

EDUCATION

OFFBEAT... DESIGN EDUCATION

Visualise your career



A Balasubramaniam

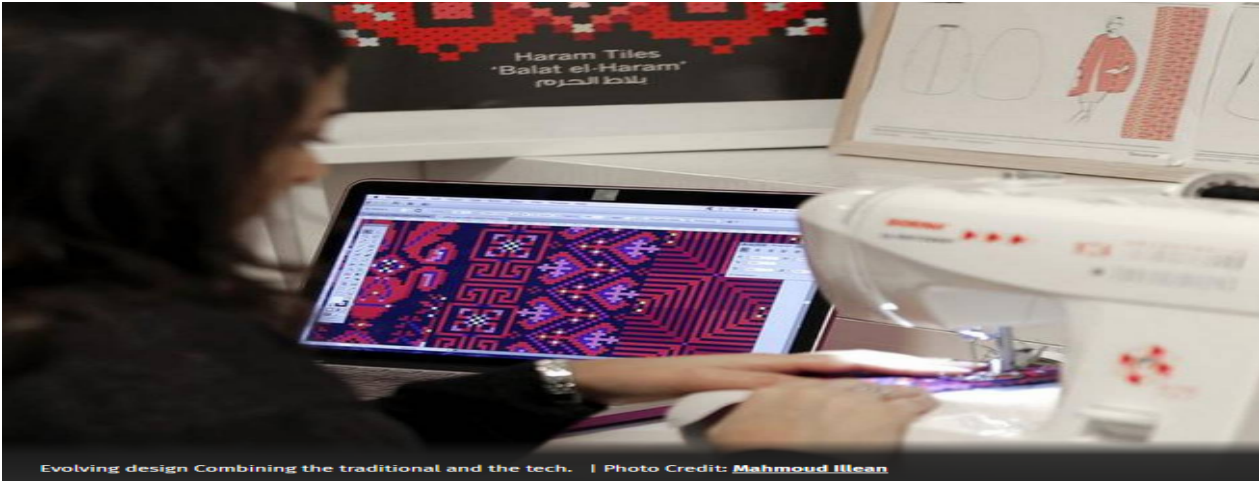
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Evolving design Combining the traditional and the tech. | Photo Credit: Mahmoud Illean

MORE-IN

careers

EDGE

Design education offers exciting opportunities as it straddles the spheres of science, technology, art and aesthetics in equal proportion

The new face of design in India has spawned several exciting new careers: the product designer competing on a global platform in increasingly global markets; the graphic designer creating 'Brand India' by giving a visual identity to Indian businesses; the craft designer who is re-interpreting traditional handloom and handicraft products to suit urban tastes and international markets; the thinker-designer who is creating processes for bettering hospital administration and coming up with solutions for making drinking water safe; and even the strategic design manager, sitting in boardrooms and creatively putting together business strategies.

Start prep

- If you think design is your 'thing', then start preparing for it.
- Learn to communicate — through sketching, drawing, photography or even articles.
- Begin observing things and people around you.
- Become a detailed person: understand the intricacies of objects and spaces.
- Be creative in whatever you do.
- Start putting together a sampling of all your creative endeavours.
- Arm yourself with the knowledge of the profession.
- Meet designers in the field. Observe how they work.

Making choices

Design education in India has been inherently generic. But much of this is changing. Since not all institutes offer such unique and niche options, it is wise to choose the area that excites you and choose an institute that would feed this excitement.

Know what you want: Introspect to understand what you want. Are you a technical tinkerer? Do you enjoy solving product-related problems? Are you the kind who is visually literate? Do you instinctively react to good websites or apps? Are you comfortable straddling different areas of work? Do you lead a digital life? All these could point you to different disciplines of design.

Know your institution: Many design institutes offer conventional disciplines of design that tend to slot you into pre-determined domains. Some of these institutes may not offer programmes that are relevant today. The curriculum should reflect the changing times and must be tuned to what the industry requires.

Know the content: It is prudent to check the contents of a design programme to ascertain its relevance and suitability. Are the courses cutting-edge? Do they include the rapid technology changes? Are there labs and workshops that can help you learn? Are they career-oriented? Do they prepare you for real-world experiences? Are the courses wired to industry needs? Do the programmes help you understand your interests or are they slotting you into domains that you do not care about?

The future

The scope of design is evolving from being a mere form-giving activity of the 1960s; the future of design is all-pervading. Designers will be expected to take on leadership roles and have to become more disruptive, responsible and inclusive. Sustainability will become the mantra for the future of design. Imagination will become paramount and creativity will be the key to solving world's problems.

To remain significant in the future, educational institutions will have to focus on creating this talent: find new ways of delivery; go online; make **students** collaborate; and be geography-agnostic.

New prospects

Some new-age roles in the field of design include:

Product designer: This designer works with materials, processes and technologies to create new products for the masses. Whether it is a phone with a

Interaction designer: This professional creates delightful digital experiences and products. This could be physical experiences as in robotics or digital ones like a fitness app.

Interdisciplinary designer: A professional who explores the width of the domains and ends up with one specialisation. Found in most start-ups and small businesses, these designers can design a brand, publish a book, design a launch event, and put together an exhibition and the website for the same.

Design entrepreneur: The creative designer who has a business idea can become a brand to be reckoned with. They become start-ups and are armed with entrepreneurial spirit and business acumen.

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<https://www.thehindu.com/education/visualise-your-career/article26618360.ece>