



**SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR MEDIA &  
COMMUNICATION (SCMC), PUNE**



Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence

# SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

## SCMC प्रमाना 2025

### THEME

Digital Democracies: Intersections of Influence,  
Consumption, Culture and Identity in South Asia

### Pramana International Research Conference

2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY, 2025

### KNOWLEDGE PARTNER

*South Asian Popular Culture*  
(A Taylor & Francis Journal)



**SYMBIOSIS**  
INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)

## **Symbiosis International (Deemed University)**

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is a renowned multi-disciplinary institution founded in 1971 by Prof. Dr. S.B. Mujumdar, with a mission to promote global understanding through quality education. It offers a vibrant, multicultural learning environment, attracting students from over 85 countries, and has campuses across four Indian states and six cities, along with an international campus in Dubai, UAE.

Recognized for its excellence, Symbiosis holds Category-I status from the UGC and has been awarded an 'A++' grade by NAAC. It ranks 31st in India according to the NIRF 2024 and has gained global recognition, securing a position in the 641-650 range of the QS World University Rankings 2025. The university is especially known for its strong employer reputation, reflecting the value of its education in the professional sphere.

Symbiosis excels in key disciplines, ranking 6th in India for Business and Management Studies and 12th for Computer Science in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024. It remains committed to innovation, knowledge generation, and contributing to national development by preparing students to become global leaders.

The university's dedication to quality is further highlighted by being the only institution to receive the prestigious Asia Pacific Quality Label. Symbiosis continues to set new benchmarks in education, both in India and internationally, while fostering a dynamic, inclusive academic environment that supports its mission of global engagement.

## **Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication (SCMC)**

Widely recognized as India's leading mass communication institute, Symbiosis Centre for Media & Communication (SCMC) has established a distinct identity in media education since its founding in 2008. A department of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), SCMC operates under the Faculty of Media & Communication (FoMC) and offers a dynamic learning environment through its Bachelor of Arts (Mass Communication) and Bachelor of Business Administration (Media Management) programmes.

SCMC stands out as the first media institute in India to offer undergraduate specializations supported by a robust combination of theoretical coursework, industry-led academic sessions, hands-on internships and immersive projects. Students benefit from a curriculum taught by highly qualified and experienced faculty, integrating both traditional and modern learning methods such as experiential learning and cyber-based education.

In addition to regular classes, SCMC hosts seminars, conclaves and field visits, enhancing student exposure to real-world scenarios. Case studies and interactive academic events allow students to gain deeper insights into the media industry. Backed by a team of accomplished educators with substantial experience in industry, academia and research, SCMC fosters a learning environment that keeps students updated on current trends, market demands and the necessary professional networks for a successful career in media.

## PRAMĀṆA 2025

Pramāṇa, the annual research conference organized by the Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication (SCMC), exemplifies the institution's unwavering commitment to academic scholarship and research. The term Pramāṇa, meaning "means of knowledge" in Indian epistemology, reflects the philosophical foundation of the conference, symbolizing the pursuit of valid and reliable knowledge through various methods, including pratyakṣa (perception), anumāṇa (inference), upamāṇa (comparison), arthāpatti (postulation), anupalabdhi (cognitive proof) and śabda (testimonial).

The Pramāṇa conference is an initiative to create an intellectual environment where academics, researchers and students can engage in critical discussions on contemporary media issues, promoting innovative perspectives and thorough analysis. The third edition of the Pramāṇa Research Conference will focus on the theme, "**Digital Democracies: Intersections of Influence, Consumption and Identity in South Asia.**" This year's Pramāṇa is expected to be pivotal in examining the transformative impacts of digital democracies within the region. As digital platforms increasingly redefine politics, media and identity, this conference will explore the intersections of digital influence, consumer behaviour and cultural change, providing critical insights into the evolving landscape of South Asia. Scheduled as a 2-day event, Pramāṇa 2025 will bring together academics and scholars specializing in media research to present their findings and explore potential avenues for future collaboration. Pramāṇa 2025 is set to be a significant forum for exploring how digital democracies are transforming the socio-political and cultural fabric of South Asia.

# SCMC PRAMANA 2025

## IMPORTANT DATES

### ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER,  
2024

### NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE

20<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER,  
2024

### REGISTRATION PERIOD

22<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER, 2024 -  
15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2025

### CONFERENCE DATES

2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY,  
2025

### FULL PAPER SUBMISSIONS (ONLY FOR THE SELECTED ABSTRACTS)

ON OR BEFORE  
MAY 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

## CONCEPT NOTE

The South Asian region, home to one of the world's largest populations, has experienced a rapid digital transformation over the past decade. This shift, experienced across countries with shared historical and cultural ties, has not only redefined politics, media access, and civic engagement but has also empowered individuals and communities. It has significantly reshaped social and cultural identities, religiosity and awareness of rights while simultaneously fostering the rise of a pervasive influencer economy.

This era of **"digital democracies"** has been characterized by unprecedented access to information, the proliferation of social media platforms and the rise of digital activism. The affordable internet has given millions access to digital content, reshaping how identities of people and communities are formed and maintained, thereby deepening the processes of democratization, both positively and negatively. Digital and social platforms have emerged as influential tools for shaping personal and institutional brands, as well as driving political and cultural influence.

Influencers across South Asia are often first-generation public communicators with formidable fan bases. Many have acquired micro-celebrity status by creating and sharing content that resonates with niche communities, offering a sense of relatability that mainstream celebrities often lack. This rise of the micro-celebrity, both with narrow and pluralistic views and personal and ideological frames, can make them significant political, social and cultural game changers.

The general elections in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India (all coincidentally held in 2024) showcased the formidable influence of digital media on the democratic processes. India's Parliamentary Elections have even been dubbed the "YouTube and Social Media Election", perhaps a further shift from its 2019 "WhatsApp Election". The transformative impact of digital spaces and

the emergence of a new breed of political influencers in the South Asian region has added a new stream of narratives outside of mainstream politics.

Representing diverse identities within influencer culture is another critical area of exploration. While digital platforms offer opportunities for underrepresented groups to gain visibility, they also reflect and sometimes exacerbate existing social inequalities. The algorithms that drive content visibility can reinforce biases, making it difficult for certain voices to be heard. While the influencer economy has spurred monetization strategies, it also brings challenges such as credibility, transparency, agendas and the ethical implications of sponsored content.

The prevalence of trolling as religious, caste and linguistic violence poses significant risks, especially for marginalized voices who may have only recently developed new digital identities of self-respect. Additionally, virtual influencers like Lil Miquela raise questions about authenticity and the future of the influencer creator economy. These digital democracies, where popular cultures are created, curated and rapidly spread, bring together old and new media, shaping discourses that engage diverse audiences. This convergence is redefining media interactions and shaping the future of communication today.

The third edition of the SCMC Pramāṇa Research Conference aims to explore these evolving dynamics, inviting researchers to deliberate on the far-reaching implications of digital democracies. Through this exploration, the conference seeks to highlight the intersections of digital influence, consumerism, popular culture, identity, and politics, all within the rapidly transforming South Asian context.

**Select full papers submitted for the Pramāṇa Conference will be considered for peer review by the journal *South Asian Popular Culture (SAPC)* (<https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rsap20/about-this-journal>).**

## TOPICS MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

### Track 1: Micro-celebrities and Digital Narratives

- Identity, Representation and Popular Culture in Digital Spaces
  - Influencer Economies: Micro-celebrities as Newsmakers
  - Micro-Celebrities and Cultural Narratives
  - Influencer Advertising on Digital Platforms
- 

### Track 2: The Creator Economy and the Electoral Landscape

- Influencer Marketing in Political Strategy
  - Digital Campaigning and Political Advertising
  - Voter Behaviour in the Age of Influencers
  - Digital Platformization of Democracy
- 

### Track 3: Challenges in Digital Narratives

- Flak, Trolls and Linguistic Violence
  - Ethical Concerns in Influencer Cultures
  - Marginalized Voices in the Digital Space
  - Data and Surveillance in Democratic Decision-Making
- 

### Track 4: Digital Literacy and Democratic Participation

- The Politics of Digital Literacy: State, Market and others
  - The Digital Divide and its Impact on Democratic Participation
  - What about that? Whataboutery and other Digital Practices of Knowledge Claims and the formation of Popular Cultures
- 

### Abstract Submission:

Interested contributors are invited to submit an abstract of their proposed paper, comprising 250-300 words, along with a brief bio-note of 50 words. All submissions should be made through the conference page <https://pramana.scmc.edu.in/> Contributors whose papers have been selected will be duly notified.

### Language:

All submissions must be in English.

### Full Paper Submission:

Completed papers should range from 6,000 to 8,000 words, inclusive of references and citations. Authors are requested to adhere to the submission guidelines outlined in the instructions provided by the journal *South Asian Popular Culture (SAPC)*, published by Taylor & Francis.

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## PUBLICATION OPPORTUNITIES

Participants whose abstracts have been selected for presentation are required to submit full papers by the specified deadlines for consideration of publication in the journal *South Asian Popular Culture (SAPC)*.

### Note:

Only selected papers will be published in the journal *South Asian Popular Culture* after undergoing an editorial board review followed by a double-blind peer review process.

### Formatting and Style:

Submissions must adhere to *South Asian Popular Culture* style guidelines. We welcome original research, unpublished work and working papers.

## PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

### Presentation Duration:

Each presenter will have 10 minutes to present their paper, followed by a Q&A session at the end.

### Submission of Presentation Materials:

Presenters are required to submit their PowerPoint slides (if any) or other presentation materials at least 5 days before the conference. Please send these to [pramana.conference@scmc.edu.in](mailto:pramana.conference@scmc.edu.in) in to avoid any last-minute technical issues.

### Format for Submission:

Title of Presentation, Presenter Name(s)

## REGISTRATION

Participants can register online after the acceptance of abstracts.

### Registration fee:

Faculty	:	<b>2600 INR</b>
Research Scholars	:	<b>1600 INR</b>
Overseas Faculty participation	:	<b>60 USD</b>
Overseas Student participation	:	<b>30 USD</b>

**Note:** Registration fee will be charged per author in case of joint paper presentation.

For any inquiries regarding the conference or submission process, please contact [pramana.conference@scmc.edu.in](mailto:pramana.conference@scmc.edu.in) with subject line: Submission.

**Conference Venue:** Sandipani Leadership Development Center, Symbiosis International University Hilltop Campus, Lavale, Maharashtra, 412115

**About the Venue:**

Sandipani Leadership Development Centre is part of the Symbiosis International University campus and is situated on a hilltop overlooking lush green mountains in Lavale. The Conference Centre has 98 fully furnished comfortable rooms. All rooms have a Television with DTH, Tea/Coffee Maker, Mini Fridge, Air Conditioning, etc. The Centre features two dining options: Mkahawa Cafe offers multi-cuisine day dining and Cibo Bello, a pizza restaurant. Its expansive 12,000 sq. ft. lawn is ideal for activities like yoga sessions and team-building exercises. Additionally, the Centre houses eight fully air-conditioned training and banquet rooms, all equipped with modern amenities such as LCD projectors, AV systems, whiteboards, and comfortable seating to ensure a productive and pleasant experience.



[Click Here to Reach Location](#)

## ACCOMMODATION

There are limited rooms available at Sandipani Homotel and rates are as per the chart given below:

Sandipani Room Rates in INR			International Rates in US Dollars	
Room Category	Single	Double	Single	Double
Deluxe Room	3000	3500	35.72	41.68
Suite Room	4000	4500	47.63	53.58

You can send an email to [rd.sandipani@symbiosis.ac.in](mailto:rd.sandipani@symbiosis.ac.in) or [fo.sandipani@symbiosis.ac.in](mailto:fo.sandipani@symbiosis.ac.in) to make the booking.

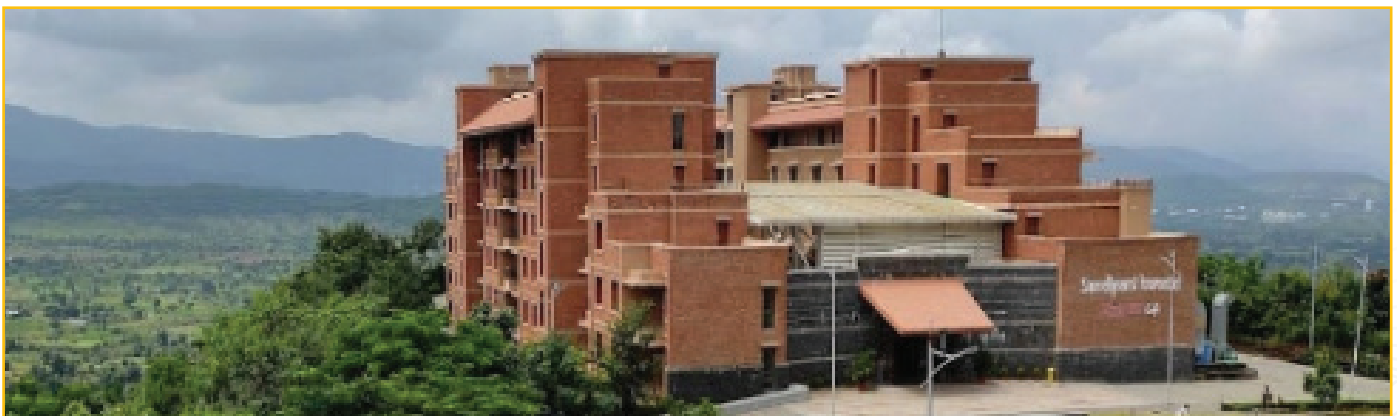
There is also accommodation available at Baner, which is the nearest urban area to the conference venue, and various booking sites should be able to provide you with many options.

Accommodation is also available in our Hostel (at a cost of Rs 500 per day) which is located in Viman Nagar. A regular bus will ply between Viman Nagar and Lavale (though the travel time is 1.5 hours) in the morning and evening.

If you would like to opt for the accommodation here, please mail us at [pramana.conference@scmc.edu.in](mailto:pramana.conference@scmc.edu.in) with the **Subject line: Accommodation in Viman Nagar, Pune.**

**For further information please visit the website**

**CLICK HERE**





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