SCIT, marking the end of a practical, structured, and highly insightful learning experience.

- Divyansh Vyas





# Decoding the Corporate Environment

The ITBM Guest Lecture Committee of Symbiosis Centre for Information Technology (SCIT) hosted an enlightening session on 19 January 2026 featuring Mr. Prasad Narayan, Vice President of India Operations at Leapfrog Technology and President of 'The Power of One' Educational Trust. With a distinguished career spanning India and the USA, Mr. Narayan offered a masterclass on navigating the corporate landscape.



The session served as a masterclass in navigating the unwritten rules of the professional world. Mr. Narayan began by dismantling the textbook perception of corporate structures, offering students a transparent view of how companies truly function. He stressed that survival and success hinge not just on technical expertise but significantly on soft skills. He dedicated considerable focus to the art of effective presentation and the strategic importance of building a genuine professional network.

Elaborating on core competencies, Mr. Narayan discussed the essential balance between hard skills for task execution and soft skills for collaboration and leadership. He advised students to proactively map their career path and master time management as non-negotiable disciplines for growth. Throughout his talk, the underlying theme was a relentless emphasis on continuous education and learning.

Mr. Narayan distilled his wisdom into powerful takeaways: to not chase money but to chase knowledge, and to follow the 4 Fs of Life: Find your purpose, Forgive, Focus relentlessly, and find the fuel to sustain your journey.

The lecture, designed to bridge the gap between academia and industry, provided a practical roadmap for future professionals. The session concluded with a formal felicitation of Mr. Narayan by Dr. Tamal Mondal, Assistant Professor at SCIT, marking an afternoon of profound learning and inspiration for SCIT students.



- Shiv Pratap Singh

# Preparing for Future Cyber Security Roles

In an era where organizations are increasingly dependent on digital ecosystems, SCIT conducted a leadership talk on 22 January 2026 that focused on preparing future professionals to navigate the evolving landscape of cybersecurity. Mr. Dilip Ghosh, Senior VP Risk Consulting, and Mr. Imran Shaikh, Senior AVP Risk Consulting from Qseap Infotech Pvt. Ltd., led the session and brought rich industry perspectives to the discussion.

A key takeaway from the session was the shift in perception of cyber security - "Cyber security has moved from a support function to a business enabler," moving decisively "from the back seat to the driver seat." The speakers traced the historical evolution of IT, from the pre-Internet era to today's digital and cloud-driven landscape, highlighting how modern IT has become borderless, significantly increasing cyber risk.

The discussion emphasized data as the new currency, while attackers today are organized and commercialized. With rising regulatory pressure, even a single incident can halt operations, trigger regulatory action, and damage careers. This reinforced the importance of connecting cyber incidents to real business and career consequences, rather than viewing them as isolated technical failures.

The speakers also outlined diverse career tracks in cybersecurity, including IT operations, information security, cyber audit, and cyber defence, stressing that "good cyber professionals are not just coders, but excellent thinkers." Employers today, they noted, look for conceptual clarity, a problem-solving mindset, the ability to explain risk, proper documentation, and an ethical approach.

Concluding the session, the leaders highlighted that cybersecurity sits at the intersection of technology, business, law, and leadership. As rightly stated, "Cyber security is one of the few careers where tech, business, law, and leadership meet," making it a dynamic and future-ready domain for aspiring professionals.

- Sudhashri Rajendra Naik





# TEDx SIUHinjewadi 2026: A Journey Beyond the Obvious

On January 24, 2026, TEDxSIUHinjewadi made its return for the 12th edition, embracing the impactful theme "The Knight's Path: A Leap Beyond Obvious", which delved into the intersection of strategy and consciousness in the transformative journey. Curated by Reuel Kuriakose and Abhishek Sharma, this event upheld its legacy as a TEDxSCIT initiative, guided by mentor Apoorva Kulkarni, Assistant Professor at SCIT. Hosts Vaibhav and Sakshi invigorated the stage, marking this edition as yet another significant milestone in the decade-long journey of ideas. The event commenced with an engaging video highlighting moments from previous TEDx editions, followed by a remarkable theme-reveal video.

The day progressed with inspiring narratives of purpose and resilience from esteemed speakers. Rituraj Mehta, Group Safety Head at Adani Group, addressed the importance of fostering a culture of safety and civic responsibility. Ajinkya Deshmukh, a Narrative Architect, redefined the concepts of visibility and power in leadership. Rukmani Krishnamurthy, India's first female forensic scientist, recounted her groundbreaking journey in crime investigation. Samir Chabukswar, the founder of Yuj Designs, examined human-centered design in the context of AI. Rhea Khanolkar, a news presenter and political strategist, motivated the audience with her journey into public leadership. Palakh Khanna, recognized among the Asia's 100 women leaders 2023, spoke about finding balance between intention and accuracy, while actress Ritika Shrotri shared insights on how acting cultivates courage and perspective.

The event also featured various performances that captivated the audience. Strings Solace commenced with a reflective melody, succeeded by Falguni Kulkarni's elegant Kathak interpretation of rain. The Konnect's soulful musical performance and Intellect Music's dynamic rap invigorated the audience, while Eklavya and Symbeats captivated everyone with their emotional drama and powerful dance, respectively. All speakers and performers were felicitated by the Director, Deputy Director, various faculty members of SCIT, and the curators.

Through talks that challenged conventions and performances that touched hearts, TEDxSIUHinjewadi 2026 reminded us that the true knight's path lies in leaping beyond the obvious—toward purpose, impact, and conscious change.

- Shiv Pratap Singh

# Republic Day 2026 at SIC: Celebrating Unity, Responsibility, and Nation-Building

The 77th Republic Day of India was commemorated with pride and patriotic spirit at the Symbiosis Infotech Campus (SIC), Hinjewadi, as SCIT, SCMHRD, and SIIB came together to celebrate the values enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The event reflected unity, responsibility, and the shared commitment of the Symbiosis community towards nation-building.

The ceremony commenced with the unfurling of the National Flag by Dr. Akhil Damodaran, Director, SCMHRD. In his address, Dr. Damodaran emphasized how the Constitution empowers ambition while ensuring inclusivity and equality. He encouraged students to actively uphold constitutional ideals and recognize their role as responsible citizens and future leaders, contributing meaningfully to the nation's progress.

The gathering was further inspired by the address of Col. S. K. Mishra(Retd), Campus Administrator, who spoke passionately about inner patriotism, stating that India's strength lies in the values its citizens embody. Highlighting India's growing global stature, he urged students to remain disciplined, resilient, and mindful of their health, reinforcing that personal excellence forms the foundation of national strength.

Adding a reflective dimension to the celebration, Dr. S. B. Mujumdar, Chancellor of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), addressed the audience via a video message. He spoke about the fundamental rights and duties guaranteed by the Constitution and emphasized the importance of fraternity and harmony, drawing inspiration from the teachings of Gautama Buddha. He also highlighted the enduring relevance of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and extended warm Republic Day wishes to all.

The celebration also featured the presentation of staff incentive awards, acknowledging the dedication and contributions of staff members. A vibrant cultural segment followed, with patriotic songs and a dance performance showcasing India's rich cultural heritage. The event concluded with gift distribution to children, symbolizing compassion and collective joy.

- Sudhashri Rajendra Naik



# Privathon 2026: Exploring Privacy from Every Angle

On 30 January 2026, Privathon 2026 was held at the Symbiosis Centre for Information Technology (SCIT), at the SIC Auditorium, as part of Data Privacy Week, organized by Team Matrix. The event began with the hosts welcoming the guests, followed by a ceremonial lamp lighting seeking the blessings of Goddess Saraswati. The lamp was lit by the invited speakers, along with Dr. Kanchan Patil, Deputy Director, SCIT, and Dr. Vidyavati H. Ramteke, Assistant Professor, SCIT.

Addressing the audience, Dr. Kanchan Patil appreciated Team Matrix and Faculty Mentor Dr. Vidyavati H. Ramteke and emphasized the importance of privacy awareness for students. The theme, “Privacy Spectrum: See Privacy from Every Angle,” was then revealed, highlighting the broad and evolving scope of data privacy.

The opening talk was delivered by Mrs. Shrilaxmi, Counsel – Privacy & Data Protection, Mastercard, who spoke about privacy as a strategic responsibility rather than just a compliance requirement. She explained key concepts such as Privacy by Design, Privacy Impact Assessment, and Data Protection Impact Assessment through practical examples. After an engaging Q&A, she was felicitated by Dr. Dhanya Pramod, Director, SCIT. The event also featured energetic performances by Team Symbeats, an interactive online game – Traverse, conducted by Team Matrix, and a musical performance by Team Konnect.

The discussion then continued with Ms. Isha Oswal, Co-Founder & CEO, JISA Softech, who spoke on data architecture and cryptographic controls, stressing that encryption alone is not sufficient. She highlighted secure data handling practices, hardware security modules, and common implementation gaps. Following the Q&A, she was felicitated by Dr. Vidyavati H. Ramteke. A thought-provoking performance by Team Eklavya followed, along with the announcement of winners for Faisala Unlocked, Level Up, and Traverse. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Vidyavati H. Ramteke, reinforcing Privathon as a valuable annual learning initiative.

- Divyansh Vyas





# Understanding India's Cyber Regulations: An Industry-Led GRC Workshop



On 31 January 2026 (Saturday), a comprehensive workshop on Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) was conducted by Dr. Vidyavati H. Ramteke, Assistant Professor, SCIT, with an expert session by Mr. Ojas Dedhiya, Manager at M&G Global Services Private Limited and an alumnus of SCIT. The workshop aimed to equip students with practical insight into the concept of GRC and its application in real life, as well as to provide industry insights on navigating the cyber regulatory environment in India.

The session commenced with background ideas, the main regulators, and how insurance fits into the regulatory ecosystem. In-depth discussions were held on the national regulatory framework in India, the financial sector, and industry-specific frameworks. However, particular attention was given to critical assets and their potential impact on organizations and the nation, with the banking system as one of the main examples. Sectors were also examined to show the impact of risk profile differences on regulatory expectations within the industries.



The workshop also helped clarify in detail the roles and cybersecurity requirements of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), as well as those of CERT-In and the Reserve Bank of India, especially with regard to cybersecurity focus areas. Other key regulators, as well as institutions such as SEBI, IRDAI, NCIIPC, TRAI, and UIDAI, were also addressed.

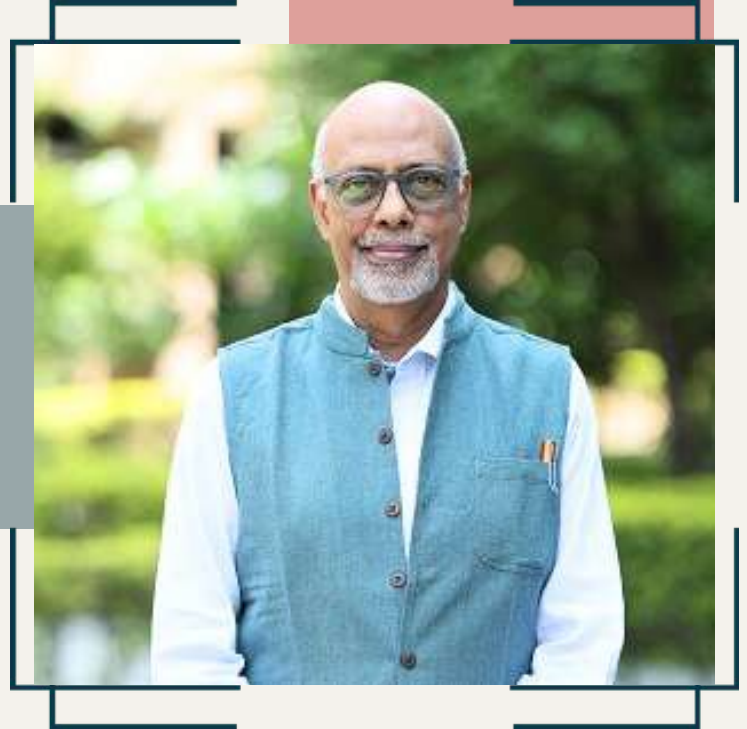
Mr. Ojas also instructed the participants on how to read and interpret regulations, including applicability, definitions, requirements, reporting, and annexures. The standards, risk management frameworks, common pitfalls to compliance, and the importance of having a personal regulatory glossary were discussed. Issues such as audit compliance, technology-related needs, business continuity, disaster recovery, and cross-border data regulations were also addressed, and the session was rounded out with an interactive Q&A.

- Soumen Sahoo

# UNVEILING INSIGHTS

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

**Dr. Mandaar B.  
Pande**  
(Professor)



**Q: When students first encounter complex subjects like quantum science, many feel intimidated. What advice would you give them to stay confident and curious rather than overwhelmed?**

**A:** I believe students or even experienced researchers may feel intimidated with seemingly complex subjects because of one or more of the following reasons:

1. They see too much of mathematics in trying to read or even start to understand the subject.
2. They may see complicated sounding terms (jargons) which they have never heard or read earlier.
3. They may start with a mindset that this is a difficult subject since others say so.

I would suggest the following to overcome the hesitation and/or the feeling of being intimidated:

1. Talk to an expert who can give an overview of the subject in easy to understand non-technical terms.
2. Read material or books which provide a non-technical and jargon free understanding of the subject to make one more comfortable.
3. I believe visualizing a subject is an important aspect of getting a deep dive into the subject. There is so much content in various forms available on the internet. Leverage that. Use AI as well now that it is available.
4. Finally, it is important for students to deep dive into any subject that they wish to master. A high level understanding is OK upto a point. However, if one needs to develop confidence, he/she needs to "get their hands dirty" as the saying goes. Nothing significant is achieved by skimming the surface of any subject.

**Q: With technology evolving so rapidly, how important is it for students to focus on fundamentals rather than chasing every new trend?**

A: Fundamentals are always important. Technology will always be in a state of evolution and most of us tend to be in a catch up mode.

One needs to strengthen the fundamentals (take help of the professors and experts to understand what are the fundamentals in any particular area of technology). There is no other option. Without having clear fundamentals, one will not be able to get into the depth of a technology (if that is the expectation). You will always be hesitant to stand confidently in front of other experts or customers if you do not get your fundamentals right.

**Q: In your classroom experience at SCIT, what kind of student attitude or behavior usually signals long-term growth, regardless of academic background?**

A: I have been teaching students in SCIT for the past 8-9 years now. I have found that students who demonstrate long term persistence and an ability to dig their heels in and get a concrete understanding of course(s) which make them uncomfortable are the ones who usually do very well towards the end of the 2nd semester or early in the 3rd semester. This involves putting in extra effort to get to the root of the subject, meeting and being behind the professor who is teaching the course to clarify doubts repeatedly. Also being honest with and accepting that you do not understand a subject is the first step to success.

**Q: On a lighter note, when you step away from research and teaching, what helps you reset and return with a fresh perspective?**

A: Having hobbies helps a lot since these are activities that one loves to do. Therefore over the years, I have cultivated multiple hobbies. Reading books, especially those which talk about the history of various countries and civilizations, and in general non fiction books helps me unwind. I also practice or do "riyaaz" both in the morning and evening of Hindustani classical vocal. That is an amazing way to reset and refresh oneself. I also do early morning walks, yoga and meditation which helps immensely to keep me physically fit and mentally alert. I listen to old songs in Marathi and Hindi. These are soothing to the mind.

# SENIOR SCOOP : TALES & TIPS

## Graffiti Edition



**Reshabh Saini**  
(Main Coordinator)



**Pranav Mutaliknadagoud**  
(Main Coordinator)

**Q: What is one misconception people usually have about Graffiti that you discovered from the inside?**

A: Many think Graffiti is just about big events and glamour, but from inside, it's 90% behind-the-scenes grind, endless coordination, last-minute fixes, and team motivation. The real magic happens in those chaotic prep nights, not just the spotlight.

**Q: How did working with diverse personalities during the fest shape your patience or perspective?**

A: It reshaped my view. I mean clashing styles are Graffiti's secret ingredient, sparking creativity and unbreakable team bonds when you adapt and laugh it off.

**Q: What part of Graffiti would you say shaped you more—the preparation or the execution?**

A: Preparation shaped me the most! Resolving unexpected documentation challenges in finance under tight timelines, with invaluable mentorship, sharpened my resilience and strategic skills. Execution was rewarding, but prep's high-stakes problem-solving defined my growth.

**Q: What aspect of Graffiti made you step out of your comfort zone?**

A: There is a difference between completing work within deadlines and ensuring others do the same. I have always excelled at finishing tasks early—my comfort zone—but now I am also proficient at managing others effectively.

**Q: How did the fest influence your confidence in handling large-scale responsibilities?**

A: I've noticed a distinct shift in my daily confidence. When facing new issues, I now draw on challenges from Graffiti and realize the solution is already within reach. It didn't just assign responsibilities; it taught me how to shoulder them permanently.

**Q: What is one assumption you had before Graffiti that completely changed afterward?**

A: I used to assume leadership was solely about effectiveness and command—traits that did not come naturally to me. However, I've learned that while those make you effective, being a good leader requires empathy, camaraderie, and a supportive nature, not just authority.



**Tanisha  
Idnani**

**Q: What was a moment during Graffiti when you had to think on your feet?**

A: When a sponsor-related issue came up close to the fest, we had to act fast and rethink plans instantly. With constant coordination, we managed to handle it smoothly. It wouldn't have been possible without my core team- Abhishek Sharma, Abhishek Songirkar, Krutika Shetty, and Anish Shinde and the incredible effort and support of our volunteers throughout the fest.

**Q: How did the fest change the way you view responsibility beyond assigned roles?**

A: Graffiti showed me that responsibility goes beyond titles and hierarchies. Everyone stepped in wherever needed, and that collective effort made a huge difference. It taught me that taking ownership and supporting the team matters more than sticking strictly to your role.

**Q: What's one thing Graffiti taught you about handling uncertainty?**

A: Uncertainty is constant, but preparation and teamwork reduce its impact. Graffiti taught me to stay calm, communicate clearly, and rely on my team's strengths. When everyone puts in sincere effort, even unpredictable situations become manageable.



**Pallavi  
Rai**

**Q: What was the most mentally demanding phase of Graffiti for you, and why?**

A: The most mentally demanding phase was the final week before the fest. Everything needed to be perfect— overall and event creatives, theme alignment, last minute changes, and constant approvals. As the Creatives SPOC, I had to manage multiple priorities while keeping the team up and running, and consistent with our "Eminence" vibe.

**Q: How did the experience influence the way you now communicate under pressure?**

A: Graffiti taught me to communicate under pressure with a mix of calm + quick thinking. Even if things go "last minute mode" or chaotic, I've learned to keep the vibe light & cheery, give clear direction, and hype the team up instead of everyone stressing out. A little humor, quick coordination, and good energy honestly saves the day!

**Q: What is one learning from Graffiti that you believe will stay relevant long after MBA?**

A: Something that will always stay with me even after MBA is taking full ownership along with adaptability. Plans will change, "urgent" messages will pop up at 1 AM, teams will get stretched, and deadlines will feel impossible- but showing up, solving fast, and staying positive matters the most. Graffiti made me confident that I can lead, coordinate, and deliver well under real pressure.



**Ishika  
Manglani**

**Q: What did Graffiti teach you about coordination that no academic project could?**

A: That nothing is ever actually gonna come together till the very last moment. You can try to coordinate with many people but something is going to go haywire, so just have patience and let everyone do their part and it'll all come together.

**Q: How did managing expectations—yours and others'—shape your experience?**

A: I think it made me much more comfortable. Everyone is going to have different expectations of you, it's important to understand them but also know what you can do and take charge instead of letting what others want define what you do.

**Q: What's one quiet contribution you made that you feel proud of?**

A: I don't think it's quiet, it's actually very loud but, my friends and I (Divya and Shaniya) banged on everyone's rooms doors to get them to volunteer for the Fest. Then seeing everyone turn up for us, that's something I'm really proud of!



**Shaniya  
Joseph**

**Q: What was the most unexpected challenge you faced while working on Graffiti?**

A: The most unexpected challenge was definitely playing referee between glitchy soundboards and unhappy performers. Managing technical meltdowns while keeping participants calm was a crash course in "backstage diplomacy" I won't soon forget!

**Q: How did the experience alter the way you now approach teamwork?**

A: Being part of the events team taught me that teamwork isn't just about sharing a Google Doc; it's about shared survival. I've come out of this not just a better collaborator, but genuinely in love with the chaos and the people who powered through it with me.

**Q: What part of the fest tested your emotional resilience the most?**

A: Honestly? The entire fest. Surviving on exactly two hours of sleep and pure adrenaline for days tested my emotional resilience more than any exam ever could. If I can function on that, I can handle anything!



**Alister  
Fernandes**

**Q: What was a decision you took during Graffiti that felt risky at the moment but proved right later?**

A: We chose to execute complex, never-before-seen designs while prioritizing the usage of scrap materials wherever possible to reserve funds for contingencies. This required relying on volunteers' autonomy to bridge the gap. The risk paid off—the constraints sparked raw creativity, transforming 'junk' into unique decor items, proving that trust and innovation outweigh budget.

**Q: How did the scale of Graffiti change your understanding of accountability?**

A: My understanding shifted from simply completing tasks to owning the entire outcome. Managing the campus decor with a lean core team, I couldn't hide behind excuses like 'miscommunication' or 'limited manpower.' If a volunteer struggled, the gap lay in my guidance. Accountability meant owning the final visual impact—ensuring every corner looked appealing and complete, regardless of the situation.

**Q: What personal quality of yours became stronger without you consciously working on it?**

A: I stopped overthinking. With unexpected material crunches and volunteer gaps, I lost the luxury of second-guessing; I just had to act. This decisiveness surprisingly dissolved my social hesitation. I initially doubted if I could connect with the batch, but the chaos forced me to open up. I realized I could lead and bond naturally, proving my usual hesitation was unnecessary.



**Nidhi Raj  
Singh**

**Q: What role did planning play versus improvisation during your Graffiti journey?**

A: Talking about my Graffiti journey, planning was definitely important which gave us the direction, helped create timelines and check progress. But I believe our fest was successful majorly because of the significant improvisations and quick decisions.

**Q: How did observing others during the fest influence your own leadership style?**

A: Being open to all opinions, discussions and ideas helped me improve my way of working. I tried to incorporate positive traits from others while maintaining my own style of working.

**Q: What's one moment during Graffiti that taught you the value of collective effort?**

A: Although there were multiple such moments, the experience and appreciation of people was inspiring for me.



**Suhani  
Singh**

**Q: What was the most learning-intensive day for you during Graffiti, and why?**

A: I can't attribute my learning to a single day or defining moment; rather, the entire PR journey for the fest was both demanding and deeply enriching. It gave me a clear understanding of what it means to work within tight constraints while staying focused on a well defined objective and seeing it through to fruition.

**Q: How did the experience shape your approach to problem-solving?**

A: I realised that an ingenious and unconventional approach often works where rigid methods fall short. Problem solving, more often than not, isn't just about logic, but about bringing one's personality, intuition, and perspective into play.

**Q: What's one takeaway from Graffiti that applies directly to professional life?**

A: Most importantly, I learned the value of kindness, paired with an awareness of one's strengths and privileges. My biggest takeaway from Graffiti was recognising the role empathy, adaptability, and self-awareness play in navigating high pressure environments. When supported by strategic thinking, these qualities help transform challenges into opportunities and make collaboration more meaningful.



**Krutika  
Shetty**

**Q: What did Graffiti teach you about managing pressure without losing focus?**

A: Graffiti taught me that pressure doesn't knock, it kicks the door in. You stay calm, tackle one mess at a time, and keep your eyes on the goal. Chaos becomes manageable when you don't panic.

**Q: How did the fest help you understand the importance of trust within a team?**

A: We built trust before to-do lists. No micromanaging, no second-guessing, just faith in each other's strengths. Turns out, trust > control, and that's how things actually get done. And honestly, it helped that I had the best team working with me.

**Q: If you had to pass on one Graffiti-related lesson to juniors, what would it be?**

A: Things will break. Plans will change. That's just Graffiti doing its thing. Stay calm, trust your people, adapt on the fly, and keep your sense of humor intact. Leadership isn't about knowing everything, it's keeping the chaos from winning.

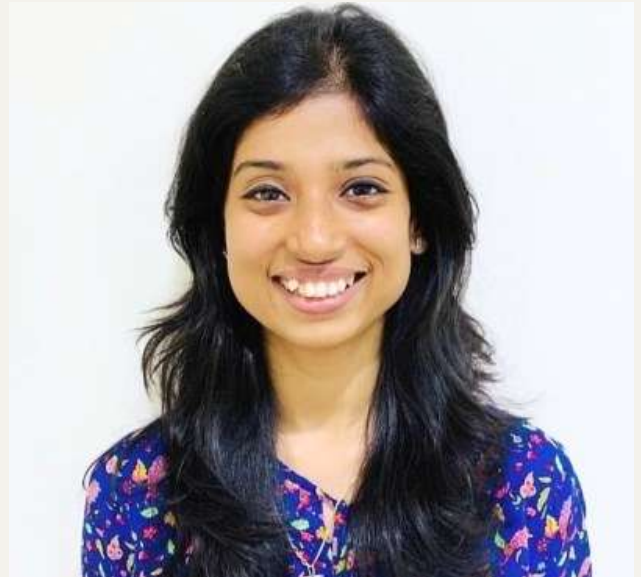
# STAR ALUMNI

In this edition of Star Alumni, Atharva Magazine proudly features Barnali Ganguli, Director at Ernst & Young LLP, and an accomplished information security leader from the Batch of 2012–14. During her time at SCIT, she pursued an MBA in IT Business Management with a specialization in Information Security and Systems, demonstrating an early passion for safeguarding digital ecosystems and building technical expertise, and was actively associated with the iTSELF Committee, reflecting her earlier inclination towards entrepreneurship, leadership, and collaboration.

Barnali has built a distinguished career at the intersection of technology, risk, and assurance. With a strong foundation in computer science engineering and a management degree from Symbiosis International University, she has developed deep expertise in Internal Audit, IT General Controls, Application Control Testing, SOX compliance, and Vendor Risk Assessments. Her work within EY's Financial Services practice reflects a steadfast commitment to helping organizations navigate complex regulatory landscapes with precision and integrity.

Through her role at EY, she leads high-impact IT audit and assurance engagements, enabling financial services clients to strengthen their control environments and manage technology risks effectively. Her experience spans IT integration testing for financial audits, information systems audits, and end-to-end vendor risk assessments—critical components in today's rapidly digitizing business world.

Barnali's journey stands as an inspiration to aspiring professionals in information security and IT governance. Her story highlights technical rigor, analytical thinking, and a relentless pursuit of excellence—qualities that define her as a trusted advisor and a leader in her field. She exemplifies how specialized expertise, combined with strategic business acumen, can create lasting value in the ever-evolving domain of cyber risk and assurance.



## Barnali Ganguli

**Batch 2012 – 14**

**Director at Ernst & Young LLP**

Barnali Ganguli, an alumna of SCIT's MBA in IT Business Management (Batch 2012–14), has carved a distinguished path in information security and IT risk management. Her work reflects a strong commitment to building resilient systems and enabling enterprises to operate with confidence in an era of digital complexity.

# COMING UP NEXT



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