How Design Education Is Shaping the Next Generation of Changemakers

With advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics decimating clerical and manual jobs across a multitude of industries, a career in design has emerged as an attractive option for students across the world, including India. No wonder, UI and UX designers are among the top 15 fastest growing jobs, as per the World Economic Forums Future of Jobs Report 2025.

JK Lakshmipat University, Jaipur

However, design education is not restricted to UI and UX design. Nor is it limited to the commonly perceived domains of fashion or graphic design. In fact, there have been so much misperceptions around design education that many students often miss out on the opportunities that pursuing a Bachelor of Design (B.Des) programme can offer.

The first misconception is that students need to be from the science stream in class 12 to excel in a design career. *"Nothing can be further from the truth. As premier design institutes across the world are adopting an interdisciplinary approach to design education, students from any stream can excel in their design careers provided they have a scientific temper, a sense of inquiry and a bundle of creative energy,"* said **Professor A. Balasubramaniam, Director, Institute of Design, JK Lakshmipat University**.

While it is true that some design institutes require their students to be from the science stream, opportunities are now

abounding for students from all streams with the evolution of design curricula and demands of the times.

Secondly, students often tend to assume that a B.Des degree is all about mastering technology tools and excelling in visual perceptions. The reality is far from it. A B.Des degree from institutions that offer interdisciplinary curricula prepares students not only to embark on a path of creative journey, but it also equips them to solve pressing global problems.

Designing Solutions

Without a design thinking perspective, for example, you cannot imagine bridging the digital divide. It is thanks to the ingenious designers that we have affordable devices which have made internet accessible to millions of Indians.

Similarly, can we imagine advancing the sustainable development goals (SDGs) without sustainable packaging or designs that support the use of renewables The answer is a clear "no".

So, in addressing all complex global problems, be it the issues of inequality, climate change mitigation, or improving the [quality of life](#) of the physically challenged or the elderly, the world looks up to the designers to produce innovative solutions.

Students in design institutes should be trained from the beginning to be critical thinkers and versatile so that they can see the [big picture and come up with timely and practical solutions](#) to the issues at hand. Training on systems [designs](#) can prepare them to take on complex global challenges.

"*Design students of today are expected to solve complex systemic problems. That is one of the reasons why the [Institute of Design at JK Lakshmipat University](#) has adopted a multidisciplinary approach to design education where students can hone not just conventional design skills but can also*

learn empathy, develop deep sensitivity to human beings and understand their context," said **Dr. Devanuj K. Balkrishan, Professor at JKLU**.

Diverse Pathways

For a B.Des student wanting to make a [mark in the world](#), he or she should look beyond conventional design disciplines and explore what contemporary disciplines such as the following can offer: Interdisciplinary Design, Interaction Design, Product Design and Integrated Communication Design.

A B.Des in Interdisciplinary Design, for example, aims to equip graduates with comprehensive skill sets, blending technology with traditional design principles. Interdisciplinary designers of today are adept at handling a wide range of roles with ease — from designing campaigns for advertisements to running startups offering multiple design solutions.

Similarly, the focus of Product [Design](#) has expanded so much over the past few years that graduates specialising in this area are now tackling critical social issues — offering solutions for areas without electricity by designing battery operated lamps to providing drinking water to communities with rollable tanks.

"*Similarly, Interaction Design has advanced beyond User Interface (UI) design to integrate the pencil with the pixel, setting the stage for designers to pioneer immersive ways of people-to-people, people with devices and devices with devices interactions,*" **Professor Balasubramaniam** said.

An Integrated Communication Design approach, on the other hand, encompasses both analogue and digital designs, dealing with a broad range of areas including data visualisation, reporting and writing.

"*A contemporary curriculum, however, is not enough to make*

graduates ready to face the challenges of the real world. What they also need is project-based learnings, global exposure, and training in communications and critical thinking," said **Raj Gopal Menon, Professor & Dean, Institute of Design, [JK Lakshmipat University](#)**.

As the world-renowned thought leader in design **Don Norman** said, *"We need new kinds of Designers, people who can work across disciplines, who understand human beings, business, and technology and the appropriate means of validating claims."*

About JK Lakshmipat University, Jaipur

Founded in 2011 by the 140-year-old J.K. Organisation (JKO), JK Lakshmipat University (JKLU) continues JKOs legacy of excellence and commitment to nation-building. Accredited with an A grade by NAAC, JKLU is at the forefront of innovation, blending academia with industry through its interdisciplinary programs in engineering, management, and design that prepare students to excel in an ever-evolving workspace.

JKLUs faculty includes accomplished scholars from globally renowned institutions such as the IIMs, IITs, NIDs, and other top universities worldwide. The university's curriculum focuses on interdisciplinary learning, hands-on projects, and practical problem-solving, providing students with the flexibility and choice of tools they need to address complex challenges and drive a meaningful change.

The universitys [strong industry](#) connections, real-world projects, and immersive internships form a core part of the JKLU experience, bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical application. Through strategic partnerships and exchange opportunities with [leading institutions in India](#) and abroad, students gain a global perspective that enriches their education and broadens their horizons.

At JKLU, students also benefit from access to cutting-edge centers such as the Centre for Critical Thinking and

Communication, the Atal Incubation Centre, and the AIMA Biz Lab. These platforms foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and critical inquiry, encouraging students to explore new ideas and develop a problem-solving mindset.