

Perspective & Strategic Plan of Symbiosis International University

AY 2016-17 to AY 2025-26

Background:

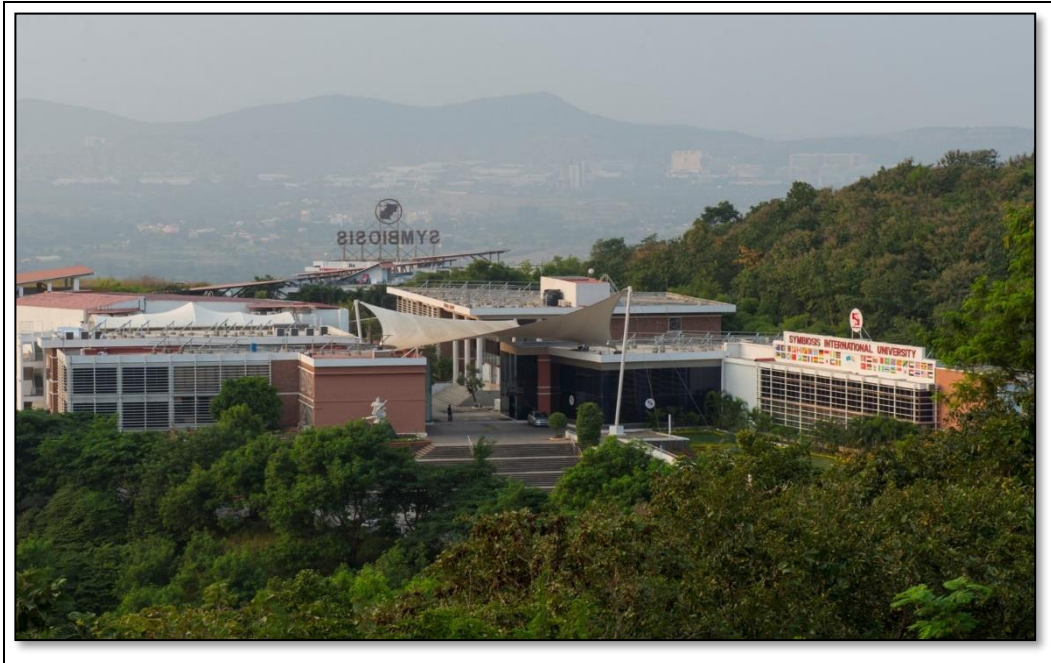
The University has over the last 14 years¹ since its establishment in 2002, built a strong foundation and an excellent reputation for being an ethical organization and it is rated amongst the best Institutions in the country. In 2008 the UGC accepted the request of the University to change its name from Symbiosis International Education Centre (SIEC) to Symbiosis International University (SIU).

Campus of the University:

Symbiosis International University is a multi-disciplinary university offering its students and faculty a vibrant learning ecosystem designed around its multi-cultural and innovative ethos. The main campus of the University is located in the picturesque hilly terrain spread over 350 acres of land adjacent to Lavale village near city of Pune.



¹Document prepared in March 2016



Off campus Centres:

The Off- campus centers at Bengaluru, NOIDA, and Hyderabad were established in 2008, 2010 and 2014 respectively after the due inspections carried out by the Statutory bodies / Councils as applicable prior to according them the status of off- campus centres of SIU.

1. Bengaluru campus



2. Noida campus



3. Hyderabad campus



Some key highlights of the achievements of the last decade (2005-16) are presented below:

1. Accreditation and Ranking:

➤ NAAC

In the previous decade the University has been accredited by NAAC

- in the first cycle on 29 January 2009 with a CGPA of 3.35 on four point scale at A grade.
- in the second cycle on 19 Jan 2016 with a CGPA of 3.58 on four point scale at A grade.

2. **New Faculty/ Disciplines added:** From three Faculty / Disciplines at the time of the inception of the University now has seven Faculty. The four new Faculty / disciplines created under SIU: Health Sciences, Media Communication and Design, Humanities and Social Sciences and Engineering. The University is thus now an eminent multidisciplinary University.

3. **New constituents added:** From three constituents at the time of inception, the inclusion of 10 erstwhile autonomous institutes of Symbiosis as Constituents of SIU, and creation of new constituents under the existing Faculty, has taken the number of constituents in March 2016 to 29. This rapid growth has brought several challenges, but far more advantages to the University. The student intake has grown from 10114 in 2005 to 15568 in 2015.

4. **New Programmes added:** The number of programmes offered at the university grew from 50 in 2005 to 81 in 2015.

5. **Establishment of Support centres:** In order to focus on skill- based education, continuing education, internationalization and to foster entrepreneurship, the University set up the following new Support departments. Of these only ELTIS which was the first institute to have been set up by Symbiosis in 1972, was established prior to the setting up of the University and was brought under the ambit of the University in 2007

- i. English Language Teaching Institute of Symbiosis. (ELTIS-2007)
- ii. Symbiosis Institute of Foreign and English languages. (SIFIL-2007)
- iii. Symbiosis Centre for International Education. (SCIE-2008)
- iv. Symbiosis Centre for Research and Innovation. (SCRI-2009)
- v. Symbiosis Centre for Corporate Education (SCCE-2010)
- vi. Symbiosis Teaching Learning Resources Centre. (STLRC- 2011)
- vii. Symbiosis Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. (SCEI-2014)
- viii. Symbiosis Centre for Health Skills. (SCHS-2015)

6. **Establishment of a Research Centre:** Symbiosis Centre for Research and Innovation (SCRI) was set up in 2009. In pursuit of high-end research in the Faculty of Law, the Symbiosis Centre for Advanced Legal Studies and Research (SCALSAR) was established in 2013.

7. **Introduction of All India Entrance Tests:** The Symbiosis Test Secretariat was established in 2004. In order to deal with the huge number of applications received by the University for the PG and UG programmes and to ensure a standardized admission process and admissions on merit the University established All India Entrance Test

- **Symbiosis National Aptitude (SNAP):** a written Entrance Test for all Post Graduate Programs in Management (MBA) was started in 2004.
- **Symbiosis Entrance Test (SET):** a written entrance test for all Undergraduate programs - was started in 2005.
- **PhD Entrance Test (PET):** Following the UGC (MINIMUM STANDARDS AND PROCEDURE FOR AWARDS OF M.Phil/Ph.D DEGREE), Regulation 2009 a written Entrance Test is conducted for admissions to the PhD programs as well.

These tests are conducted at 30 cities in the country and have expanded the reach of the University that believes in admissions entirely on merit. Thousands of students apply for the various programmes at SIU

The written Entrance test is Phase I of the Admission process. Students shortlisted in this phase are called for a **Group Discussion/ Exercise, Personal Interview and Writing Ability Test (GEPIWAT)** and the final selection list is drawn based on scores in the written Examination and the GEPIWAT. The excellent practices drawn from the erstwhile autonomous Institutes of Symbiosis as planned in the earlier decade, have earned the University a lot of appreciation for the transparent processes followed to ascertain the competencies of the applicants.

8. **Introduction of Credit based curriculum and CGPA system of grading:**

The University adopted the credit based system of evaluation. Since 2012 the University adopted a uniform 4-point scale for the CGPA evaluation system. Thereafter, when the

UGC notification on adopting a 10-point scale was received in 2015, the University has transitioned to the 10-point scale for CGPA.

9. **Best practices in Academics:**

- Since 2007 the University has adopted the practice of offering electives to students to broaden the perspective that students gain from any program. This again has been lauded as a practice that was introduced prior to the UGC guidelines on Choice Based Credit System (CBCS).
- As planned in the earlier decade Industry - Academia collaboration has been embedded in each programme offered by SIU, by ensuring that industry is involved in the design and delivery of academic programmes. Industry has supported the Institutes by offering a large number of live projects and internships to students to enrich experiential learning.
- Master catalogues of courses in each Faculty have been prepared with levels of learning aligned to Bloom's Taxonomy
- The curriculum of each course is prepared by benchmarking with reference to good Universities in India and overseas.

In the background of the current status of the University given above, the perspective plan of the University for the next decade 2016-26 is outlined below.

Perspective Plan for AY 2016-17 to AY 2025-26

This Perspective plan for the decade 2016-26 is prepared in two phases of five years, each with a strategic plan, for operational ease. This will help guide the University in its actions in the short and long term and provide a strategic direction to the growth of the University.

The aim of the University is to focus on research and strengthen the academic offerings of the University.

Strategic Plan for the period AY 2016-17 to AY 2025-26

This will be the decade of strengthening Research and leveraging the advantage of the interdisciplinary nature of the University- for enriching academic programmes offered and for undertaking externally funded research. It will also be the decade for further consolidating/reviewing the Academic processes, building a strong base for Research, and embedding technology in all the academic and administrative processes.

It is proposed to split the decade (2016-26) into two periods for the purposes of operationalizing the Strategic Planning

- 1. Phase A: AY 2016-17 to AY 2020-21**
- 2. Phase B: AY 2021-22 to AY 2025-26**

Phase	Period	Strategic Plan
A	AY 2016-17 to AY 2020-21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review and further strengthen the academic programmes at SIU 2. To strengthen the Research environment at the University 3. To establish the University Hospital and Research Centre as part of the Health Science Technology park envisaged at SIU. 4. To leverage the advantage of inter-disciplinary nature of the University for undertaking research at the intersection of disciplines 5. Increase Industry academia interface by offering microcredit programmes and other corporate education. 6. Strengthening entrepreneurship and establishing startups in health Tech. 7. To reach out to Alumni and seek endowments for various Institutes. 8. To establish off- campus Centres 9. To enhance the use of technology for Administration 10. To be recognized as one of the top 50 Universities in the NIRF ranking among public and private Universities
B	AY 2021-22 to AY 2025-26	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. To create a new framework for academic programmes at SIU leveraging the multidisciplinary nature of the University 12. Setting up of a Faculty of Education 13. To continue to focus on Research as outlined in Phase A with special focus on Health Sciences and Technology. 14. To complete the next phase of the establishment Health Science Technology Park through establishment of Industries on the University campus 15. To further strengthen the use of technology for administration and teaching-learning process. 16. To build strong interdisciplinary research in collaboration with overseas partner Universities 17. To build strong partnerships with international organizations for enhancing <i>Internationalization @ Home</i> 18. To set up a UGC approved National Human Resource Centre- NHRC, for imparting training to faculty members from across the nation, based on the modules in Andragogy that have been developed. 19. To make all efforts to be recognized as one of the top 25 Universities in the NIRF ranking among public and private Universities. 20. To consider setting up an off- shore campus

Phase A: AY 2016-17 to AY 2020-21

To operationalize the Strategic plan of the university for this period the following actions are planned:

1. Reviewing and Strengthening Academic programmes:

a. Faculty wise Catalogues:

- All the courses (core and electives) offered under each Faculty and listed in the Master Catalogue of the University, and further classified into levels based on Blooms Taxonomy, will be reviewed regularly by the sub-committees of the Boards of Studies of each Faculty.
- This must be an on-going internal exercise given the fast pace of change that is seen around us. Redundant or obsolete courses must be weeded out and new courses in emerging areas or domains of knowledge, must be introduced after careful review each year
- This Master Catalogue needs to be reviewed regularly and this is a specific focus for the early part of this decade.

b. Review the curriculum and structure of the existing programs

- An informed review should be based on continuous engagement with the stakeholders, particularly the recruiters who would employ the graduates, since all Higher Education must prepare young people to step into the world of work and aim to provide them the life skills needed to sustain themselves over the course of their lives and careers.
- Every Institute has a committee, chaired by the Director, and they may pick courses from this Catalogue, not only from the own Faculty but also from other Faculty, hence for instance the Symbiosis Institute of Technology would primarily choose courses in Engineering but can also pick courses from the Management catalogue, or even courses in Law E.g. Intellectual Property Law.
- All the Institutes will thus be able to create unique Program structures on the lines of universities in the west which offer flexibility to students. They will also keep in mind the level and needs of Industry, which will aid the employment of students.
- In addition, to ensuring academic rigour in the concerned discipline, equipping the students with life- skills should form an integral part of all programmes at SIU.
- Carrying out an **External audit** of all the programs and courses in the first half of the decade, prior to the next NAAC Review due in late Dec 2020 or early Jan 2021

c. Adding newer disciplines:

- In line with the tradition at Symbiosis, the University will continue to add newer disciplines as found necessary.
- To make the University truly multidisciplinary, the University may like to explore other disciplines which can add to the Research profile of the University.

d. Implementing Outcome based education –

- Many good universities across the world practice Outcome-based education, where the learning goals of the courses are clearly articulated.
- This involves clearly outlining the Program objectives, the Course objectives for each course and programme and identifying the attainment levels expected
- The mapping of PO – CO and CO- Assessment with the related weights will help to assess attainment levels course wise and help in measuring the attainment of the said outcomes at the level of the programmes too.
- The Assessment of the attainment of the outcomes would be done with the purpose of-
 - Evaluating the effectiveness of implementation of the programme and courses
 - Evaluating the performance of students against the set outcomes
- This will help the Institutes to deliver content effectively and will help them retain their competitive edge in a rapidly changing environment.
- This will need constant review of the courses as outlined above.

e. Rationalizing credits for the various diploma and certificate programs

2. Strengthening the research environment of the University

Over the years, the University has been gradually creating the ecosystem to support, encourage and reward research. In the last decade, the progress was slow. In this decade, it is planned to enhance the thrust on research in several ways. The research initiatives will specifically focus on the following objectives:

- To improve the faculty to publication ratio.** Each faculty member will be required to publish a minimum specified number of publications, which will be considered for the annual Performance Appraisal Review (PAR)
 - To enhance the quality of the publications.** Faculty members will be encouraged to publish in journals indexed in SCOPUS/ WoS so that the quality of the research publications shows an upward trajectory. To achieve this, several training programs on the latest techniques in quantitative and qualitative research will be conducted by STLRC and SCRI. Access to databases, training in use of databases will be the focus of the Library.
 - To increase the number of patents and other IP assets of the university.** The university has so far not paid adequate attention to creation of IP. With disciplines such as engineering and Design there is a good potential to register patents and every effort will be made to acquaint the faculty members with the relevant processes. It is also planned to provide Administrative and financial support.
 - To build capacity amongst faculty to successfully bid for external funded projects.** Very few of the faculty members have so far been bidding for external funded projects and there is scope to build capacity towards seeking more funds as outlined in the NAAC Peer Report.
- e. The **Research & Development (R&D) Mandate of the University** is outlined as follows:
- The R&D must be socially relevant, locally need based, nationally important and globally significant.

- The focus of R&D in the University is aligned with the national priorities of the Government, reflected through various schemes and grants.
- The R&D must be applied, translational and leading to innovation.
- To create R&D hub comprising medical facilities, diverse research centres and constituent institutes that promotes interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research significant to society, and
- The University's R&D must lead to the development of capable and responsible human resource.

3. Establishing the University Hospital and Research Centre as part of the Health Science Technology park envisaged in the future.

This is a plan that seeks to serve two worthy objectives:

1. To serve the community of 23 villages in the vicinity of the University that has no access to health care facilities, as a step –up from the Family Doctor Clinics and the Mobile Medical Units operated by SCOPE, the Department for Community service, at the University. FDCs and MMUs that have been operating since 2012 and provide valuable service to the access-constrained villages.
2. To bring together the Faculty of Health Sciences and Faculty of Engineering to expand the interdisciplinary horizons of research.

4. Leveraging the advantage of the inter-disciplinary nature of the University for undertaking research at the intersection of disciplines.

- a. To encourage faculty to interact with faculty from other disciplines and undertake interdisciplinary research and co-teach courses.
- b. **To establish Research clusters** comprising faculty drawn from across different disciplines and plan for eventual upgradation of the ones that display excellent execution and have the potential to garner external funding consistently, to the status of funded Research Centres

5. Increase Industry academia interface by offering microcredit programmes and other corporate education.

6. Strengthening entrepreneurship and establishing startups in health Tech.

7. To reach out to Alumni and seek endowments for various Institutes.

- a. As pointed out by the NAAC peer team in the recent review of the second cycle, SIU is blessed with alumni across India and overseas and most of them are in very senior positions now. This advantage must be leveraged to seek their support for the advancement of the University.
- b. Establish Alumni Global Chapters in Singapore / Dubai.

8. Establishing off-campus centres

The University will plan to further expand its presence in other cities through off campus centres. The centres established earlier are all well established and have served the purpose of expanding the reach of the university and providing meritorious aspirants to seek education at their preferred locations, closer to home.

9. **Enhancing the use of technology** in administrative departments such as Finance, HR, Purchase, Asset Management etc. SIU has so far adopted technology to make routine jobs easier and to enable ease of handling large amounts of data, given the large number of constituents. The rapid pace of changes in technology has brought to the fore newer applications that can further enhance productivity of the existing staff in HR, Finance and Administration departments. Identifying and customizing such software to suit the specific requirements will be one of the tasks undertaken through the decade- phase A and B.
10. **NIRF Ranking** – to be recognized as one of the top 50 Universities in the NIRF ranking among public and private Universities.

Phase B: AY 2021-22 to AY 2025-26

11 Creating a new Framework for Academic programs at SIU

Leonardo da Vinci said *“To develop a complete mind: Study the art of Science; and the science of Art. Learn how to see. Realize that everything connects to everything else”*

Frans Johansson in *The Medici Effect: Breakthrough Insights at the Intersection of Ideas, Concepts, and Cultures* (2004) says, *“When you step into an intersection of fields, disciplines, or cultures, you can combine existing concepts into a large number of extraordinary new ideas.”* This book cites an interesting example - *Architect Mike Pearce drew insight from termite towers to design a building without air conditioning—in Africa.*

In this Phase and into the next decade SIU will explore the following options for students:

a. Design the content of your own Programme: SIU is a multi-disciplinary University, which can provide students an option to take courses from multiple disciplines while pursuing the core curriculum at one of the Institutes. A unique structure creating a flexible programme and building in the possibility of pursuing courses from different domains available in the campus vicinity at other Institutes of SIU—e.g. Mechanical Engineering and Photography, E&TC and digital communication, Film making and Baking & patisserie. The options can be manifold since the University offers a large number of programs and thousands of courses.

b. Study – Work & Earn – Return to Study: Rigidity in the duration of the program had traditionally been built into academic programmes in India - currently students enroll for a 2,3,4,5 years' program and have a fixed schedule, thereby dissuading them from pursuing other interests/ jobs/ family commitments as required. This has been a hurdle.

If the award of the Degree is based on earning a pre- specified number of Credits, the student could be given flexibility to complete them within a fairly liberal span of time subject to a minimum duration as defined under Section 22 of UGC. As academic programmes become more expensive, students of the future may choose to **Study – Work & Earn – Return to Study** pattern and Universities must facilitate this - there can be no reason to stick to rigid schedules. SIU would therefore explore multiple exit and entry options for students to facilitate their progression in academics.

12. Setting up of a Faculty of Education – The University has delved into FDPs in Andragogy and these earlier forays have yielded good results. The University would therefore consider starting a 4 years B.Ed programme and also a Centre for research in Internationalization of Higher Education, which has been an area of intense involvement over the years..

13. To set up a UGC approved National Human Resource Centre- NHRC, for imparting training to faculty members from across the nation, based on the modules in Andragogy that have been developed.

- a. Strengthening Faculty development and Academic Leadership through strengthening STLRC.
- b. Building on this strength to seek MHRD approval to become a National Human Resource Centre- NHRC, for imparting training to faculty members from across the nation. Currently, only Public Universities are given the opportunity to be NHRCs, but hopefully a time will come when the discriminatory chasm between public and private Universities will vanish, and Deemed Universities will also be granted permission to train faculty as NHRC which is a crying need of the nation.

14. To continue to focus on Research as outlined in Phase I-A with special focus on Health Sciences and Technology.

- a. With the setting up of the proposed Symbiosis University Hospital and Research Centre (SUHRC) in Phase A, the University will be poised to extend its research in Health Sciences, Biological Sciences and other allied areas.
- b. The conjunction of Health Science and Technology that is envisaged to help incubation of start-ups on the campus will also help to leverage the vast opportunities available in finding tech- based solutions for medical problems. Interdisciplinary work will further get an impetus.

15. To complete the next phase of the establishment of Health Science Technology Park through establishment of Industries on the University campus

The vision behind the concept of the Health Science Technology Park on the University campus stems from the following:

- a. to bring together the expertise in multiple domains present in the University, in order to create a virtuous cycle of research and invention that will provide an opportunity for students to be involved in live research projects thus enriching the academic programmes
- b. to support the startups on campus,
- c. to generate strong translational research output.
- d. to attract companies / start-ups wishing to establish their presence on campus, where there will be access to trained manpower, faculty expertise, clinical material for research, excellent and latest equipment in SUHRC, an ecosystem to provide services of IP protection, legal matters, finance and accounting services, design development, support for conducting market surveys etc. who will benefit tremendously by not having to seek individual services from varied sources.
- e. Such a cluster of companies will also benefit from proximity to SUHRC which can be the base for research.

16. To further strengthen the use of technology for administration and teaching-learning process.

- a. As technology advances, the scope to do more things digitally grows. With the convergence being seen in technology, many of the traditional processes in Universities will undergo change and adoption of technology will help reduce time required, besides making them error-free.
- b. As regards teaching - learning, the use of blended mode of teaching will be increasingly adopted to make learning easier for those who need time to assimilate, and to adopt engaging, student – friendly pedagogy

17. To build strong interdisciplinary research in collaboration with overseas partner Universities.

The setting up of the Hospital and Research Centre and the multi-disciplinary nature of the University gives it an advantage to seek collaborations for interdisciplinary research with existing partners and also to bid for global research funding in collaboration with international partners. This will be a new phase of internationalization.

18. Internationalization: To build strong partnerships with International Organisations for enhancing *Internationalization @ Home*.

19. NIRF Ranking

To make all the efforts to be recognized as one of the top 25 Universities in the NIRF ranking among all public and private Universities.

20. Setting up of off – shore campuses - In this phase the University may consider setting up off-shore campuses to expand its reach beyond Indian shores. Many Indian Universities have already set up base in Dubai, Singapore etc. and as a University which has its genesis in providing 'a home away from home' for foreign students this would be a logical step. Given the enormous goodwill earned by Symbiosis over the years, this will be a step welcomed by most Afro- Asian nations.