



## STUDENT LIFE AT

AZIM PREMJI UNIVERSITY

### INTRODUCTION

The Azim Premji University, founded in 2010, is deeply committed to the creation of a society that is just, humane and equitable. While our academic programmes are designed to nurture responsible and giving citizens, the activities on our campus seek to bring out the best in each of us in terms of creativity and talent.

From music to theatre, sustainable farming to our very own radio station, we at Azim Premji University are writing a unique chapter of student life. The following pages will give you a glimpse of what our campus means to us and what we do to make it a fun, compassionate, culturally rich and inclusive space.

Welcome to our own corner of the world!













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ARTS & CULTURE

At Azim Premji University, we believe in learning that goes beyond the classroom. Every corner and being on campus is part of this unique learning experience. The very first step of this process is the building of meaningful relationships and learning to live with people from different places and background. There is a never a dull moment at the campus. It is buzzing with energy and enthusiasm. And there is always something to do. Together, we live, we learn and work for a productive today and a happy tomorrow.



#### CAMPUS WEEK

A good welcome is always welcome. And a lively freshers' welcome party goes a long way in making newcomers feel at home in a new environment and setting. On 12 August 2022, the University hosted a day-long event to welcome the new batch. It gave students of different programmes a chance to interact among themselves and form new friendships. Food stalls, open mic sessions and games made the day even more memorable and fun.

The welcome party did not end with just that one day.

A whole week of fun and festivities helped students and members of the faculty bond like friends. Over 90 events spread over a week painted the University in the colours of camaraderie. From cooking to cricket, crochet to cubing, theatre to treasure hunt — the range of events and activities of this campus week was both wide and interesting.





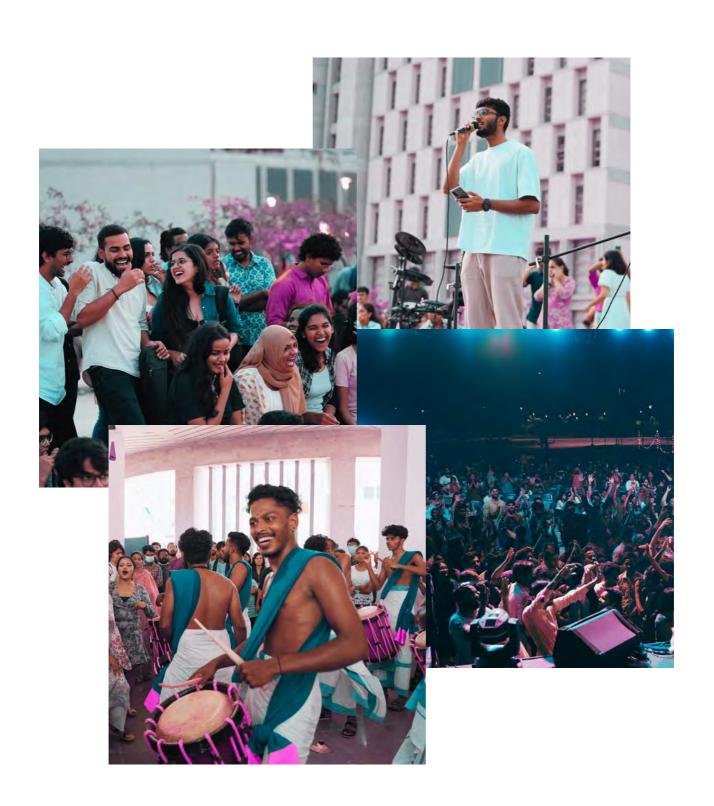
#### UNMUKT

UnMukt. In other words, free and without fetters. As free as the wind and the birds. Our annual cultural festival is a celebration of this free and uninhibited spirit. It holds a special place in our hearts. The strains of music, the tapping of feet, gripping theatre, vibrant art on the walls, soulful verse and powerful cinema ... you name it and UnMukt has a stage for everything creative and colourful.

Apart from being a platform for special talent and extracurricular interests, UnMukt gives our students, teachers and other members of staff a sense of community. The festival is a melting pot of culture, identities and perspectives.







**Katha 3.0 - Amare:** Once upon a time, a story was told - not with pen and paper, not with spoken words, not even with pictures. It was a story which was lived. It was a story that was danced into being. The third edition of 'Katha - Dance Yours to Life' gave our undergraduate students a stage for a wide range of forms and styles. And their talent and recitals held us in thrall. This edition, held in July 2022, was dedicated to love.



#### RADIO AZIM PREMJI UNVERSITY

You are listening to Radio Azim Premji University, our campus radio station!

How often do you hear of a university with its own radio station? This makes our campus life even more interesting. On our channel you can tune into a variety of shows across a wide range of interests: democracy and culture to mathematics and more. You can also experience a slice of campus life. If you are a seeking student, an arts aficionado, curious about science, or just passionate about India, subscribe and start listening.

**#TheIndiaProject** is an ambitious project with investigative reporter Josy Joseph. Here, he is unearthing documents that will shed new light on the birth of Indian democracy and its institutions through snippets and stories.

**#CampusCast** is a veritable audio magazine covering events and happenings, student opinions, and a showcase of in-house talent.



The official YouTube channel of Radio Azim Premji University

#### CULTURAL FESTIVITIES

The word 'harvest' holds a special place in a country like India. Some of our oldest festivals are harvest festivals — a time to celebrate a good yield of crops and thank the elements of nature for being generous and caring. Harvest festivals have many names and variations, but the spirit of celebration unites every community. A beautiful reflection of this unity comes alive at the University campus, through festivals such as Onam and Bihu. Floral decorations, traditional music and dances, delicious local food and festive clothes — all of these come together to make these festivals a success.

Holi, the festival of colours, is yet another occasion for students to paint the campus red, blue, yellow and many other shades. Even a flower festival called Bathukamma, celebrated by women in Telangana, infuses more enthusiasm into students. The campus becomes a carpet of flowers, with students staying up all night to arrange the petals in various shapes. The end result of course is stunning.







INCLUSIVITY & DIVERSITY

#### PAWS

PAWS is a group of student volunteers, who have been tending to the medical needs of campus dogs since January 2019. What is a campus without wagging tails and belly rubs? To ensure a steady supply of canine cheer, we at PAWS ensure that no dog on campus suffers due to neglect. Every sick dog at the University is taken to hospital and given proper care. Whenever a dog needs medical attention, we take the dog to the hospital and ensure s/he is cared for. Our funds come from on and off-campus donations. And the number of people who have come forward to help us shows that we are not short on puppy love.

#### Three woofs to PAWS!



Follow <a>@paws.apu</a> on Instagram to catch Luna and her friends' shenanigans on campus



# QUEER SUPPORT & GENDER DISCUSSION FORUM

Our queer solidarity group — Queer Space — works towards making the campus safe and welcoming for the LGBTQIA+ community.

First, the Queer Support Group and Gender Discussion Forum reaches out to students who identify as queer, trans, non-binary and other gender non-conforming identities, to make them feel at home. In other words, we ensure that no one discriminates against anyone for their queer identity. This encourages such students live and speak freely, and also seek help and guidance if they face discrimination of any kind.

Breaking stereotypes and overcoming social stigmas is the second important role that the solidarity group plays. And this is done through workshops, movie screenings and discussions. The film screenings and discussions are also a platform for open and candid conversations among people from both sides of the gender and sexuality lines. Everyone gets to speak. Everyone gets to listen. And the end result is wholehearted acceptance of people without inhibitions, stereotypes and prejudices.





#### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DISABILITIES

Inclusivity begins at home. And the campus is home to a large family living together in harmony. To mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we held a number of events on 6 December 2022. The theme was specific to transformative solutions for inclusive development. A number of activists, trainers and accessibility specialists led a panel discussion on 'Educational Spaces for Disabled: Promoting and Obstructing Inclusion and Accessibility', moderated by Professor Ankur Madan. This was followed by talks on inclusion in campus and learning disabilities. The screening of a short film and various interactive activities summed up the day-long affair.







RECREATION AND WELLNESS

#### SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLNESS

Popularly known as SFC, the Sports and Fitness Committee speaks volumes for the University's commitment towards good health. We all know that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, so SFC is a way of getting students, faculty and members of the staff to refresh both mind and body. Quite obviously, different kinds of sports and games are part of the SFC manifesto. The SFC is actively seeking to engage with the surrounding community, with the goal of fostering greater involvement in sports and athletics. Currently, approximately 650 students are engaged in a wide range of sports and fitness activities.

We hope that during your time with us, you fall in love with physical activity. We believe that games and sports can help your health, build discipline and motivation, and develop a feeling of camaraderie with your peers. You can join **Workout Wednesdays** or **Yoga** on Mondays and **Zumba sessions**—there is something for everyone!







#### SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLNESS

#### Students vs Members Cricket Match

The students and members match has always been a significant event, and it's a celebration of the good sporting spirit displayed over the years by both students and members of the University.

#### Leagues and Tournaments

SFC, along with the help of student-led clubs, conducts mixed-gender sports leagues across various sports during a semester. Fresh teams are made each semester during open houses. Leagues are a great way of nourishing teambuilding skills along with improving one's technique in sport. One-day tournaments are quite popular on campus, especially across sports such as badminton, table tennis and chess. Registration for such events are sometimes walk-in, which gives people absolutely new to a sport the chance to have a bit of fun and gain some experience too.



#### FOOD COMMITTEE

At Azim Premji University, we take food seriously. We believe in eating well and responsibly. Our Food Committee, comprising students and members of the staff, has the all-important task of monitoring what is served at the campus as well as ensuring smooth operation of the kitchen and the cafeteria.

The Committee works with nutritionists, vendors and members of the faculty to devise healthy and balanced meal options for the cafeteria. Our commitment to diversity is also visible in the wide array of dishes on the weekly menu. From breakfast to evening snacks, the cafeteria is abuzz with students and other members of the University tucking into food that is curated with care and thoughtfulness.



Running a canteen is a task that requires patience, skills in people and budget management, and of course knowledge of and interest in food and nutrition. When students volunteer to join the Food Committee, they sign up for an experience that is as good as an internship or training. It is not enough to keep just students happy. The Committee is equally responsible for the well-being and happiness of the cafeteria staff that works day and night to feed the campus.

The Committee is also concerned about food wastage. It is our endeavour to reduce wastage and encourage people to be responsible consumers.



#### HEALTH COMMITTEE

The new normal of the post-pandemic world underscores the importance of good health — mental and physical — in our lives. Healthcare on campus has gone beyond just treating people for diseases. It now includes the task of preventive care. To this end, our Health Committee has a significant role to play. It includes members of the medical team, student affairs, IMF and student volunteers. Together they keep a watch on the 'health' of the University.

First and foremost, the Committee ensures that students get prompt and adequate medical attention. It also organises regular check-ups and first-aid training sessions for students. The medical team works with the Committee to demarcate and equip isolation wards on campus.





#### HEALTH COMMITTEE

The Committee is equally serious about mental health issues among students. It works in tandem with the Conversations Team to give students easy access to the support they need for dealing with mental health conditions. A significant role of this support system is destigmatising mental health and encouraging students to seek help without the fear of social embarrassment.

The Health Committee also conducts interactive sessions on sexuality, mental well-being and the importance of positive health practices.





#### CONVERSATIONS

At Conversations: Centre for Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing, a team of trained mental health professionals work round-the-clock to help our students manage their academic demands and adjust to living with a diverse peer group amid a new setting.

Our students come from various backgrounds and adjustment is key to a happy, fulfilling life on campus. Conversations seeks to ease that transition — from home to campus — with counselling on interpersonal relationships, time management and other factors.

Our counsellors are trained in queer affirmative practices, are sensitive towards social factors such as caste and indigeneity, and are trauma-informed.



Learning at University: Conversations: Centre for Mental Health and Wellness





# SUSTAINABILITY AT THE CAMPUS

#### SUSTAINABLE FARMING

In today's world, the distance between our food and us is growing by the day. It affects our physical and mental health. Keeping this in mind, the University has taken a step towards bringing students closer to the soil and acquainting them with the process of growing grains and vegetables. Another beautiful aspect of this initiative is the coming together of techniques and produce from the native places of our student community. Harvest is on the way. Plants are in good health and sometime soon we will sample tomatoes, pumpkins and bottle gourds grown by students at our very own campus.

We look forward to having more students and members join the sustainable farming venture, making Azim Premji University a truly green, earth-friendly and sustainable address.



Learnings at Azim Premji University: Sustainable Farming





#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

We at the University believe in caring and sharing. And our faith in this philosophy finds expression in our Community Engagement Initiative (CEI). It gives us a chance to engage with our neighbouring Gram Panchayats on various projects and initiatives. Currently, our students are volunteering in the following areas: community youth mobilisation, engagement with government schools and a local orphanage, library projects, mapping projects on religious spaces, biodiversity and pottery.

#### **Strengthening Public schools**

The CEI has collaborated with CARE India, an NGO, to set up 5 innovators' laboratories in government schools to support 500+ children in the age group of 11 – 14 years building their higher-order skills in research, problem-solving, computational thinking, and spread digital literacy through community-based youth educators.



Community Engagement Initiative



#### SOCIAL ENTERPRISES ESTABLISHED BY OUR ALUMNI

#### Mitti Café

Mitti facilitates the creation of cafes in corporate, healthcare and education institutions to serve organic fast food and fresh juices. These cafes are run by a team of people with disabilities. The opportunity to work at these cafes boosts their confidence and self-esteem apart from giving them the chance to lead by example.

These cases are unique as they are designed as platforms for the differently abled communities to showcase their potential for productive activity and to create awareness on equal opportunities in employment.

**Founder Alina Alam**, alumnus of Azim Premji University (MA Development, batch of 2017), seeks to provide tasty, nutritious, non-GMO and chemical-free food through this initiative.



Mitti Cafe

#### SOCIAL ENTERPRISES ESTABLISHED BY OUR ALUMNI

#### **Gubbachi Learning Community**

An estimate says that Bangalore has around one lakh out-of-school children.

A significant chunk of this population are children of migrant labour.

A community of learners has come together to bring migrant out-of-school children back into the public education system. Their programme endeavours to make learning meaningful for the child and strives to improve the life chances of the child and potentially, his/her family.

The five founders of this learners' community are alumni of Azim Premji University's MA Education batch of 2013: Somya Suri, Nomita Sikand, Rizwan Ahmed, Joseph Deyone and Preethy Rao Patel. It is their passion, experience and unique framework that keeps Gubbachi Learning Community going.



Gubbachi - A Learning Community



#### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CELL

Our Social Enterprise Cell was set up in 2015, to help students network with individuals, incubators and like-minded groups towards creating their own social ventures. A member of the University anchors the Cell and a core group supports its activities through the year.

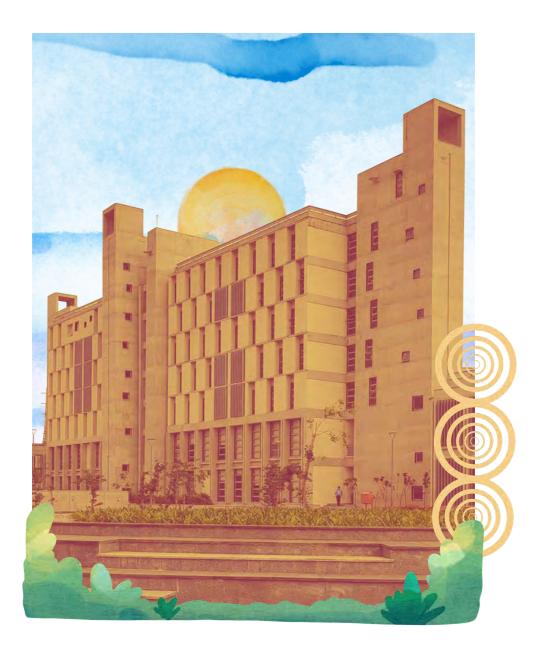
We conduct workshops and capacity-building programmes. The range of topics at these workshops is wide, from design thinking, finance and budgeting of organisations, proposal writing, communication and outreach as well as organisation building.

In 2016, we launched a national-level **Social Enterprise Idea Challenge** event for college and university students across India. The Challenge was designed as a yearly flagship event with the following objectives: a) To provide students from all parts of the country an opportunity to explore social entrepreneurship and share their innovative ideas; b) to provide a platform for students to shape their ideas through mentorship support and networking with other budding entrepreneurs in the social entrepreneurial circuit.



The 6th National Social Enterprise Idea Challenge





RESIDENCES

#### RESIDENCES

A home away from home. That too, a home where the world comes to roost.

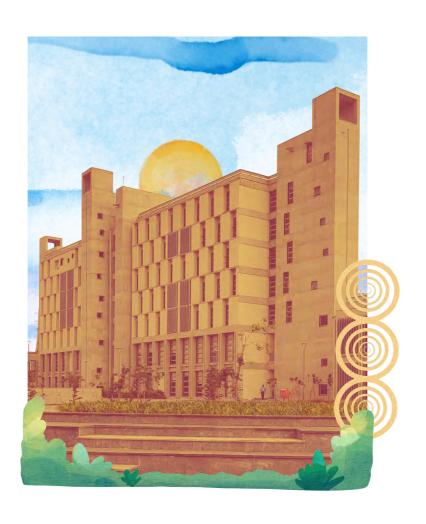
In a nutshell, that is what the residences of the Azim Premji University are about. They are much more than a roof under which our students sleep after a day's hard work. It is the place where many of them pick up the first lessons of community living. The place where they learn to share and care as well as respect the space and privacy of others. The place where different faiths, languages, socio-economic backgrounds and ideas reside. And the place where students refresh and recharge themselves for a whole new day.

To ensure that all this happens smoothly, the University has a team of Resident Mentors. It is their duty to ensure that students feel safe, happy and welcome in the residences. While discipline is one part of the Mentors' job, the other part is looking after the comfort and safety of the hostel residents.

The Mentors are also in charge of events and activities at the residences. Be it music, dance parties or workshops, the Mentors are always ready to make the residences a fun address.







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