

CREATIVE HORIZONS

Volume 01 Issue 02 April 2026 Quarterly Magazine

An
FDI
Initiative

FEATURE STORY

Responsible luxury: rethinking leather for a sustainable future

BRANDING & OUTREACH

FDDI represents footwear sector at National Quality Conclave 2026

INDUSTRY CONNECT

*MECHAI: Human + Machine + AI
A new Industrial Balance*

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*"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief
that someone else will save it."*

. Robert Swan .

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MESSAGE FROM THE
**MANAGING
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DESK**

Dear Readers,

It gives me immense pleasure to present the second issue of Creative Horizons, FDDI's quarterly magazine.

Following the launch of our premier issue, we have been truly encouraged by the overwhelming response and appreciation received from industry stakeholders, academia, and readers across the value chain.

The positive feedback and enthusiastic participation reaffirm the relevance of such a platform in fostering dialogue, sharing knowledge, and showcasing innovation within the leather, footwear, and allied sectors.

Building on this momentum, the present issue is specially curated around the theme of sustainability, in line with the spirit of Earth Day, reflecting our shared commitment towards environmentally responsible growth and conscious innovation within the leather, footwear, and allied industries.

In this issue, we have made a concerted effort to bring together a diverse range of articles and perspectives that highlight sustainable practices, emerging trends, and forward-looking approaches being adopted across the value chain.

From eco-friendly materials and circular design principles to responsible manufacturing and evolving consumer awareness, the contributions in this edition underscore the growing importance of sustainability as a key driver of the industry's future.

We look forward to further deepening our collaboration and expanding the reach and impact of Creative Horizons in the coming editions.

Vivek Sharma, IRS
(Managing Director, FDDI)



EDITOR'S NOTE



Dear Readers,

For many years, the vision of a dedicated publication, one that captures the evolving pulse of the leather, footwear, fashion and retail industries remained a shared aspiration of Footwear Design & Development Institute (FDDI), an institution actively imparting education and training in these domains.

Today, as we present the second edition of Creative Horizons, it is deeply gratifying to witness this vision not only realized, but, steadily gaining momentum. The overwhelming response to our inaugural issue, received from stakeholders across the value chain, reaffirms the importance of such a platform in encouraging informed dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and innovation.

The publication also aims to serve the leather, footwear, fashion, and retail industries by sharing sectoral insights, institutional developments, and perspectives on design, innovation, market trends, and emerging industry developments. In doing so, it seeks to strengthen the vital connect between academia and industry.

Building on this encouraging foundation, the current issue is centered around the theme of Sustainability, a subject of growing urgency and global relevance. Drawing inspiration from the spirit of Earth Day, this edition explores the industry's transition toward environmentally responsible and future-ready practices.

As we reflect on the present, we are equally excited about the future. This July, Creative Horizons will bring out a Special 40th Anniversary Edition, marking a significant milestone in the Institute's journey.

This commemorative issue will celebrate four decades of excellence, tracing our evolution and reaffirming our commitment to advancing education, innovation, and industry collaboration on a global scale.

We also take this opportunity to invite industry stakeholders to actively contribute to this growing platform. We would be delighted to feature your esteemed organization in our upcoming issue through commercial advertisements, brand showcase pages, sponsored articles, or product highlights.

We take great pride in presenting this second edition and remain committed to curating content that informs, inspires, and connects our expanding community of readers.

Manoj Agarwal
(Editor-in-Chief)



CREATIVE HORIZONS

Connecting Ideas, Craft and Innovation

April 2026

Issue No. 2

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Subscription for 5 Years (4 Issues each year) – Rs. 1600/-

Annual Subscription (4 Issues) – Rs. 400/-

Single Copy – Rs. 100/-

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RESPONSIBLE LUXURY

Rethinking leather for sustainable future



Rooted in a Philosophy of Craft

Growing up in Shahjahanpur, I was surrounded by craftsmanship that valued patience, durability, and respect for materials. Objects were not meant to be discarded, but preserved, repaired, and passed on. This philosophy has shaped my journey, from studying Leather Design at NIFT-Delhi to over 25 years in the Indian leather industry.

Today, through StudioSRZ and my brand OneFineLeather, my work seeks to redefine leather accessories with a narrative that blends Indian craft heritage with global refinement, and sustainability with understated luxury.

Leather as a Responsible Material

Leather, when responsibly developed, is one of the most enduring and biodegradable natural materials available.

It is a by-product of the food industry, and when treated through processes such as vegetable tanning, low-impact finishes, and controlled chemical usage, it becomes both environmentally considerate and exceptionally durable.

Sustainable leather product development begins with conscious sourcing and continues through every stage of refinement. The tanning process, finishing techniques, and material selection determine not only the tactile richness of the product, but, also its environmental footprint. The use of biodegradable components, natural linings, carefully selected threads, and reduced synthetic layering ensures that elegance does not come at the cost of responsibility.



Design with Intention, Waste with None...

In today's context, luxury is increasingly measured by longevity. A truly premium leather accessory should age gracefully, developing a distinctive patina that reflects time and character. At OneFineLeather, the focus is on clean architectural lines, ergonomic precision, and meticulous detailing. Each piece is designed to transcend trends and remain relevant across seasons.

Equally important is respect for material. Precision in cutting and thoughtful pattern engineering help minimize waste, while leftover materials are reimagined into new creations. Responsible luxury lies in maximizing every resource with intention.



A Shifting Industry and What It Demands

Having been closely associated with the Indian leather industry through developmental and research-based collaborations, I have observed a significant shift toward cleaner technologies, traceable sourcing, and responsible production. Global buyers now seek transparency and ethical integrity alongside design excellence. The modern market values authenticity, knowing where a product comes from and how it was crafted.

Sustainability, however, should not be reduced to a marketing vocabulary. It is a discipline, a balance between heritage craftsmanship and modern innovation.

It demands accountability without compromising aesthetics. From raw material to responsible market, every decision matters. In the world of true luxury, responsibility is not an option. It is an expectation.

"Longevity itself is a form of sustainability."

Shahrukh Zaidi is a Designer, Consultant, Trend Forecaster and Academic Mentor with over 25 years of distinguished excellence in the Indian leather industry.

He is the Founder and Curator of StudioSRZ, and the creative force behind OneFineLeather. A graduate of NIFT-Delhi in Leather Design, his expertise spans leather apparel, accessories, footwear, branding, visual merchandising, and packaging, reflecting a holistic approach to design and innovation.



Mr. Shahrukh Zaidi
Founder and Curator,
StudioSRZ



India Tightens Footwear Rules to Curb Toxic Chemicals, Aid Exports Push

India has tightened chemical safety norms in the footwear sector, with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) issuing voluntary standards to detect hazardous substances in footwear materials. The move signals a broader effort by the world's second-largest footwear maker to align with global benchmarks while strengthening consumer protection.

According to a BIS notification, the new norms prescribe test methods to measure the presence of dimethylformamide (DMF) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), respectively. Both substances are commonly used in footwear manufacturing and can pose health risks with prolonged exposure.

DMF is widely used as a solvent in the production of polyurethane-based synthetic leather and components. It can be absorbed through the skin and has been linked to liver toxicity.

PAHs are typically found in rubber and plastic parts such as soles, and some compounds in this group are known to cause cancer.

Trade experts said that the notification is part of a wider effort to harmonize Indian standards with global regulations, particularly in export markets such as the European Union (EU) where limits on such chemicals are stringent.

"The absence of standardized testing protocols has often been cited as a barrier for Indian exporters, as compliance requirements differ across jurisdictions," said Mr. Abhash Kumar, trade economist.

Earlier, the footwear industry did not have a uniform method to test hazardous substances such as DMF and PAHs, leading to variations in results across laboratories.

By aligning with the norms of the Geneva-based International Organization for Standardization (ISO), BIS has now introduced standardized testing protocols, which manufacturers may need to adopt to ensure consistency and global comparability of test results.

With BIS rolling out new norms, manufacturers will now need to follow uniform ISO-based testing protocols, using defined methods for sample

preparation, chemical extraction, & analysis, including techniques such as gas chromatography-mass spectrometry.

Globally, regulations such as the EU's Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) prescribe strict limits on hazardous substances in products with prolonged skin contact. For instance, several PAHs are restricted to very low concentrations, typically around 1 mg/kg, while solvents like DMF are also tightly controlled.

The government's move is significant for India's \$2.6 billion footwear market. It also assumes importance as the government seeks to boost footwear exports, which rose to \$2.55 billion in FY25 from \$2.49 billion in FY24.

- Source: Mint 2026



"NATURE DOES NOT HURRY YET EVERYTHING IS ACCOMPLISHED."
-LAO TZU

India's Digital Commerce Set for a \$250 Billion Leap

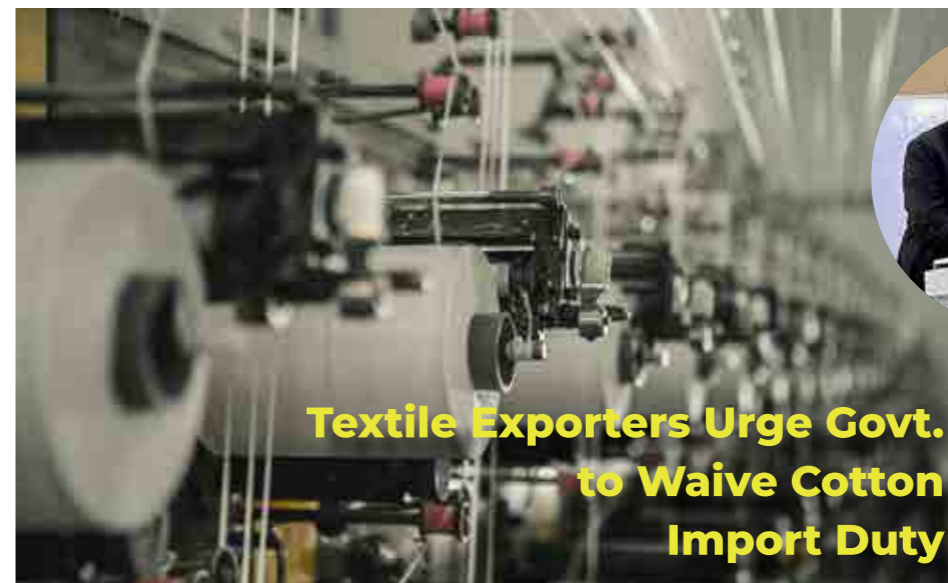
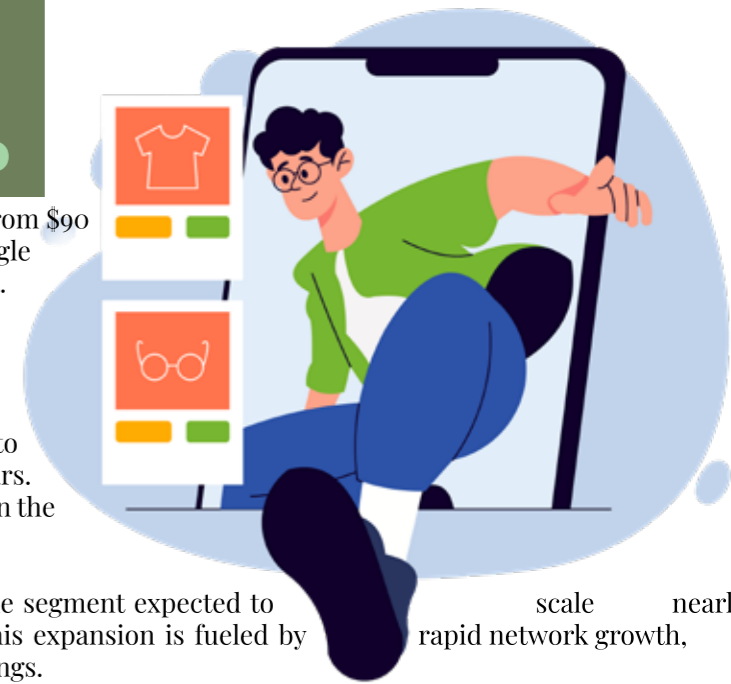
India's digital commerce ecosystem is projected to grow from \$90 billion today to \$250 billion by 2030, according to the Google and Deloitte "The \$250 Billion Commerce Frontier" report. This growth is being driven by emerging channels such as quick commerce, Gen Z consumers, and AI-led shopping experiences.

Gen Z, estimated at 220 million consumers, is expected to account for nearly 45% of online spending in the coming years. Additionally, around 150 million new shoppers are likely to join the digital economy, further expanding the consumer base.

Quick commerce is set to be a major growth driver, with the segment expected to sixfold, from \$7-8 billion in 2025 to \$50 billion by 2030. This expansion is fueled by increased dark store penetration, and broader product offerings.

The number of quick commerce users is projected to double from 32-34 million in 2025 to 65-70 million by 2030, as convenience-driven shopping becomes mainstream.

Notably, non-grocery categories such as electronics and fashion are gaining traction, contributing nearly 45% of total quick commerce spending. Much of this growth is being led by Tier II cities, signaling deeper market penetration beyond metros.



Textile Exporters Urge Govt. to Waive Cotton Import Duty

Textile and garment exporters have urged the government to remove the 11% import duty on cotton, as a recent surge in domestic prices has eroded margins and hurt their competitiveness in over-seas markets. Local cotton prices have risen 7-8% over the past month, driven by a sharp increase in demand as costlier crude oil pushed up prices of synthetic fibres, prompting mills to shift back to natural inputs.

The industry is seeking a temporary relief on the lines of the one granted last year, when the government waived cotton import duties between August and December to ease supply pressures. The prices of ginned cotton have increased 11-12% over the past one month, as per data from the Cotton Association of India. International cotton prices have risen 12-15% during this period, as cotton was the cheapest agricultural commodity available to investors, said industry experts.

For the export of textiles and garments, India depends on imported long-staple and contamination-free cotton, as demanded by overseas buyers. "Prices of almost all raw materials have gone up. However, as about 60-70% of the textile value chain depends on cotton we have requested the central government to waive the import duty on cotton for three-six months," said Chandrima Chatterjee, Secretary General, Confederation of Indian Textile Industries.



Sanjay Gupta Takes charge of CLE Components Panel

Strengthening its focus on the upstream ecosystem, the Council for Leather Exports (CLE) has nominated Mr. Sanjay Gupta as Convenor of the Components and Allied Panel, reinforcing alignment across critical input segments of the leather and footwear value chain. He currently serves as the President of the Indian Footwear Components Manufacturers Association (IFCOMA).

Mr. Gupta brings extensive industry experience and a sharp understanding of component manufacturing, sourcing, and supply chain dynamics. His company, Sandeep Rubbers, is a key industry supplier, providing soles to a wide spectrum of footwear manufacturers across the sector. His appointment comes as the industry sharpens its focus on scale, quality, and global competitiveness particularly in components that significantly influence finished product value.

As Convener, Mr. Gupta is expected to foster deeper collaboration among manufacturers, drive innovation in materials, and strengthen India's positioning within global supply chains, while advancing policy advocacy, standardisation and export growth in the components segment.

HOOFERS

Rethinking Footwear, RESPONSIBLY

Hoofers is reimagining footwear by challenging one of the industry's most entrenched norms, its reliance on plastic. Founded by entrepreneurs with a background in banking, the brand reflects a transition from conventional career paths to purpose-driven innovation.



The Founders: Naresh Maddisetty, Vinod Kandukuri & Sandeep Motepalli

At its core is a simple idea: Footwear can be designed to work with nature, not against it.



India's First Nature-Built Sneakers

At a time when synthetic materials dominate footwear manufacturing, Hoofers takes a different route. It focuses on natural, breathable materials, aiming to reduce dependence on petrochemical-based inputs that contribute significantly to environmental impact, particularly in a major production hub like India.

Rather than treating sustainability as an add-on, Hoofers integrates it into the very construction of its products. The brand emphasizes thoughtful material selection, efficient use of resources, and durability, promoting longevity over excess. The result is footwear that is minimal, functional, and environmentally conscious.

Supported in its early stages by Footwear Design & Development Institute (FDDI), Hoofers has built its foundation on research-led design and responsible innovation.

Positioning itself not as a definitive solution but as a progressive step, Hoofers reflects a growing shift in the industry where the future of footwear is defined not only by design, but by the impact it chooses to leave behind.



www.myhoofers.com

Leather Making: Beyond SUSTAINABILITY

The Regenerative Net-Positive (RNP) Approach

By Dr. M. Sathish Senior

[Scientist | CSIR-Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI) | Regional Centre| Kolkata

For decades, the concept of sustainability has served as the cornerstone of responsible industrial development, anchored in the principle of “doing less harm.” It emphasizes reducing resource use, lowering emissions, and maintaining balance. However, this approach often results in a neutral impact, which is insufficient in the face of escalating climate change, biodiversity loss, and social inequities.

Moreover, sustainability alone cannot reverse the existing damage. Therefore, it is time to think “Beyond Sustainability, that is, creating a positive impact to restore what has been lost.

The Regenerative Approach goes beyond sustainability, with its core principle being to restore, renew, and enhance natural systems, societies, and economies, rather than merely preserving them.

RNP the Leather Sector

To shift the leather sector from conventional sustainability to beyond sustainability, five guiding rules are proposed:

1. Reduction in Reliance on Virgin Resources

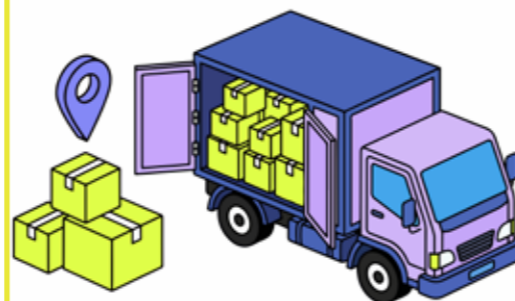
Leather is fundamentally a by-product of the meat industry, which already contributes to resource efficiency. However, the regenerative model goes further by minimizing dependence on virgin water, chemicals, and energy. Through process optimization, water recycling, cleaner production technologies, and efficient material utilization, leather manufacturing can significantly reduce its environmental burden while improving economic performance.

2. Movement from Centralized Manufacturing to Decentralized Manufacturing

Decentralized manufacturing promotes regional value addition, reduces transportation-related emissions, and strengthens local production clusters. By fostering distributed processing systems and empowering smaller units within organized frameworks, the leather industry can generate employment, reduce carbon footprints, and enhance supply chain resilience.



Courier Export Value Limit to be Scrapped



The government on 27th March 2026 announced that it would remove the value limit per consignment for exports through courier services from 1st April 2026.

Earlier, the limit was ₹10 lakh per consignment. The announcement was made in the FY27 Budget, and the move is expected to support small exporters and e-commerce led shipments.

"There shall be no value limit prescribed per consignment for through courier services," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification.



Sustainable is not enough



3. Caters to Customization

Customization supports demand-driven production models that reduce overproduction and material waste. By aligning manufacturing volumes closely with actual market requirements, the sector can avoid excess inventory and unnecessary resource consumption. Regenerative thinking, thus, integrates smart production strategies with environmental responsibility.

4. Bio-economy

The transition toward a bio-economy involves adopting bio-based technologies such as enzyme-assisted processing, renewable tanning agents, and organic waste valorization. These approaches reduce reliance on petrochemical inputs and encourage innovation rooted in biological systems. The integration of bio-based solutions strengthens both sustainability and industrial competitiveness.

5. Infinite Circular Economy: Land to Leather to Land (3L)

Leather inherently connects agricultural systems to durable products. Derived from livestock linked to land, transformed into long-lasting materials, and capable of biodegradation under appropriate conditions, leather has the potential to complete a natural cycle: Land to Leather to Land (3L). Strengthening this circularity through responsible sourcing, cleaner processing, and mindful product development can position leather as a model material within a regenerative industrial framework.

The Regenerative Net-Positive approach represents a forward-looking and progressive evolution for the leather industry. It calls for collaboration among scientists, manufacturers, policymakers, and designers to move beyond compliance-driven sustainability toward systems that actively restore environmental balance.

By embracing regeneration, the leather sector can transform from being resource-efficient to becoming resource-positive, demonstrating that industrial growth and ecological responsibility can move forward together.

Dr. M. Sathish Senior
|Scientist|CSIR-Central Leather
Research Institute (CLRI)| Regional
Centre| Kolkata|



"THE GREATEST THREAT TO OUR PLANET IS THE BELIEF THAT SOMEONE ELSE WILL SAVE IT."
— ROBERT SWAN

MECHAI

Human + Machine + AI a new industrial balance

Normally, when we hear topics like garments, leather machinery, automation, or Artificial Intelligence, we imagine an intellectual person (read: nerd) sitting in front of a screen, typing complicated technical words. We read through everything, nod a few times pretending to understand, and by the time we reach the conclusion, we usually fall into one of two mindsets.

Type I:

"Artificial Intelligence will replace jobs. Machines will take over. Maybe even my role will become outdated. What do we do? Are we doomed?"

Type II:

"AI is still dumb. It can't even solve basic problems correctly sometimes. Human intelligence is superior. Nothing can replace us." Both reactions are understandable.

But what if there is a **Type III**?

I once asked AI if it could replace humans in manufacturing. It replied: *"I can calculate the pattern, optimize the material, and predict the demand... but someone still has to explain to the customer why the delivery is late."* So, for now, humans remain essential.

Introducing **Type III: MECHAI**

Type III is neither fear nor denial. It is collaboration. Let's call it MECHAI - the synergy of Human Capability (Me), Machinery (Mech), and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

- Me represents us—human creativity, judgment, intuition, ethics, and experience.
- Mech represents machinery—precision, strength, endurance, and consistency.
- AI represents artificial intelligence—data analysis, prediction, pattern recognition, and optimization.

When these three come together, something powerful happens. Machines carry the load. AI processes the data. Humans provide meaning, direction, and conscience. And suddenly, the goal becomes simple: getting the work done better than ever before.

The Reality of Our Industry

The garments and leather industries have continuously evolved from manual craftsmanship to mechanization, automation, and now digital transformation. Today, technologies such as AI-assisted pattern optimization, automated nesting for improved material utilization, machine vision for quality inspection, and predictive analytics for demand forecasting are steadily becoming part of modern manufacturing ecosystems. These are not disruptions, but enablers of efficiency and innovation.

Where Humans Still Lead

Machines calculate. AI predicts. But humans interpret meaning. In garments and leather product development, design is not only about efficiency. It involves aesthetics, ergonomics, cultural understanding, storytelling, and emotional value. A machine may suggest an optimal cutting layout, but it cannot understand the emotion behind craftsmanship or the subtle balance of proportion in a beautifully designed product. That remains our domain.

The Shift Toward Smart Manufacturing

Across the world, manufacturing is moving toward smart production systems—AI-assisted quality inspection, robotics-supported processes, data-driven inventory planning, automated grading and cutting, and real-time machine performance monitoring.

The real question is not whether automation will arrive—it already has. The real question is: **Will we resist it, ignore it, or master it?**

Becoming Type III

To become Type III—to adopt the MECHAI mindset—requires a small shift in thinking. Instead of fearing machines, we learn how they work. Instead of ignoring AI, we understand how to use it. Instead of competing with technology, we collaborate with it. At the same time, we strengthen what machines cannot replicate: creative thinking, design sensibility, ethical judgment, and human-centered innovation.

The future of garments and leather manufacturing will be neither fully automated nor completely manual. It will be intelligently hybrid.

**"Sustainability slows damage.
Regeneration repairs it."**

The Evolution Ahead

Imagine a workspace where designers use AI tools to simulate collections before sampling. Machines cut materials with optimal precision to reduce waste. Automation handles repetitive processes, while humans supervise, innovate, and refine.

That is **MECHAI**.

Not humans versus machines. Not blind dependence on AI. But synchronized growth.

We are not being replaced. We are being upgraded- if we choose to evolve.

Find Your Type

So the question is simple: Are you **Type I**, **Type II**, or evolving into **Type III**?

The real question is; how will we evolve with it? Because in the future of manufacturing, machines may do the heavy lifting and AI may do the heavy thinking.

But humans will still be responsible for asking the most important question: "Did we remember to switch the machine on?"



A short QR-based questionnaire accompanies this article to help readers reflect on their mindset toward machinery, automation, and artificial intelligence in the garments and leather industry.

It only takes a few minutes, but it might change how you see the future of manufacturing. Because the real question is not whether AI will replace us.



Mr. Subhpratik Bhattacharjee
Founder,

Chemico: One-Stop Shop for All Leather Goods
| Multi-Business Investor |
Advocate of Human Machine Synergy



GEOMETRY IN MOTION...



A sustainable approach to contemporary wooden heels

- Ms.Devangana Bharadwaj
FDP 2023-27, FDDI Kolkata

By reducing internal mass while maintaining outer integrity, the design balances material efficiency with stability. Its broader base further improves weight distribution, offering enhanced comfort over conventional narrow heels.

Craftsmanship and Construction

Working with wood introduced significant technical challenges. Achieving precise hexagonal edges required meticulous carving without compromising strength, while weight management demanded careful control of thickness and proportions. Ensuring durable bonding between the wooden base and leather upper, along with maintaining ergonomic comfort despite the rigidity of wood, required thoughtful construction. Each challenge ultimately refined the design, strengthening its structural logic and overall performance.

Footwear is more than function—it is a dialogue between structure, material, and identity. In her design exploration, Ms. Devangana Bharadwaj reimagines contemporary heels through the lens of geometry, sustainability, and minimalism. The result is a striking open-toe silhouette featuring a handcrafted hexagonal wooden heel paired with a clean black leather upper.

Breaking away from conventional forms, the solid wooden heel is carved into a precise hexagon with an internal void, introducing visual intrigue while ensuring structural strength and balance.

Inspiration: Geometry in Nature

Inspired by the hexagon, one of nature’s most efficient and stable forms seen in honeycombs and crystalline structures, the design embodies symmetry, strength, and material efficiency. By translating this geometry into footwear, Devangana merges organic inspiration with engineered precision, creating a heel that functions like a miniature architectural structure supporting human movement.

Sustainable Material Exploration

A key objective of the project was to explore responsible material choices. Wood was chosen for the heel due to its biodegradability, durability, and natural aesthetic, with its grain and texture consciously highlighted rather than concealed.

The matte black leather upper is kept minimal, featuring a clean double-strap design for comfort and grip, allowing the sculptural heel to remain the focal point. The guiding philosophy is clear: Let the heel speak. Let the upper support.

Structural Transparency as Concept

The carved hexagonal void reflects the idea of “structural transparency”, lightness within solidity and strength without excess.



Sustainability Beyond Material

This footwear reflects sustainability beyond material choice, emphasizing longevity and timeless design.

Through durability, geometric efficiency, and a slow fashion approach, it moves away from fleeting trends toward enduring value.

The matte black leather upper is kept minimal, featuring a clean double-strap design for comfort and grip, allowing the sculptural heel to remain the focal point. The guiding philosophy is clear: Let the heel speak. Let the upper support.

A Statement of Strength

Designed for individuals who value meaningful statement pieces, the heel embodies strength, stability, and refined boldness. It seamlessly suits semi-formal settings, exhibitions, and contemporary styling, where fashion meets art and architecture.

From ROOTS to *Rose*

A Journey into Conscious Creation

In an era where fashion's environmental impact often goes unnoticed, Ms. Sanghamitra Malik turns attention to more mindful practices. Her saree project responds to the ecological concerns of synthetic dyeing by embracing the quiet strength of plant-based colour.

Crafted on soft mulmul cotton, the saree was dyed using manjishtha (Indian madder root), a natural dye source that has been part of the Indian subcontinent's textile traditions for centuries. The roots were soaked and gently processed to release their pigment into water, creating a dye bath guided by patience rather than chemicals. As the fabric absorbed the colour, it developed soft rose and earthy pink hues, tones shaped by time, fibre, and nature itself. Each variation in shade reflects the organic dialogue between plant and textile, ensuring that no two outcomes are identical.

The surface is further enriched through eco-printing with fresh rose petals, leaving delicate, natural imprints that capture the transient beauty of the flower.

More than a garment, the saree embodies a conscious design philosophy, reducing chemical dependency while reconnecting with traditional ecological knowledge. Sanghamitra's work positions sustainability not as an alternative, but as an evolving and responsible direction for contemporary fashion.



Ms. Sanghamitra Mallik,
Fashion Design, 2024-28,
FDDI, Kolkata

Threads of Heritage,



Forms of the Present

For Ms. Chinmayee Dash, design begins with memory. Drawing inspiration from the delicate Heer embroidery of Punjab and the vibrant Abhla embellishments of Western India, she reinterprets traditional craft through a contemporary line of leather bags.

Rather than replicating textile techniques, the collection translates their visual language, fine threadwork and reflective detailing into clean, structured silhouettes. Geometric embroidery and subtle sequin accents bring a sense of celebration, while maintaining modern minimalism.

Each piece balances softness with structure, and tradition with functionality, as intricate handcrafted surfaces meet the strength and durability of leather. The result is a collection that feels both rooted and relevant.

Chinmayee's work becomes a bridge between heritage and modern design, reaffirming that tradition evolves finding new expression in contemporary forms.



Ms. Chinmayee Dash
School of Leather Goods,
2023-27, FDDI, Kolkata

Handcrafted Expression:

A

Crochet Bag



Ms. Aksha Rose Thomas
Leather Lifestyle & Product Design,
2024-28,
FDDI, Kolkata

Blending tradition with contemporary design, Ms. Aksha Rose Thomas (LLPD Batch 2024-28) presents a thoughtfully developed handcrafted bag that brings together leather craftsmanship and intricate crochet detailing. Rooted in the timeless art of crochet, the design transforms simple yarn loops into a refined and functional lifestyle accessory.

The structured silhouette pairs a textured crochet panel with solid leather elements, creating balance and durability. Entirely handmade using traditional techniques, the piece reflects careful experimentation with stitch patterns, yarn thickness, and form to achieve a visually rich yet practical design.

Developed through extensive sampling and refinement, the final outcome is a striking monochromatic piece: modern, minimal, and confident in its simplicity. Aksha's work redefines crochet as a contemporary design language, demonstrating how traditional handcraft can evolve to remain relevant in today's fashion landscape.



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FROM CAMPUS To Couture

Ms. Vani Sharma, an accomplished alumna of the FDDI Chandigarh campus from the Fashion Design (FD) department, exemplifies the art of balancing creative ambition with professional stability. Her journey stands as a testament to how passion, when combined with discipline, can lead to a truly fulfilling career.

A freelance fashion stylist and choreographer, Ms. Vani is also the founder of VastraLuxe, an Indian outfit brand that brings together luxury aesthetics and affordability. Through her brand, she aims to make refined styling accessible to a wider audience, without compromising on elegance and quality.

Founded in 2025, VastraLuxe is an emerging Indian outfit brand that focuses on delivering “luxury within reach.” The brand specializes in styling for festive occasions, weddings, and special events, offering thoughtfully curated ensembles that blend elegance, affordability, and premium aesthetics.

What sets her journey apart is her ability to successfully manage a parallel career as a government employee with the Haryana Government. Seamlessly navigating both roles, she reflects a rare blend of creativity and commitment, demonstrating that professional security and artistic pursuits can coexist and complement each other.

Her story underscores the importance of perseverance, continuous learning, and the value of mentorship in shaping a balanced and successful career. It serves as an inspiration for aspiring designers to embrace multiple dimensions of their identity and explore diverse opportunities.

She fondly credits her mentors for being far more than educators- they were guides and constant sources of support who helped her navigate both academic challenges and personal growth.

Over the years, Ms. Vani has worked on a wide spectrum of projects, including product styling, fashion shoots, and personalized wardrobe styling. Her portfolio spans editorial features, commercial assignments, and styling for traditional and celebratory occasions, reflecting both versatility and creative depth.

Her industry exposure also includes participation in fashion shows, commercial productions, and digital media projects, enabling her to collaborate with diverse creative teams and clients, further enriching her professional experience.

Although VastraLuxe was established recently, it has already demonstrated steady growth and growing recognition in the luxury-budget fashion segment. With a strong emphasis on quality, styling expertise, and customer-centric experiences, the brand continues to expand its presence in a competitive market.

Reflecting on her journey, Ms. Vani emphasizes that consistency outweighs speed. She believes that true success is built on patience, resilience, and a commitment to continuous learning values that continue to guide her path forward.



Ms. Vani Sharma
Founder,
VastraLuxe

ALUMNI TIPS FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

- Start building skills early and explore opportunities during college itself.
- Seek mentors and value their guidance.
- Do not wait for the “perfect timing” to begin your journey.
- Learn financial discipline and develop strong professional habits.
- **Build confidence - your personality is your biggest asset.**

A Journey of Creativity & Purpose

Rooted in Culture, Designed for Today

She describes her time at FDDI as deeply enriching and memorable, often referring to the campus as her “second home.” The faculty and staff played a pivotal role in shaping her journey, offering constant support and encouragement through both academic and creative challenges. Their mentorship helped her develop confidence, discipline, and clarity in her career direction.

Even after completing her education, she continues to share a strong bond with her mentors, who remain a source of guidance and inspiration. She expresses heartfelt gratitude to her mentors, whose unwavering support and belief in her abilities played a crucial role in shaping her entrepreneurial path and inspiring her to take her first steps toward building her own brand.

Founded in 2025, Sristuti was envisioned as a platform to reinterpret Uttarakhand’s rich artistic and architectural heritage into contemporary design expressions. Drawing inspiration from traditional elements such as jharokhas and aipan art, the brand seamlessly blends cultural motifs with modern aesthetics to create handcrafted interior décor and lifestyle products.

By integrating heritage craftsmanship with contemporary sensibilities, Sristuti has developed a distinctive design language—one that bridges tradition and modern living while preserving cultural authenticity.

The brand has engaged in a diverse range of projects across both institutional and individual client segments. On the B2B front, it has collaborated with NGOs and organizations to develop customized cultural gifting solutions and decorative products for events and institutional initiatives. On the B2C side, Sristuti offers handcrafted décor pieces that resonate with customers who value authenticity, storytelling, and artisanal design.

Despite being a recent entrant, the brand has already demonstrated promising early traction. During the second half of the previous financial year, Sristuti generated approximately ₹6 lakh in revenue through initial product sales and early market engagements, reflecting a growing appreciation for culturally inspired handcrafted products.

As the brand continues to expand its artisan network and production capacity, it aims to scale steadily while preserving the authenticity, quality, and cultural integrity that define its identity. At its core, Sristuti remains deeply connected to purpose and heritage.

Through her entrepreneurial journey, she has come to value the balance between creativity and discipline. Working closely with artisans and customers has instilled in her patience, adaptability, and a deep appreciation for trust, collaboration, and thoughtful decision-making qualities that continue to guide her evolving path.



Ms. Stuti Pant
Founder,
Sristuti

Ms. Stuti Pant, an alumna of FDDI Chandigarh from the B. Design in Fashion Design (2020–2024), is the founder of **Sristuti**, a culture-driven creative brand inspired by the rich artistic heritage of Uttarakhand.

Her brand is rooted in the vision of transforming traditional architectural elements and regional art forms into contemporary handcrafted décor and lifestyle products. By drawing from indigenous design narratives, Sristuti reimagines heritage aesthetics for modern living spaces.

Stuti’s journey reflects a deep connection to culture, creativity, and entrepreneurship. Through Sristuti, she seeks not only to reinterpret Uttarakhand’s traditional design language into contemporary expressions but also to create meaningful opportunities for local artisans, thereby contributing to the preservation and promotion of regional craftsmanship. Her work stands at the intersection of tradition and innovation where cultural legacy is not only preserved but thoughtfully evolved for a new generation.

ALUMNI TIPS FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

- Start early, even if the beginning is small.
- Do not be afraid to experiment, make mistakes, and learn from them.
- Stay patient and consistent, as meaningful growth takes time.

Global Sustainability Challenge – TRITATVA

(Atmospheric Water Generator)

– Ms. Anneasa Manna
School of Footwear Design & Production, 2023-27
Structural and Product Designer
FDDI Kolkata

The Challenge

The Global Sustainability Challenge is an international inter-university competition that invites student teams to develop innovative solutions to the world's most pressing climate and environmental problems. Our team entered under the Adaptation and Resilience theme, addressing one of the most critical challenges facing arid and water-stressed regions: access to safe drinking water.

I progressed through multiple stages of the competition, beginning with clearing the initial round, followed by qualification for the Regional Finale held at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay. Our performance at that stage earned us a place in the Global Finale at the Technical University of Munich, Germany, where we will pitch TRITATVA on an international platform.

The Project: TRITATVA

TRITATVA is a bio-mimetic atmospheric water generator that produces potable water from humidity using corona discharge and electric-field-assisted condensation—eliminating the need for compressors. Inspired by the Namib Desert beetle, which harvests water through micro-textured surfaces, the design translates this natural principle into an engineered solution. The result is a low-energy, solar-compatible system tailored for arid regions where conventional water sources are scarce or unreliable.

The project has been recognised as one of the Top 5 teams from South Asia and among the Top 20 teams globally in the competition, reflecting both the scientific rigour and the real-world relevance of the solution to climate-related water scarcity.

My Role in the Team

TRITATVA was developed by a four-member inter-university team: Anneasa Manna from the Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI), Arnav Varshney from Manipal Institute of Technology, Kush Kapoor from Delhi Technological University, and Kriti Puri from Chitkara University. As the Structural and Product Designer, the focus was on form development and structural feasibility.

Bridging engineering with design, the role ensured that TRITATVA is not only technically sound but also manufacturable, resilient in harsh arid conditions, and cohesive as a product. Here, design was not an afterthought, it was infrastructure.



Team TRITATVA at the Global Sustainability Challenge Regional Finale, IIT Bombay, 2025-26

"Top 5 in South Asia. Top 20 globally.
A design born from the logic of nature."

What Comes Next

Qualifying for the *Global Finale at the Technical University of Munich* marks an opportunity to present TRITATVA to a global audience of researchers, policymakers, and sustainability practitioners. For me, this project has demonstrated that design thinking, when applied to urgent global problems, is capable of producing solutions that cross disciplinary boundaries and earn recognition at the highest levels of international competition.



Ms. Anneasa presenting TRITATVA at the competition stall.

A Father, A Toy, A Patent:

The Story Behind
"Toy Robo"



Dr. Rambabu Muppidi marks a significant milestone with his 25th design patent in India for an innovative children's toy, Toy Robo, published in the Indian Patent Office Journal in February 2026. The achievement underscores his continued contribution to design innovation across toys, handicrafts, and sustainable products.

Inspired by a simple yet heartfelt request from his daughter, Sri Ananya, the concept evolved through careful research, observing children's play behaviour and engaging with parents to ensure safety, usability, and engagement. Crafted from traditional Etikoppaka wood and finished with child-safe natural colours, the toy seamlessly blends heritage craftsmanship with modern design, refined through CAD modelling.

Developed in collaboration with IPR advocate Subhajith Saha, Toy Robo reflects a thoughtful convergence of sustainability, cultural value, and innovation demonstrating how meaningful ideas can transform into impactful, nationally recognised designs.



Dr. Rambabu Muppidi,
Sr. Faculty, FDDI Hyderabad
School of Leather Goods &
Accessories Design,
M. Des. (NIFT), M.Phil.,
PhD. Handicrafts and Design History.

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Built by scientists and trusted by consumers, the brand was established under the leadership of Dr. Sanchit Sharma, a PhD expert in phytochemistry in Feb'2020. Backed by decades of herbal research and multiple recognitions, Ayurveda doesn't mask problems, it corrects them by addressing concerns at the root with authentic, research-led formulations.

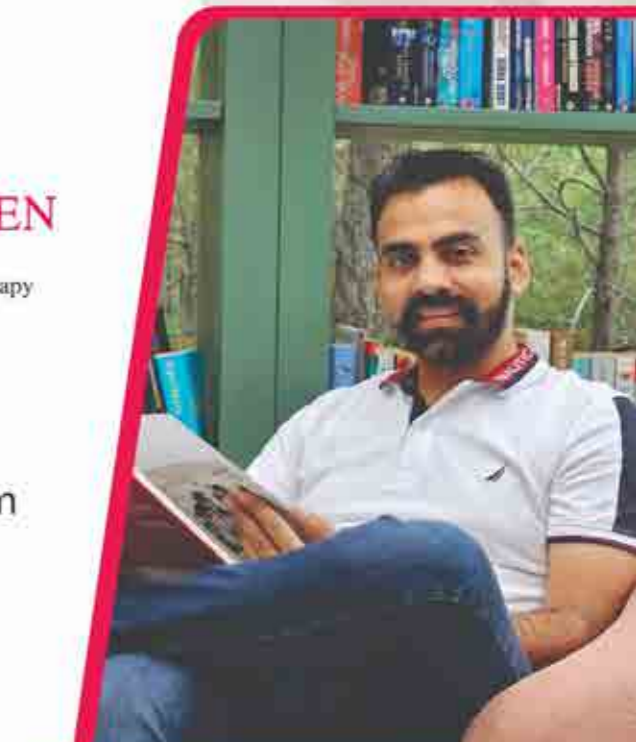
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Dr. Sanchit Sharma
Founder & Director
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A MOMENT IN TIME

As I graze through the pages of time's embrace,
 moments that danced with a fleeting grace
 Eternal truths we briefly traced.
 A heartbeat's whisper,
 In this moment of solace

Time suspended, a moment defined
 page soon to turn
 with whispers and rhyme,
 Continuing the chapter of life,
 This is a snapshot in time.

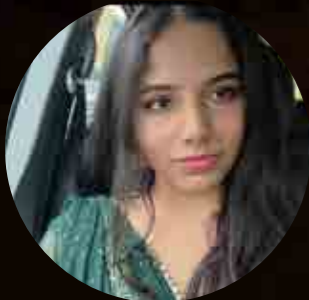
necklace of years,
 Of past we have seen
 Shimmering with tears of sorrow and happy dreams
 Each moment we string
 Remembering our beginning and anticipating endings

Yet in this moment here and now
 Time stands still, and I avow,
 It's a canvas, blank and pure,
 A fleeting gift we must ensure.
 The past has faded, the future's unknown,
 this moment's been a gift like a new sapling sown

The world spins; the seasons change,
 Shrubs to trunks and sprout to grain
 But occasions like these never estrange.
 It's a treasure chest of dreams and orchestra of rhyme,
 This moment it, yours and mine.

A juncture in time that's to be lived
 For this moment
 like footprints in the sand,
 Is a transient touch of life's grand hand

And alas
 in this fleeting instant, we get to truly see,
 The beauty of life's profound decree.
 With hearts wide open, intertwine,
 In the symphony of this moment in time.



Ms. Sofia Shazad
 6th Sem
 School of Leather Lifestyle
 & Product Design
 FDDI Noida

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FDDI

represents footwear sector at National Quality Conclave 2026

FDDI represented the footwear sector at the National Quality Conclave (NQC) Series-1, held on 23 February 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, addressed the gathering virtually, while the conclave was inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Shri Jitin Prasada.



Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, addressing the conclave virtually

In his address, Shri Piyush Goyal emphasised that quality must become the defining mantra of India's manufacturing and export ecosystem. He highlighted that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Zero Defect, Zero Effect" will serve as the cornerstone of India's growth during the Amrit Kaal. Aligning the initiative with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, the Minister stated that India's aspiration to become a \$30-35 trillion economy by 2047 rests on three key pillars – Zero Defect (quality), Zero Effect (sustainability), and Equitable Opportunity (inclusivity).

Shri Jitin Prasada reinforced the need for a decisive shift towards quality-led manufacturing to strengthen India's global competitiveness.



Shri Jitin Prasada, Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce and Industry addressing the participants during NQC

Secretary, DPIIT, Shri Amardeep Singh Bhatia, stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among government, industry, and institutions to build a robust, quality-driven ecosystem, while Chairperson, Quality Council of India (QCI), Shri Jaxay Shah highlighted that quality must evolve into a daily discipline beyond certifications.

The conclave featured focused discussions on Textiles, Leather, Footwear, and Pharmaceuticals, aiming to identify practical challenges, align with international benchmarks, and create actionable pathways for sustained excellence across sectors.

Representing FDDI, Managing Director Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, set the context during the Footwear Domain Session, highlighting FDDI's role in promoting quality standards, sustainability practices, and industry collaboration in partnership with the Quality Council of India (QCI) and industry clusters.



Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, MD-FDDI addressing the Footwear Domain Session during NQC



A team of FDDI officials actively participated in deliberations, contributing to the integration of quality-driven approaches into the sector's growth and competitiveness roadmap.

FDDI

showcases Innovation and Sustainability at the 39th India International Leather Fair 2026

FDDI participated in the 39th India International Leather Fair (IILF-2026), held from 1-3 February 2026 at Chennai Trade Centre. As a flagship event of India's leather sector, the fair brought together global stakeholders, offering a dynamic platform to showcase innovation, sustainability, and emerging industry trends.

The fair witnessed participation from several countries, including Germany, Italy, Australia, Argentina, China, Ethiopia, Hong Kong, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Taiwan, The Netherlands, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom, reinforcing its global stature.



Dignitaries at the inauguration session of 39th IILF

The fair was inaugurated by Mr. Jawed Ashraf, Chairman – India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), Mr. Ramesh Kumar Juneja, Chairman – Council for Leather Exports (CLE), Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director (MD) – FDDI, Mr. R Selvam, IAS, Executive Director, CLE, Mr. Sanjay Gupta, President – Indian Footwear Components Manufacturers Association (IFCOMA), Mr. Motilal Sethi, Managing Director, M/s. Saroj International, President – Indian Leather Garments Association (ILGA) and industry leaders, Dr. Neeraj Kharwal, Mrs. L. Bharathi Devi, Lt. Col. Harsh Kondilya, Mr. M. Abdul Wahab, and international dignitaries like Mr. Michael Hasper, Ms. Antonietta Baccanari, and Mr. Cameron Nobel.

Aligned with the theme "Sustainovation – where sustainability meets innovation," the FDDI Pavilion showcased eco-friendly collections and TechxCraft—a concept blending traditional leather craftsmanship with contemporary design innovation. Student-designed products, including footwear, leather goods, garments, and accessories, highlighted creativity, sustainability, and industry relevance.



Dignitaries at the stall of FDDI

FDDI also presented its capabilities through the International Testing Centre, emphasising quality assurance and technical support for the leather and footwear sector, while engaging aspiring students with information on academic programmes.

A technical session by Dr. Vimudha Muralidharan, Senior Project Engineer and Head, Centre of Excellence, FDDI Chennai on circular design and sustainable materials further reinforced FDDI's thought leadership in responsible innovation.

During IILF 2026, FDDI participated in the International Leather Fashion Show held at ITC Chennai on 01 February 2026. Showcasing a dynamic blend of innovation, tradition, and contemporary design, the presentation featured bold silhouettes and refined detailing across footwear, fashion apparel, leather goods, and lifestyle accessories, highlighting the institute's strong focus on design excellence and industry-oriented training.



FDDI collection presented by models at leather fashion show

FDDI-BFDS MoU

to Boost Skills & Innovation in Footwear Sector

On 25 February 2026, FDDI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bahadurgarh Footwear Development Services (BFDS) at Bahadurgarh, Haryana. BFDS is a government-supported institution established under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) MSE-CDP scheme to promote the growth of the footwear industry and skill development in India.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director, FDDI, and Mr. Subhash Jagga, Director, BFDS, in the presence of FDDI HQ officials including Mrs. Rashmi Asthana, Head ITC; Mr. Prashant Kumar Saxena, Head BD & SD; and Mr. Siddharth Dubey, Administration BFDS, along with dignitaries and leading footwear manufacturers from the Bahadurgarh cluster.

The partnership establishes a structured industry-academia framework aimed at strengthening the footwear ecosystem through focused skilling, testing, certification, design support, and enterprise development. Key areas of collaboration include NCQF and NCVET-aligned skill programmes, on-the-job training and joint placement initiatives, testing support for MSMEs, development of a commercial design and sampling facility, and certification and CE facilitation.

This collaboration is expected to significantly enhance cluster competitiveness and create a scalable model for skill-driven industrial growth, with a capacity expansion roadmap targeting training of up to 15,000 candidates annually.



A view of the MoU signing ceremony

FDDI Signs MoU with AIC BIMTECH to Boost Startup and Incubation Ecosystem

FDDI has signed a MoU with Atal Incubation Centre – Birla Institute of Management Technology (AIC BIMTECH) on 24 February 2026, to strengthen the incubation and startup ecosystem.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director (MD), FDDI, and Mr. Surya Kant, CEO, AIC BIMTECH, in the presence of Mr. Manoj Agrawal, CAO – FDDI; Mr. Prashant Kumar Saxena, Head BD & SD – FDDI; and Ms. Kanwalpreet Arora, Program Manager – AIC BIMTECH.



From Left: Ms. Kanwalpreet Arora, Program Manager – AIC BIMTECH, Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, MD, FDDI, Mr. Surya Kant, CEO, AIC BIMTECH, Mr. Manoj Agrawal, CAO – FDDI; & Mr. Prashant Kumar Saxena, Head BD & SD – FDDI during the MoU signing ceremony.

The collaboration aims to establish a structured incubation and startup support framework through joint programs, mentorship, and capacity-building initiatives. It will also promote innovation, industry linkages, knowledge sharing, and entrepreneurship development across sectors such as footwear, leather, fashion, retail, and allied industries.

Through this partnership, FDDI and AIC BIMTECH will work together to nurture scalable startups, encourage innovation-driven enterprises, and empower future-ready entrepreneurs within the design and manufacturing ecosystem.



“THE MOST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCT IS THE ONE YOU DIDN'T BUY.”
– JOSHUA BECKER

FDDI & IFCOMA host India-Vietnam Meeting on Trade and Manufacturing Synergies

On 27 January 2026, FDDI, in collaboration with the Indian Footwear Components Manufacturers Association (IFCOMA), hosted a high-level meeting with a Vietnamese delegation under the theme “Exploring Trade, Manufacturing, and Investment Synergies.”

Held in hybrid mode at the FDDI Head Office, Noida, the meeting focused on strengthening India-Vietnam cooperation in the footwear and leather sectors through skill development, technology exchange, quality enhancement, and joint venture opportunities.

The Vietnamese delegation comprised Mr. Bui Trung Thong, Trade Counsellor and Head of Trade Office, Embassy of Vietnam; Mrs. Tran Thi Lan Huong, First Secretary, Trade Office, Embassy of Vietnam; and Ms. Sonia Das, Advisor, Vietnam Trade Office.

FDDI was represented by Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director (MD); Colonel Pankaj Kumar Sinha, Secretary; Ms. Manju Maan, Executive Director, Noida Campus; Mr. Manoj Agrawal, CAO; Ms. Rashmi Asthana, Head – ITC; Ms. Renu Sharma, Head – Academics; Mr. Sharad Srivastava, Joint Director – CoE; and Mr. Prashant Saxena, Head – Business Development.

Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, MD, FDDI, and Mr. Sanjay Gupta, President, IFCOMA, formally welcomed the dignitaries and delegates, underscoring the importance of deeper India-Vietnam engagement in the footwear value chain.



Mr. Bui Trung Thong, Trade Counsellor and Head of Trade Office, Embassy of Vietnam highlighting about the promotional support initiatives



Second from Right: Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, MD, FDDI presenting memento to Mr. Bui Trung Thong, Trade Counsellor and Head of Trade Office, Embassy of Vietnam

Industry partners participating through IFCOMA included Ess Aar Universal Pvt. Ltd., Versatile Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., Shroff Polytech Pvt. Ltd., Shoes & Accessories, and Harman Sales Pvt. Ltd. Representatives shared insights into component manufacturing, material innovation, supply chain integration, and potential avenues for cross-border collaboration.

As part of the engagement, the delegation visited FDDI's International Testing Centre, gaining exposure to advanced testing facilities and research capabilities.

During the session, FDDI presented an overview of India's footwear ecosystem, highlighting education, research and development, testing, design capabilities, and skill training. IFCOMA followed with a focused perspective on India's footwear components industry, emphasizing manufacturing clusters, export potential, and the expanding depth of the domestic supplier base.



Vietnamese delegation being briefed about the testing facility available at FDDI's – ITC, laboratory

An open and constructive discussion explored manufacturing partnerships, sourcing models, technology transfer, and design collaboration. The deliberations maintained a practical orientation, emphasizing commercially viable and scalable frameworks for cooperation. FDDI also outlined its capacity to support partnerships through R&D, product and design development, quality testing, and specialized training programs. The possibility of formalizing cooperation through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Vietnamese institutions was also discussed.

The meeting witnessed strong participation from across the footwear and allied sectors, reflecting industry-wide interest in enhancing India-Vietnam collaboration. Distinguished participants included Mr. Erik Oliver, Secretary – IFCOMA; Mr. Ajay Gaur, Deputy Director – IFCOMA; Mr. Amit Chopra, Managing Director – ACDC Group; Ms. Dipika Chopra, Founder Director – Shoes & Accessories Magazine; Ms. Tripti Pandey, Associate – Invest India, Ministry of Commerce & Industry; Mr. Sanjay Kumar, CEO – Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC); Mr. Navin Anand, Director – Creations World Wide Ltd (UK/China); Mr. Kamal Ahuja, AVP – Alpine Shoes Pvt. Ltd.; Mr. Sumeet Bhatere, Director – Alpine Shoes Pvt. Ltd.; Mr. Saurabh Shroff, Director – Shroff Group; Mr. Virender Narula, Director – AMS Narula Labels Pvt. Ltd.; Mr. Sudhir Rustagi – ESS AAR Universal Pvt. Ltd.; Mr. Yogesh Madan, General Manager – Marketing, Enkay Rubber Group; Mr. Deepak Manchanda, Partner – Top Lasts; Mr. Prem Madan, CEO – Pitch Perfect; Mr. Pradeep Walia, Consultant – Sourcing, Aero Club Woodland; Mr. Neeraj Kumar Sharma, Manager – Standards, LSSC, Noida; and Mr. Kartik (Nandi Foot Wears Pvt. Ltd.), among others. Online participants included Ms. Snigdha Agrawal (The Foot Replica), Mr. Yogesh Mankar (Colour Kicks), and Mr. Sunil Kumar (LLPD Buying Agency).

The meeting concluded on a positive note, laying the groundwork for long-term India-Vietnam cooperation driven by innovation, quality, and shared growth objectives.

FDDI's Corporate Grooming & Personality Development Program: Be Seen. Be Heard. Be Hired.

FDDI conducted a comprehensive Corporate Grooming, Interview Preparedness, and Personality Development & Styling Program across all campuses, aimed at enhancing students' employability and corporate readiness. The sessions conducted by Placement Department witnessed enthusiastic participation, reflecting a strong commitment among students to prepare for competitive career opportunities.

The Corporate Grooming & Interview Preparedness session by Ms. Ananya Raje, Placement Executive (HR), focused on communication skills, resume building, professional behaviour, and interview techniques. Students were introduced to various interview formats and guided on the importance of preparation, ethics, and creating a strong first impression, particularly within the crucial first 60 seconds.

Practical tools such as structured self-introduction and the STAR method further strengthened their confidence and clarity.

Complementing this, the Personality Development & Styling session by Ms. Sweta, Certified Personal Stylist, emphasized confidence, grooming, and impactful presentation. Students gained insights into overcoming psychological barriers, maintaining professional hygiene, and mastering styling essentials such as colour coordination and wardrobe planning. The importance of non-verbal communication including posture, eye contact, and body language was also highlighted as a key factor in professional success.

Further strengthening its student-centric approach, FDDI introduced one-to-one interaction sessions as part of its Phase-3 Placement Drive. Conducted virtually by the Vertical Head – Placement, these sessions provided a personalized platform for students to discuss their placement readiness, challenges, and career aspirations. Key areas such as profile evaluation, communication skills, and employability were addressed, enabling tailored guidance and mentoring.

Insights from these interactions are being used to identify skill gaps and enhance placement strategies, ensuring better alignment between student capabilities and industry requirements. This initiative underscores FDDI's commitment to personalized mentoring, transparency, and effective career support.

Blending skill development with individualized guidance, FDDI continues to empower students to transition confidently from campus to corporate.



A view of one-on-one interactions



"IF EVERY DAY WERE EARTH DAY WE WOULDN'T BE IN THE MESS WE'RE IN."

– NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON

Sustainability as a Strategic Imperative in Leather Bag Manufacturing

In the global leather industry, sustainability has evolved from a compliance requirement to a core business strategy. For export-oriented leather bag manufacturers, it directly influences competitiveness, buyer trust, operational stability, and long-term growth. Increasingly, sustainability determines not only who survives in international markets, but who leads.

Sustainability must be integrated across factory systems, processes, and organizational culture. It extends beyond environmental responsibility to include ethical sourcing, material efficiency, energy management, workforce development, compliance, and transparent governance. When approached holistically, sustainability strengthens industrial performance while positioning manufacturers as reliable global partners.

Sustainability is not a parallel initiative. It is central to industrial strategy.

Responsible Sourcing and Supply Chain Transparency

Sustainable production begins with ethical sourcing. Partnering with Leather Working Group (LWG) rated tanneries and adopting low-impact leather processes supports global environmental standards. Increasing adoption of vegetable-tanned and low-chrome leathers further supports environmental stewardship while meeting evolving buyer expectations.

Equally critical is traceability, from raw hide origin to finished product. Ethical partnerships with suppliers of hardware, linings, and packaging materials help build transparent and accountable supply chains. This transparency strengthens buyer confidence, reduces compliance risk, and supports long-term commercial relationships in demanding export markets.

Waste Reduction and Material Optimization

Material efficiency lies at the intersection of sustainability and profitability. Through digital marker planning, lean cutting techniques, and structured scrap-segregation systems, manufacturers can significantly improve yield percentages. Repurposing leftover leather into small accessories such as wallets, pouches, and keychains transforms waste into value-added revenue streams.

Optimized material utilization reduces environmental impact while improving margins, reinforcing the principle that sustainable practices drive operational excellence rather than constrain it.

Energy Efficiency and Workforce Development

Energy management is a critical lever for cost and carbon



reduction in leather bag manufacturing. Strategic investments in rooftop solar systems, energy-efficient machinery, LED lighting, and preventive maintenance protocols deliver measurable long-term savings.

Energy optimization reduces carbon footprint while protecting operating margins demonstrating that sustainability and profitability are not mutually exclusive. Equally vital is workforce development. Structured skill-development programmers, quality-control training, safe working conditions, and inclusive employment practices reduce rejection rates, improve consistency, and enhance institutional credibility with international buyers.

Lean Systems, Compliance, and Innovation

Modern sustainability demands process discipline and transparency. Line balancing, reduction of idle time, structured production planning, and digital tracking systems improve efficiency and visibility across manufacturing stages.

Global buyers increasingly priorities social and environmental compliance. Adherence to frameworks such as Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) and Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (SEDEX), supported by regular audits and structured documentation, has become essential for market access and brand credibility.

Sustainability also enables product innovation. Lightweight bag constructions, recyclable and reduced packaging, and continuous design refinement aligned with global trends help manufacturers differentiate themselves while lowering environmental impact.

Organizations that institutionalize sustainable practices will not only meet global expectations—they will shape the future of the industry.



Managing Operational Challenges Strategically

Leather manufacturing operates within complex economic realities. Rising raw material prices, dependence on imported hardware, skilled labour shortages, and increasing energy costs remain persistent challenges. Strategic responses include:

- Improving cutting efficiency to offset raw material volatility;
- Strengthening vendor partnerships through long-term contracts;
- Developing alternative local sourcing channels;
- Implementing structured training and skill-retention systems;
- Expanding renewable energy adoption;
- Building buffer stocks and demand-forecasting mechanisms.

Sustainability as a Growth Multiplier

When embedded across sourcing, production, compliance, and innovation, sustainability becomes a growth multiplier rather than a cost burden. It enhances international reputation, attracts premium global buyers, improves operational efficiency, reduces rework and rejection losses, strengthens workforce retention, and reinforces India's position as a responsible global manufacturing hub.

For leather bag manufacturers, long-term success will be defined by the ability to integrate responsibility with efficiency, innovation with discipline, and growth with environmental stewardship. Those who embed sustainability into their value chains will not merely respond to global expectations, they will define them.



Mr. Vishnu Shankar Singh
Merchandising Head
Leather Bag division
Chemgems India Pvt Ltd

Mr. Vishnu Shankar Singh has extensive experience in export-driven leather manufacturing, he works at the intersection of product development, supply-chain management, and sustainable production practices.



"LOOK DEEP INTO NATURE, AND THEN YOU WILL UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING BETTER."

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

The Power of FOCUS

Why Specialisation Builds Global Footwear Brands



In the footwear industry, what separates a product from a brand is not price or distribution - it is identity. The kind that makes your product the first choice and the hardest to replace.

In a market as vast and competitive as ours, this identity doesn't happen by chance. It is built through clear strategy, discipline, and consistent focus.

We believe the strongest path to brand building is not diversification, but deep specialization — becoming so exceptional in one category that no alternative exists. Own it completely. Then take that strength to the world.

The Product as the Brand- Not the Other Way Around

There is a natural temptation in growing businesses to expand product ranges rapidly- more SKUs, more segments, more price points. But in chasing volume, companies often dilute what truly builds lasting value: **a distinctive product identity.**

The world's most enduring footwear brands are not remembered for how much they produce, but for one product they perfected. That product defines their identity, and everything else draws credibility from it.

When a company achieves true product mastery, it no longer competes - it defines the category. Competitors begin positioning themselves around you, not against you. While pricing and distribution can be replicated, deep expertise and refined processes built over years cannot.

Small Nations, Singular Products - Lessons in Specialization

Global success is built on specialization.

Nations that focused deeply on one craft, from Swiss watches to Italian leather - created not just products, but global identities. India has everything needed to lead in footwear. What we need now is focused intent and long-term commitment. **The time to specialize is now.**

Manufacturer to Brand Builder - Role of Private Capital

Building a brand has always been an expensive journey—requiring continuous investment in marketing, design, packaging, retail experience, and digital presence. For many Indian footwear manufacturers, especially in the SME segment, this has long been a significant barrier.

However, the landscape is evolving. The rise of private equity, venture capital, and consumer-focused funds has opened new avenues for brand-building. Investors are now actively looking beyond technology and into consumer sectors like footwear, where strong products, clear differentiation, and a compelling growth story can unlock substantial opportunities.

The Moment for Ambition

The Indian footwear industry stands at a defining inflection point where opportunity meets readiness. A strong domestic market, advancing manufacturing, access to capital, and a shifting global landscape together create a moment of exceptional promise. Yet, such moments are fleeting. The brands that will shape India's global identity will be those that act with clarity, discipline, and vision today. The path forward is deliberate: choose with intent, perfect with obsession, and build with patience. True distinction lies not in expansion, but in mastery. India has the craftsmanship, heritage, and capability to lead. What remains is the will to pursue excellence with focus and conviction. The opportunity is not just to compete but to create enduring symbols of excellence.



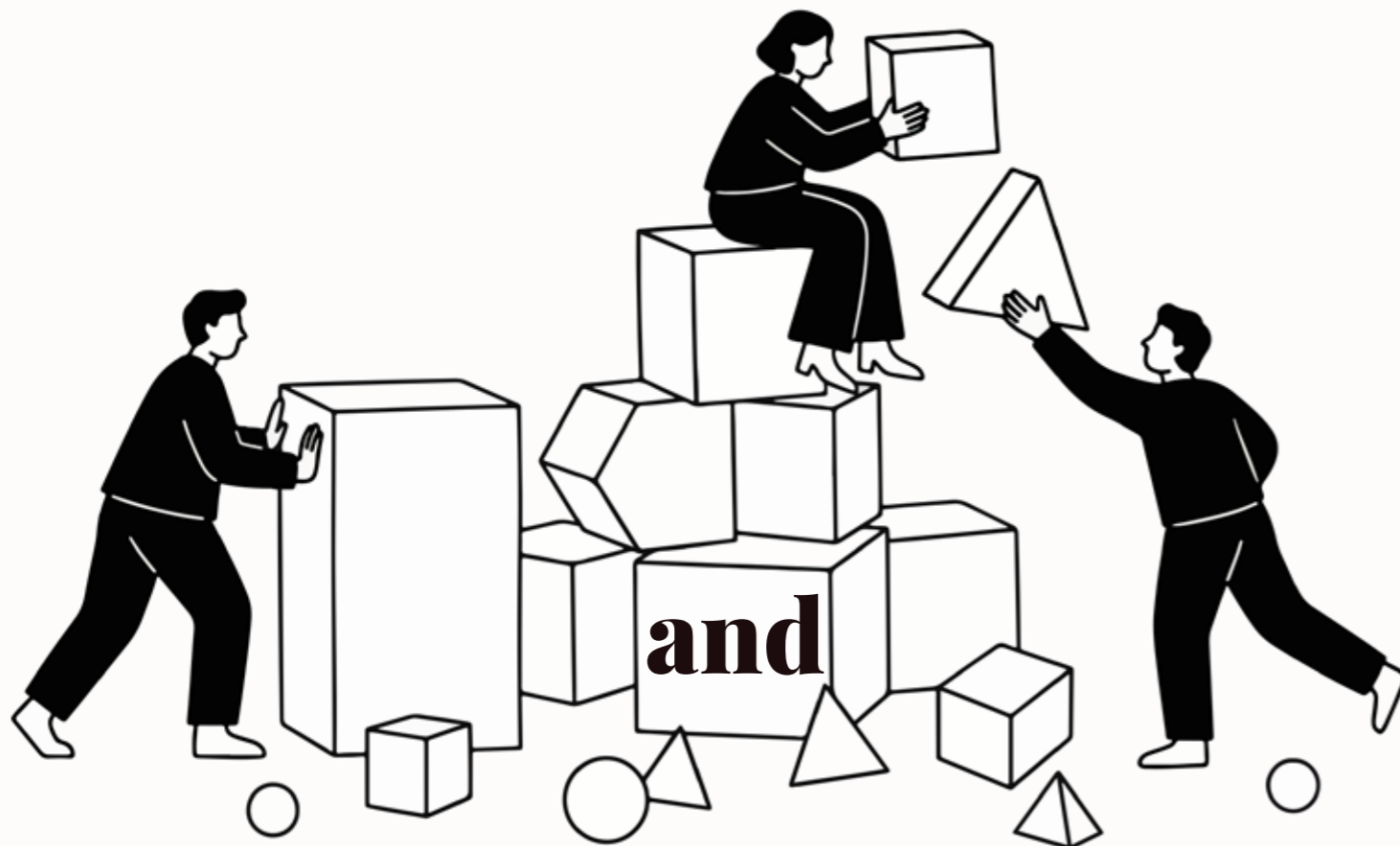
Mr. Nitin Gupta
Director
XO Footwear Pvt Ltd.

Mr. Nitin Gupta is the Director of XO Footwear Pvt. Ltd., a leading footwear manufacturer.

With over 20 years of experience, he has built large-scale operations supplying across India and 25+ countries, focusing on innovation, quality, and advanced manufacturing systems.

The views expressed are personal and reflect a practitioner's perspective on industry transformation and long-term competitiveness.

Entrepreneurial Journey



Industry Perspective

Growing up in a middle-class family where values mattered more than wealth, his early years were shaped by simplicity and perseverance. His father, a schoolteacher, instilled in him a deep respect for patience, hard work, and grounded living.

He followed a conventional path, pursuing engineering and post-graduation, and built his career with HCLTech, where he rose to leadership roles managing global teams. Yet, beyond professional growth, a deeper question continued to evolve—what truly defines success?

The answer began to take shape during a pivotal phase of his life. As opportunities for international relocation emerged, his responsibilities at home became more profound. With the birth of his son, Adit, a special child who brought a renewed sense of purpose and perspective and his father's transition into retirement, Vaibhav chose to re-evaluate his path. He made a conscious decision to prioritise family, remain rooted in India, and build something meaningful closer to home.

This decision marked the beginning of his entrepreneurial journey. In 2017, he founded Lujo Trends Pvt. Ltd. from a modest rented basement in Noida, without any external funding.

From the very beginning, the organisation adopted a people-first approach, working with full-time employees rather than contractual labour, with a focus on ensuring job security in an otherwise highly unorganised industry.

Today, Lujo Trends has evolved into a multi-brand organization with over 100 associates and brands such as Hirolas, Guava, and Aady Austin, with a strong presence across both offline and online channels. Guided by a clear vision, the company remains committed to promoting the spirit of “Make in India”, building products that are designed and developed for Indian consumers with global aspirations.

Vaibhav believes that the future belongs to brands that can balance affordability with quality, and scale with responsibility. Beyond business, his journey continues to be guided by a strong sense of giving back to society through meaningful initiatives.

Industry Perspective: Navigating Global Uncertainty in Footwear Sector

“In uncertain markets, it's not the fastest-growing brands that win, but the most disciplined ones.”

The current global landscape presents a complex challenge for footwear manufacturers and emerging brands. Raw material prices are increasingly volatile often behaving like commodities such as gold or crude oil. Geopolitical tensions, inflationary pressures, rising cost of living, and increasing labour costs are directly impacting manufacturing economics.

In such an environment, aggressive scaling and high inventory creation can quickly become liabilities. The need of the hour is not just growth, but disciplined and sustainable growth.

For footwear brands and manufacturers, this calls for a strategic shift:

- *Avoid overproduction to minimise dead inventory and working capital blockage.*
- *Focus on fast-moving designs aligned with real consumer demand.*
- *Improve seasonal planning accuracy to ensure better sell-through and reduced markdowns.*
- *Build supply chain agility to respond quickly to cost and demand fluctuations.*

In Vaibhav Mittal's view, the brands that will lead in the coming years will not necessarily be the ones that scale the fastest, but the ones that scale the smartest—balancing cost, demand, and operational efficiency.



Mr. Vaibhav Mittal
Entrepreneur,
Lujo Trends Pvt. Ltd
(Brands: Hirolas, Guava,
Aady Austin)



**“LET US PERMIT NATURE TO HAVE HER WAY.
SHE UNDERSTANDS HER BUSINESS BETTER THAN WE DO”**

— MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE



INDIA - EU Free Trade Agreement

**Redefining Global
Competitiveness
for India's Leather
& Footwear Industry.**

For India's leather and footwear industry, the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) represents far more than a conventional trade pact, it marks a decisive shift in India's global competitive positioning. The sector, which combines traditional craftsmanship with large-scale industrial manufacturing, has long been constrained by tariff disadvantages in the European Union (EU), one of its most important export destinations.

European buyers source footwear and leather goods primarily from countries that offer a combination of price competitiveness, compliance assurance, and supply reliability. Until now, India faced import duties of up to 17 percent on many leather and footwear categories, while competing suppliers such as Bangladesh and Vietnam enjoyed preferential or zero-duty access.

The India-EU FTA fundamentally removes this asymmetry, opening a new phase of opportunity for Indian manufacturers and exporters.

Tariff Elimination: A Structural Cost Advantage

The most direct benefit of the FTA is the elimination of customs duties on Indian leather and footwear exports to the EU. This change has immediate implications for factory gate pricing, buyer negotiations, and long-term sourcing strategies.

For exporters, zero-duty access:

- Improves landed cost competitiveness in the EU;
- Enhances margins or allows sharper pricing;
- Makes Indian suppliers viable alternatives in price-sensitive categories.

For EU buyers, the FTA reduces sourcing risk by enabling diversification away from overdependence on a few countries, strengthening India's appeal as a stable, large-scale sourcing destination.

Export Growth Potential and Cluster Revival

The EU already accounts for a significant share of India's leather and footwear exports, and tariff elimination is expected to substantially increase order volumes over the medium term. Growth is likely to be concentrated across established production clusters, including:

- Agra and Kanpur** – finished footwear, leather uppers, and export-oriented units.
- Ambur, Vellore, Ranipet, and Chennai** – large-scale footwear manufacturing and component suppliers.
- Kolkata** – leather goods, handbags, and accessories.

For these clusters, the FTA provides renewed momentum for:

- Capacity expansion
- Machinery upgradation
- Improved compliance infrastructure
- Deeper integration with EU buying houses

Impact on Footwear Manufacturing and Value Addition

The FTA is expected to accelerate a gradual shift from basic, low-margin exports to higher value-added footwear and leather products. With tariffs no longer eroding competitiveness, Indian manufacturers can invest more confidently in:

- Design and product development
- Premium materials and finishing
- Private-label manufacturing for European brands

This transition is particularly important for footwear exporters seeking to move beyond price-driven competition and improve export realisation per pair.



MSMEs, Employment, and Supply Chain Depth

India's leather and footwear ecosystem is heavily Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) driven, especially in cutting, stitching, finishing, and component manufacturing. Increased EU demand following tariff elimination is likely to generate positive spillover effects across the value chain, including:

- Higher capacity utilisation in small and medium units
- Increased subcontracting and vendor participation
- Expanded employment, particularly for skilled and semi-skilled workers

The FTA thus strengthens the sector's role as a key employment generator while supporting cluster-based industrial development.



COMPARISON INDIA & Key EU Sourcing Countries

Parameter	India (Post FTA)	Bangladesh	Vietnam
EU Import Duty	Zero	Zero (LDC)	Zero (FTA)
Raw Material Base	Strong Domestic	Limited	Import- Dependent
Manufacturing Scale	High & Expanding	Medium	High
Compliance Readiness	Improving Rapidly	Mixed	Strong
Product Breadth	Very Broad	Limited	Footwear-Centric

Bangladesh: From Tariff Advantage to Direct Competition

Bangladesh's leather and footwear exports benefitted for years from zero-duty access under **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** preferences, enabling aggressive pricing in the EU market. The India-EU FTA effectively neutralises this advantage.

While Bangladesh continues to benefit from low labour costs, India now competes on equal tariff terms while offering:

- A larger raw material base
- Stronger domestic tanning and finishing capacity
- Greater scalability for large EU orders

For buyers, sourcing decisions will increasingly hinge on quality consistency, compliance, and delivery reliability rather than tariffs alone.

Vietnam: Matching an Established Export Powerhouse

Vietnam has built a strong foothold in the EU footwear market through efficient factories, integrated supply chains, and early trade agreements. India's FTA now places it on **equal tariff footing**, reducing Vietnam's price advantage.

While Vietnam retains strengths in logistics and speed-to-market, India's expanding manufacturing capacity and skilled workforce make it an increasingly credible alternative—particularly for buyers seeking volume diversification.

Pakistan and Sri Lanka: Narrowing Preference Gaps

Pakistan's preferential access under GSP+ and Sri Lanka's niche positioning previously provided limited advantages in the EU. The India-EU FTA narrows these gaps, especially as Indian exporters offer broader product ranges, higher volumes, and stronger cluster ecosystems.

Compliance and Sustainability: The New Competitive Frontier

While tariffs are no longer a barrier, **EU regulatory compliance** has emerged as the defining competitive factor. Exporters must align with European norms on:

- Environmental management
- Restricted substances and chemical compliance
- Labour standards and traceability
- Sustainable sourcing

For the Indian leather and footwear industry, this represents both a challenge and an opportunity. Firms that invest in compliance, transparency, and sustainability will not only secure EU orders but also enhance competitiveness across other global markets.



Strategic Implications for Indian Exporters

For manufacturers and exporters, the FTA calls for a strategic shift:

- Focus on long-term buyer relationships rather than spot orders
- Invest in compliance infrastructure and certifications
- Strengthen design, sampling, and development capabilities
- Move up the value chain in footwear and leather goods

Those who adapt early stand to gain disproportionately from increased EU sourcing.

For India's leather and footwear industry, the India-EU Free Trade Agreement is a structural turning point. By eliminating tariff disadvantages which persisted for decades, the agreement restores competitiveness, improves export economics, and repositions India as a serious long-term sourcing partner for European buyers.

While regional competitors remain strong, the FTA shifts competition away from tariff arbitrage toward efficiency, quality, and compliance—areas where India possesses significant latent strengths. With the right industry response, the agreement has the potential to usher in a new era of export growth, value addition, and global relevance for India's leather and footwear sector.



Mr. Nelaish Yadav
Senior Faculty
School of Footwear Design & Production
FDDI Noida

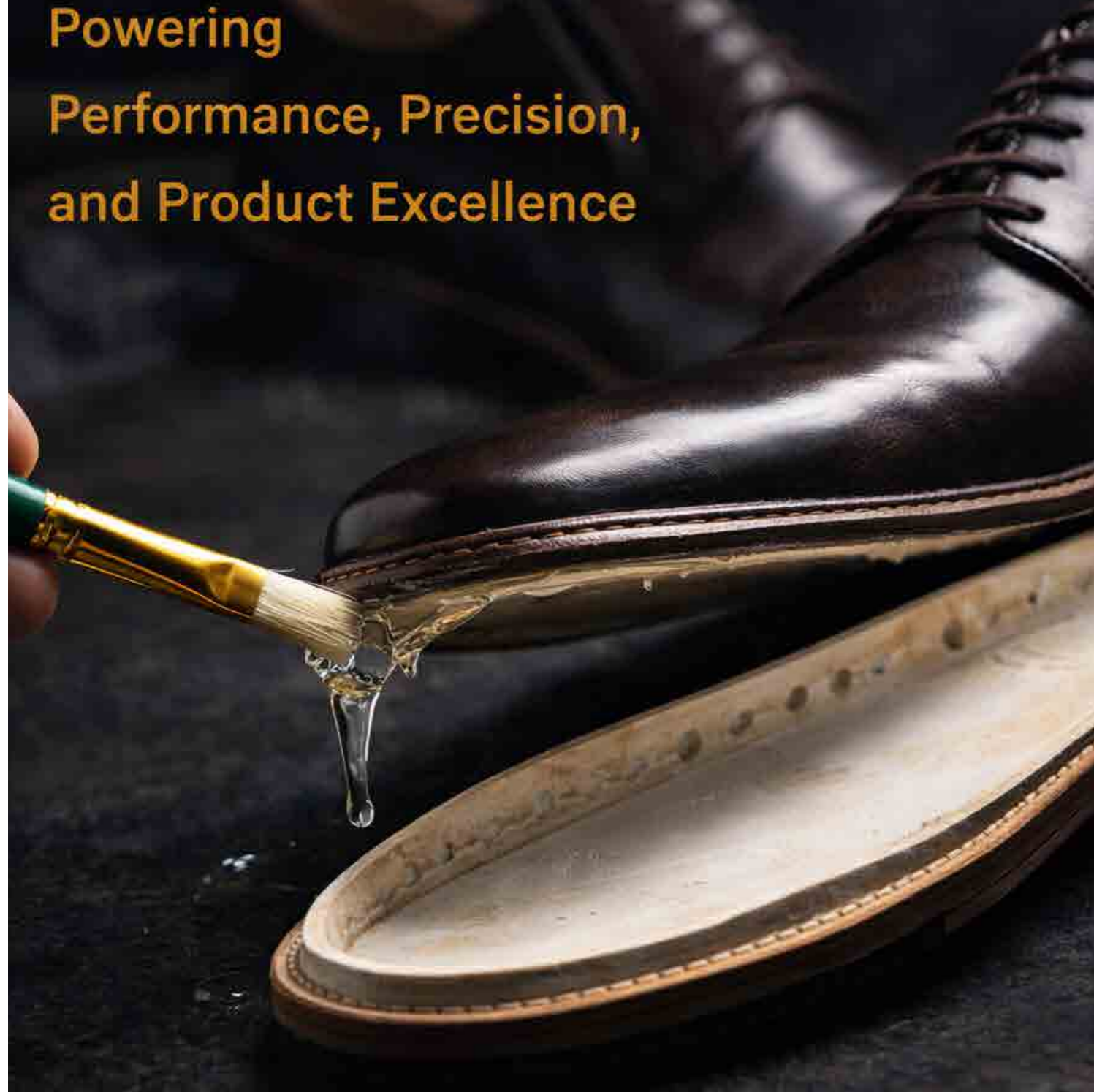


**"YOU DON'T LIVE ON EARTH,
YOU ARE PASSING THROUGH."**

- RUMI

Adhesives: The Unsung Heroes of Modern Footwear

Powering
Performance, Precision,
and Product Excellence



In the evolving landscape of footwear design and manufacturing, adhesives have emerged as a cornerstone technology. Far beyond basic bonding, advanced adhesive systems now contribute to durability, flexibility, aesthetics, and production efficiency.

From high-performance athletic shoes to contemporary fashion designs, adhesives ensure that every component functions seamlessly as a unified whole.

Strength That Holds It All Together

At the heart of every quality shoe lies strong and reliable bonding. Modern adhesives deliver robust attachment between uppers, soles, and reinforcements—minimizing failures even under demanding conditions.

“A shoe is only as strong as the bond that holds it together.”

This bonding strength directly impacts product reliability, reducing failure rates and enhancing brand trust.

Built to Last: Durability in Motion

Footwear is subjected to constant mechanical stress and environmental exposure. High-performance adhesives enable shoes to endure:

- Repeated flexing and bending
- Continuous walking and load stress
- Moisture, heat, and temperature variations

The result is extended product life and consistent performance, critical for both consumers and manufacturers.

Flexibility Meets Comfort

Modern footwear materials such as EVA, PU, PVC, rubber, leather, and textiles demand flexible bonding solutions. Adhesives today are engineered to move with the shoe, ensuring:

- Natural foot movement
- Resistance to cracking
- Long-term bond integrity

“Flexibility in bonding is the foundation of comfort in footwear.”

Lightweight Construction & Superior Aesthetics

Adhesives have replaced traditional stitching and nailing in many applications, enabling:

- Lightweight designs for enhanced comfort;
- Seamless finishes without visible marks;

Efficiency on the Production Floor

In high-volume manufacturing, adhesives play a critical role in improving efficiency:

- Faster curing and processing times
- Consistent application and quality
- Reduced rejection and rework

These advantages lead to cost-effective production and improved profitability.



Material Versatility for Modern Design

Today’s footwear combines multiple materials in a single product. Adhesives provide the versatility to bond:

Rubber | EVA | PU | PVC | Leather | Fabric

This compatibility is essential for innovation in both design and performance.

THE FUTURE OF FOOTWEAR ADHESIVES Sustainability | Innovation | Automation

Sustainability: Designing for a Greener Future

With increasing environmental awareness, the footwear industry is transitioning toward sustainable practices and adhesives are at the forefront.

Key Developments:

- Water-based polyurethane adhesives
- Bio-based and recyclable adhesive systems
- Low-VOC technologies for safer workplaces
- Adhesives supporting circular design and recyclability

“The future of footwear lies in bonding performance with environmental responsibility.”

FDDI’s Role:

- FDDI integrates sustainability into its curriculum through:
- Research on eco-friendly materials
- Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) studies
- Sustainable manufacturing frameworks

This prepares students to align with global sustainability goals.

Innovation: Driving Next-Generation Footwear

Innovation in adhesive technology is enabling superior product performance and design possibilities.

Emerging Innovations:

- High-performance polyurethane adhesives
- Reactive hot-melt systems
- Fast-curing technologies
- Adhesives compatible with recycled materials

These advancements support:

- Lightweight and high-performance materials
- Enhanced durability and flexibility
- Smart footwear integration

“Innovation in adhesives is unlocking new dimensions in footwear performance and design.”

Automation: Transforming Manufacturing

Automation is redefining footwear production with precision and efficiency.

- Robotic adhesive dispensing systems
- Enhanced durability and flexibility
- CAD/CAM-based design and manufacturing
- Automated cutting and assembly systems
- Smart production lines with real-time monitoring

Benefits:

- Uniform adhesive application
- CAD/CAM-based design and manufacturing
- Reduced material wastage
- Improved product consistency
- Faster production cycles

“Automation ensures that every drop of adhesive delivers precision and performance.”

Adhesives have become a strategic pillar of modern footwear, bridging innovation, efficiency, and sustainability. As technology advances, their role will only deepen, shaping the future of footwear design and manufacturing.



“WE ARE ON EARTH TO TAKE CARE OF LIFE. WE ARE ON EARTH TO TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER.”

— XIYE BASTIDA



Mr. Sumit Fernandez
Senior Faculty II
School of Footwear Design & Production
FDDI Fursatganj

Mr. Sumit Fernandez has done his Management in Footwear Technology from FDDI Noida and is currently associated as a Senior Faculty (Grade II) at School of Footwear Design and Production, FDDI since 2012.

He is having more than 25 years of working experience spanning both academics and industry. He has worked with leading organizations like Liberty, SSIPL, Euro Footwear, IPCC-Reebok etc. and has also been associated with consultancy projects in Ethiopia.



Mr. Brijesh Sharma
Manager-technical
specialist footwear adhesives
Atul Ltd. (Polymers-Retail business)

Mr. Brijesh Sharma holds a qualification from the Central Footwear Training Institute (CFTI), in collaboration with the Textile Institute, U.K. He is currently working as Manager-Technical Services (Footwear adhesives specialist) at Atul Ltd. (Polymers- Retail Business) since 2024.

With over 25 years of extensive experience in footwear manufacturing and the footwear adhesives industry. Throughout his career, he has provided technical expertise, driven sustainability initiatives, introduced innovative solutions and led process simplification projects. He has also closely collaborated with international and premium domestic brands including Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Puma, Asics, Liberty and Campus.

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

“Partnering for Quality. Enabling Innovation. Delivering Excellence.”

In a significant step towards strengthening industry engagement and delivering integrated technical solutions, FDDI launched its Associate Membership Program in February 2026, a comprehensive and forward-looking initiative designed for manufacturers, exporters, and allied sectors.

Positioned as more than just a service offering, the program brings together testing, Centre of Excellence (CoE) services, training, and expert consultation into a single, value-driven platform. Since its launch, the initiative has received an exceptional response from the industry, with enthusiastic participation across sectors, reaffirming FDDI's position as a trusted partner in quality and innovation.

What Makes This Program Stand Out

- Exclusive Testing Advantages – Special pricing structures designed to optimize cost while maintaining the highest standards of quality assurance.
- Access to World-Class CoE Facilities – Enabling innovation, product development, and technical validation.
- Skill Enhancement Opportunities – Discounts on specialized training programs, workshops, and knowledge sessions.
- Audit & Compliance Readiness – Laboratory Audits
- Priority Services – Faster turnaround time with dedicated support.
- Expert Technical Guidance – Direct access to domain specialists.

With this initiative, FDDI is not just offering services, we are building long-term partnerships and empowering the industry to achieve higher standards of quality, innovation, and global competitiveness.

MEMBERS

GOLD Membership Strategy Partner	SILVER Membership Strategy Partner	BRONZE Membership Associate Partner
Relaxo Footwears Ltd.	Arvind Gramudiyog	XO Footwear Pvt. Ltd.
Footwear (Klick) India Pvt. Ltd. (Lancep)	Derpa Industrial Polymers Pvt. Ltd.	Ahros Sports International
Infinity	Bansal Industries	AS Leather Works
Superhouse Ltd.	Prosafe International Pvt. Ltd.	Dharamveer & Sons
Amit Gramudiyog Sansthan	East West Tanners	
S.G. Esports	Enloy (India) Rubber Co. Pvt. Ltd.	
Munjeet Plastic Industries		
Bata India Ltd.		
Bairathi Shoes Co. Pvt. Ltd.		
Liberty Shoes Ltd.		

An Overwhelming Industry Response

The program has quickly gained traction, with industry stakeholders recognizing its strategic value and practical benefits. Members have particularly appreciated the integrated service model, which enhances efficiency, strengthens compliance, and supports continuous improvement.

GOLD *Membership*

Growth Partner
Industry Membership Program

Package features

Complimentary tests worth Rs.1.0L including CE tests on safety footwear /REACH tests/ basic physical tests on FDDI approved base prices. (Details of tests and prices in Annexure A)

Inter-laboratory testing on forty basic tests between industry in-house laboratories and FDDI, to validate internal testing results.(List of tests in Annexure A)

Two days (8hours per day) OR Four days (4 hours per day) structured training program on testing for two persons.

One annual audit of your industry laboratory. Includes advisory recommendations.

Twenty five percent fee concession on industry sponsored seats. Applicable to bachelor's and master's programs.

Flat 30% discount on the base price on all testing services (Valid for one year from the date of membership). This discount is applicable to all chargeable testing services. This offer will operate exclusive of the complimentary testing benefit as per Sl. no 1 above.

Five-year subscription to the FDDI magazine.

Complimentary ergonomic assessment of one article at COE of FDDI.

Access to 3D scanning facilities during the period of membership (Prior booking intimation with details of duration of access required and subject to a maximum of 20 hours cumulative in the entire membership period).

20% discount on specific paid training programs conducted by FDDI from time to time, including on industry premise training programs.

Dedicated SPOC

Enhanced Value Additions

1. Priority testing and audit scheduling with faster turnaround time (TAT).
2. Early access to campus placement drives and internship engagement.
3. Featured listing on FDDI website as a Strategic Industry Partner.
4. Preferential invitation and protocol to FDDI events.
5. Opportunity to participate as a preferred industry speaker at FDDI conclaves and events.
6. Gold Category Plaque and Gold Category Membership certificate.

Annual Fee: Rs. 2,00,000 + 18%GST

SILVER *Membership*

Growth Partner
Industry Membership Program

Package features

Complimentary tests worth Rs.50,000 including CE tests on safety footwear /REACH tests/ basic physical tests on FDDI approved base prices. (Details of tests and prices in Annexure A)

Inter-laboratory testing on Thirty basic tests between industry in-house laboratories and FDDI, to validate internal testing results.(List of tests in Annexure A)

Two days (8hours per day) OR Four days (4 hours per day) structured training program on testing for two persons.

One annual audit of your industry laboratory. Includes advisory recommendations.

Twenty five percent fee concession on industry sponsored seats. Applicable to bachelor's and master's programs.

Flat 30% discount on the base price on all testing services (Valid for one year from the date of membership). This discount is applicable to all chargeable testing services. This offer will operate exclusive of the complimentary testing benefit as per Sl. no 1 above.

Three-year subscription to the FDDI magazine.

Complimentary ergonomic assessment of one article at COE of FDDI.

Access to 3D scanning facilities during the period of membership (Prior booking intimation with details of duration of access required and subject to a maximum of 10 hours cumulative in the entire membership period).

20% discount on specific paid training programs conducted by FDDI from time to time, including on industry premise training programs.

Dedicated SPOC

Enhanced Value Additions

1. Priority testing and audit scheduling with faster turnaround time (TAT).
2. Early access to campus placement drives and internship engagement.
3. Featured listing on FDDI website as a Strategic Industry Partner.
4. Preferential invitation and protocol to FDDI events.
5. Opportunity to participate as a preferred industry speaker at FDDI conclaves and events.
6. Silver Category Plaque and Silver Category Membership certificate.

Annual Fee: Rs. 1,00,000 + 18%GST

BRONZE *Membership*

Associate Partner
Industry Membership Program

Package features

Inter-laboratory testing on Twenty basic tests between industry in-house laboratories and FDDI, to validate internal testing results.(List of tests in Annexure A)

One days (8hours per day) OR Two days (4 hours per day) structured training program on testing for two persons.

One annual audit of your industry laboratory.

Twenty five percent fee concession on industry sponsored seats. Applicable to bachelor's and master's programs.

Flat 30% discount on the base price on all testing services (Valid for one year from the date of membership). This discount is applicable to all chargeable testing services. This offer will operate exclusive of the complimentary testing benefit as per Sl. no 1 above.

One-year subscription to the FDDI magazine.

Access to COE facilities. Available at special member rates.

20% discount on specific paid training programs conducted by FDDI from time to time, including on industry premise training programs.

Enhanced Value Additions

Preferential scheduling subject to availability

Eligibility for cluster-based group benefits.

Bronze Category Plaque and Bronze Category Membership certificate.

Annual Fee: Rs. 25,000 + 18%GST

Mr. Prashant Kumar Saxena

Head Business Development and Skilling Projects
Footwear Design and Development Institute, Head Office

Role: Industry partnerships, membership onboarding, service integration, and strategic collaborations.

Email: pks@fddiindia.com

Contact No.: 9088813242

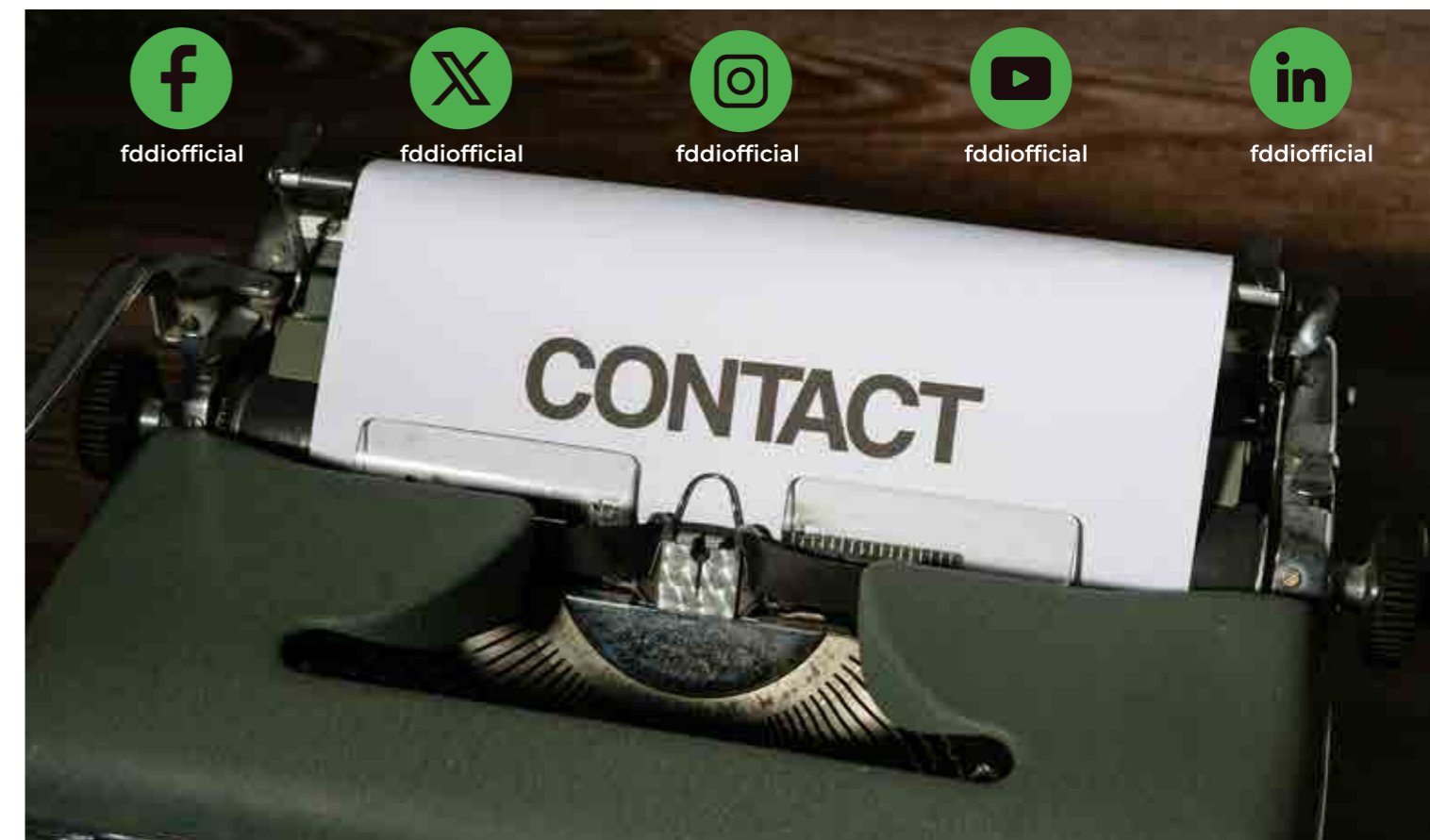
Ms. Rashmi Asthana

Head International Testing Centre
Footwear Design and Development Institute, Head Office

Role: Testing services, laboratory audits, compliance support, and technical service delivery under membership.

Email: hoditc@fddiindia.com

Contact No.: 9899559113



CONNECT WITH FOOTWEAR, FASHION & LIFESTYLE ECOSYSTEM THROUGH “CREATIVE HORIZONS”

Creative Horizons, FDDI's quarterly magazine, provides a high-impact advertising platform with direct reach to manufacturers and exporters, Embassies and High Commissions, trade and export bodies, and the FDDI alumni network. Commercial advertisements enable brands to connect with industry leaders, professionals, academicians, students, and key decision-makers across the footwear, fashion, retail, and lifestyle sectors. In addition to the printed edition, Creative Horizons shall also be published in digital format. The advertisement tariff is as follows:

Size of Advertisement	Colour (In Rs.)	Black & White (In Rs.)
Full Page	20,000	10,000
Double/Center Spread (02 Page)	30,000	20,000
Inside Front Cover	25,000	15,000
Inside Back Cover	25,000	15,000
Back Cover	40,000	30,000
Half Page	10,000	5,000

Special Offers:

- Grab your advertising spot early and enjoy special discounted rates—first come, first served!
- Straight discount of 20 % on booking of four consecutive issues.
- Free company profile in any issue with the advance bookings of Rs. 50,000.00 and above and one-year free subscription of the magazine.

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The advertisement material is required as per the specification given herewith:

Technical Specification		
Particular	Inches	MM
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Text Block	93/8X71/4	250X195

All advertisements shall be booked against 100% advance payment. Payment towards the advertisement may be made through Cheque, Demand Draft (DD), NEFT, or RTGS. The bank details of FDDI for processing the payment are provided below for ready reference:

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Bank Name: HDFC Bank

Branch MICR Code: 110240446, IFSC/RTGS/NEFT

Code: HDFC0004715

Account No. : 50100631701714

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FDDI RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY ADVERTISEMENT NOT CONFORMING TO PUBLICATION STANDARDS

CONTACT FOR ADVERTISING

North Region & East Region

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Mobile No: 7310108020
Email: varun@fddiindia.com

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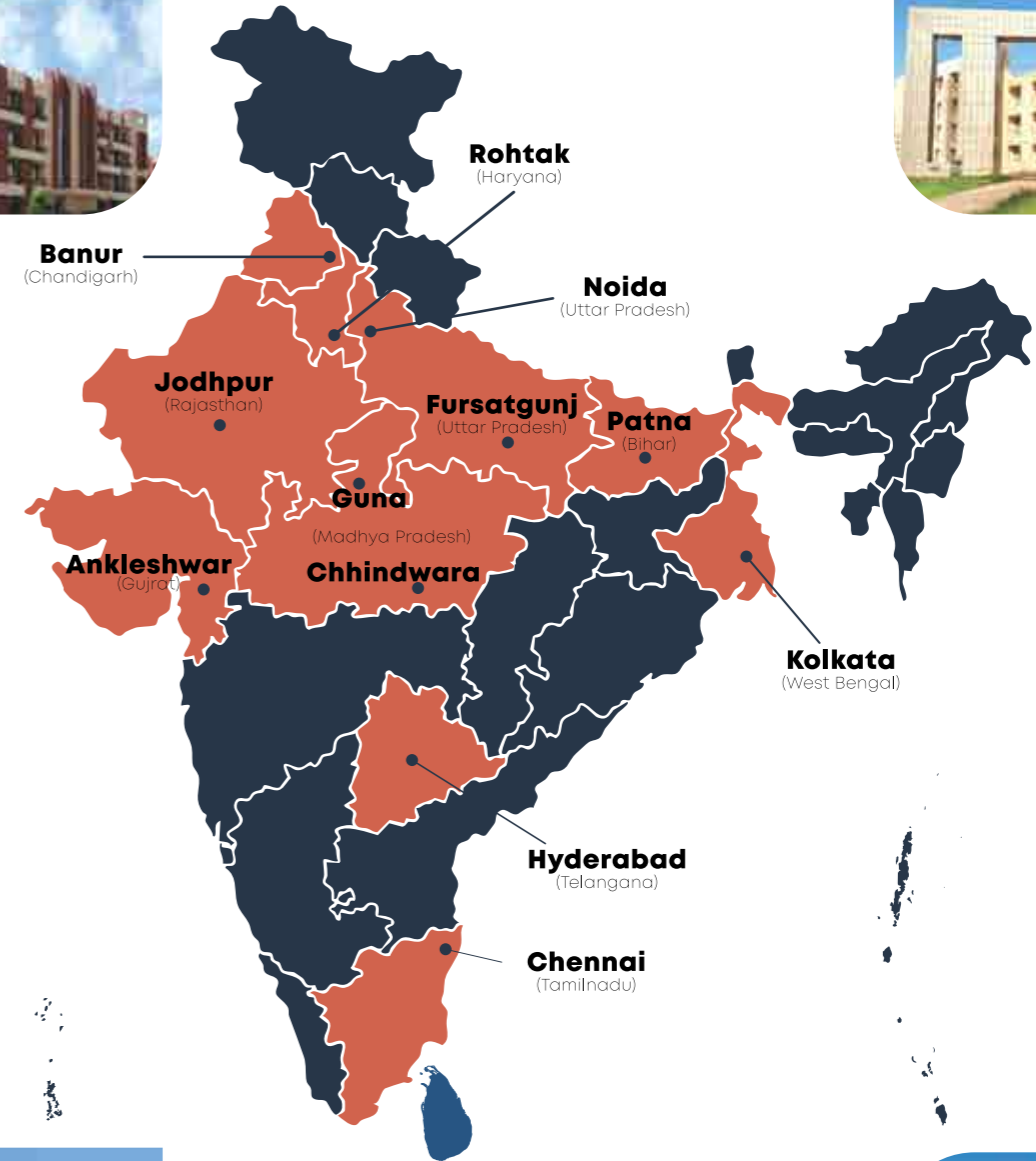
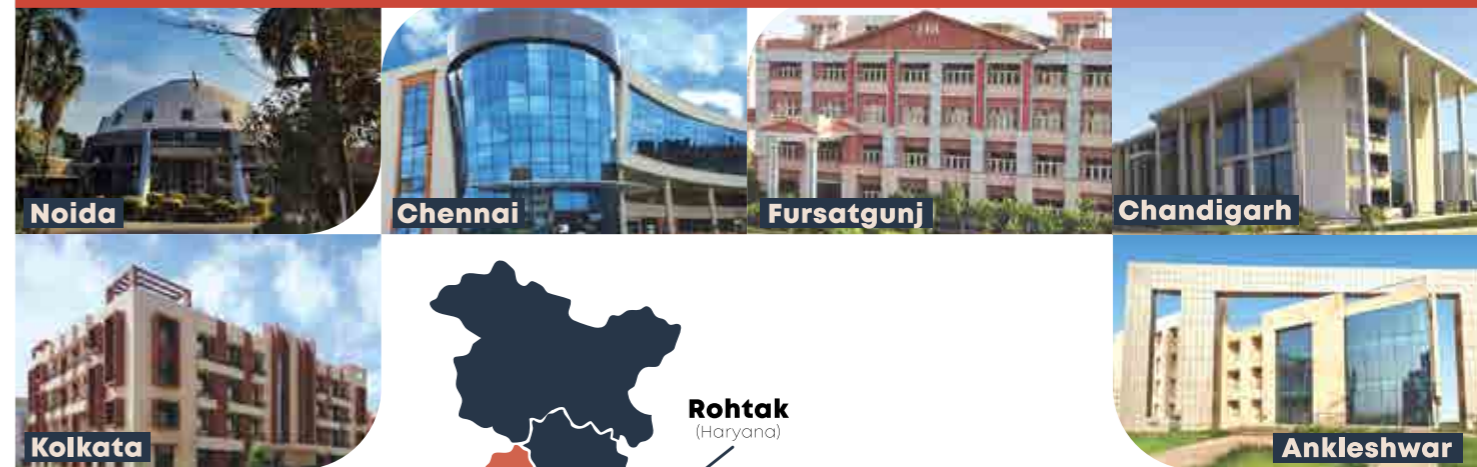
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West Region

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Mobile No: 9894224072
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For magazine related queries

Mr. Prashant Kumar Saxena, Head Business Development & Skilling Project
Email: pks@fddiindia.com



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MBA (2 Years)

- ▶ Retail & Fashion Merchandise *

* (Many more specialization available under each program)



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AIST Exam - 10th May 2026

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