

## **IIT Hyderabad Hosts First-of-Its-Kind UKRI International Symposium**

### **Highlights**

- **IIT Hyderabad emerges as a global hub for nineteenth-century studies**, hosting a major UKRI international symposium on the cultures of exchange and affect in the colonial Indo-British interface in collaboration with Kingston University (UK)
- **UKRI-funded initiative brings together scholars from India, UK, and USA**, who examine transnational colonial histories and their **contemporary relevance for climate change and health inequities**
- **IIT Hyderabad launches South Asia's first Nineteenth-Century Studies research and collaboration network (Nineteenth-Century Diversities Research Network, NCDRN)**

**IIT Hyderabad, January 29, 2026:** The Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) has further strengthened its global academic footprint by hosting the **UKRI International Symposium on Nineteenth-Century Studies**, titled “*Transnational Encounters in/through South Asia*”, on **January 8–9 and January 29, 2026**. Organised by the **Public Humanities Initiative (PHI Centre)**, **IIT Hyderabad**, under the leadership of **Dr. Shuhita Bhattacharjee**, in collaboration with **Kingston University, UK**, the symposium marked the **first event of its kind in South Asia**

The symposium emerged from a **major UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) grant** focused on expanding collaborative research on nineteenth-century Indo-British history, with IIT Hyderabad serving as the **lead India partner**. Scholars from across **India, the United Kingdom, and the United States** convened to explore colonial encounters, gendered histories, visual archives, and cultural exchanges that shaped South Asia during the long nineteenth century.

The event featured **keynote addresses by eminent scholars**---**Dr. Tara Puri (Senior Lecturer, University of Bristol)**, who examined colonial photographic archives of Indian women, and **Prof. Supriya Chaudhuri (Professor Emerita, Jadavpur University)**, who analysed evolving representations of affect in nineteenth-century verbal and visual texts by and about women. The symposium also included significant contributions from scholars such as **Radhika Govinda (University of Edinburgh)**, **Ross Forman (University of Warwick)**, **Fariha Shaikh (University of Birmingham)**, **Alexander Bubb (University of Roehampton)**, **Jessica Durgan (University of Bemidji, USA)**, **Priti Joshi (University of Puget Sound)**, and **Priya Raman (University of Exeter)**.

Across two intensive days, discussions ranged from colonial exhibitions and performance cultures to gendered and embodied encounters, while also drawing strong connections between nineteenth-century studies and **contemporary global challenges**, including **climate change, public health inequities, and sexual violence legislation**. The symposium underscored how historical inquiry continues to inform present-day social and political concerns.

A major outcome of the symposium was the **launch of the Nineteenth-Century Diversities Research Network (NCDRN)**—the **first South Asian network dedicated to nineteenth-century studies**—by **Dr. Shuhita Bhattacharjee**, in collaboration with **Dr. Eadaoin Agnew (Kingston University)**, who heads the UK-based *Victorian Diversities Research Network*. This initiative positions **IIT Hyderabad at the centre of an emerging global research consortium on nineteenth-century studies and public humanities**.

International scholars lauded the initiative. **Dr. Radhika Govinda (University of Edinburgh)** described the symposium as *“a gathering of unprecedented range that generated rich interdisciplinary conversations across diverse global contexts.”* **Dr. Tara Puri (University of Bristol)** highlighted the *“urgent necessity and remarkable achievement of creating a shared platform that meaningfully connects scholars across the Global South and North.”*

Welcoming the initiative, **Dr. Aalok Khandekar, Head, Department of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad**, noted that the launch of the South Asian network exemplifies *“the public-spirited, interdisciplinary scholarship that the department seeks to nurture.”* **Dr. Shuhita Bhattacharjee, Founder-Coordinator of the Public Humanities Initiative (PHI Centre)**, expressed gratitude for the institutional support and reaffirmed IIT Hyderabad’s growing role as *“a significant international hub for nineteenth-century studies and collaborative public humanities research, especially through the establishment of the new global network.”*

The symposium strengthened **IIT Hyderabad’s expanding engagement with humanities and global scholarship**, highlighting how a leading technology institute can actively support and enrich humanities-based interdisciplinary research and international academic collaboration.

#### **About IIT Hyderabad:**

IITH, established in 2008, has reached a respectable position in academics, research, technology development, and Start-ups in a short span of 17 years. In the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF-2025), IITH is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among Engineering institutes (crossing a first-generation IIT this year), and is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in Innovation, while it has maintained its rank within the top 10 Engineering Institutes ever since NIRF was launched. IITH is ranked 664<sup>th</sup> and 270<sup>th</sup> in the QS World and Asian University Rankings 2026, respectively (among the top 10% of global institutions in citations per faculty). IITH secured 46 positions by 31 faculties in the Global Top 2% Scientists World list 2025 released by Stanford University (SU) in collaboration with Elsevier across two categories. IITH has been striving for excellence with a motto of "Inventing & Innovating in Technology for Humanity (IITH)".

With 340+ full-time Faculty, 360 non-teaching Staff and 5,700+ Students (PG+PhD students accounting for about 60%), IITH has a strong research focus with 5260+ R&D Projects worth of Rs. 1650+ Cr (Rs. 335+ Cr funding in 2024-25, i.e. Rs. 1+ Cr per Faculty, one of the largest per capita funding among IITs), 12,890+ Publications, 2,48,580+ Citations, 154 h-index, 710+ Patents (250 Patents in 2025, making it 0.75 patents per faculty in 2025), and about 335+ Start-ups (that have generated 1100+ jobs with a revenue of Rs. 1500+ Cr).

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