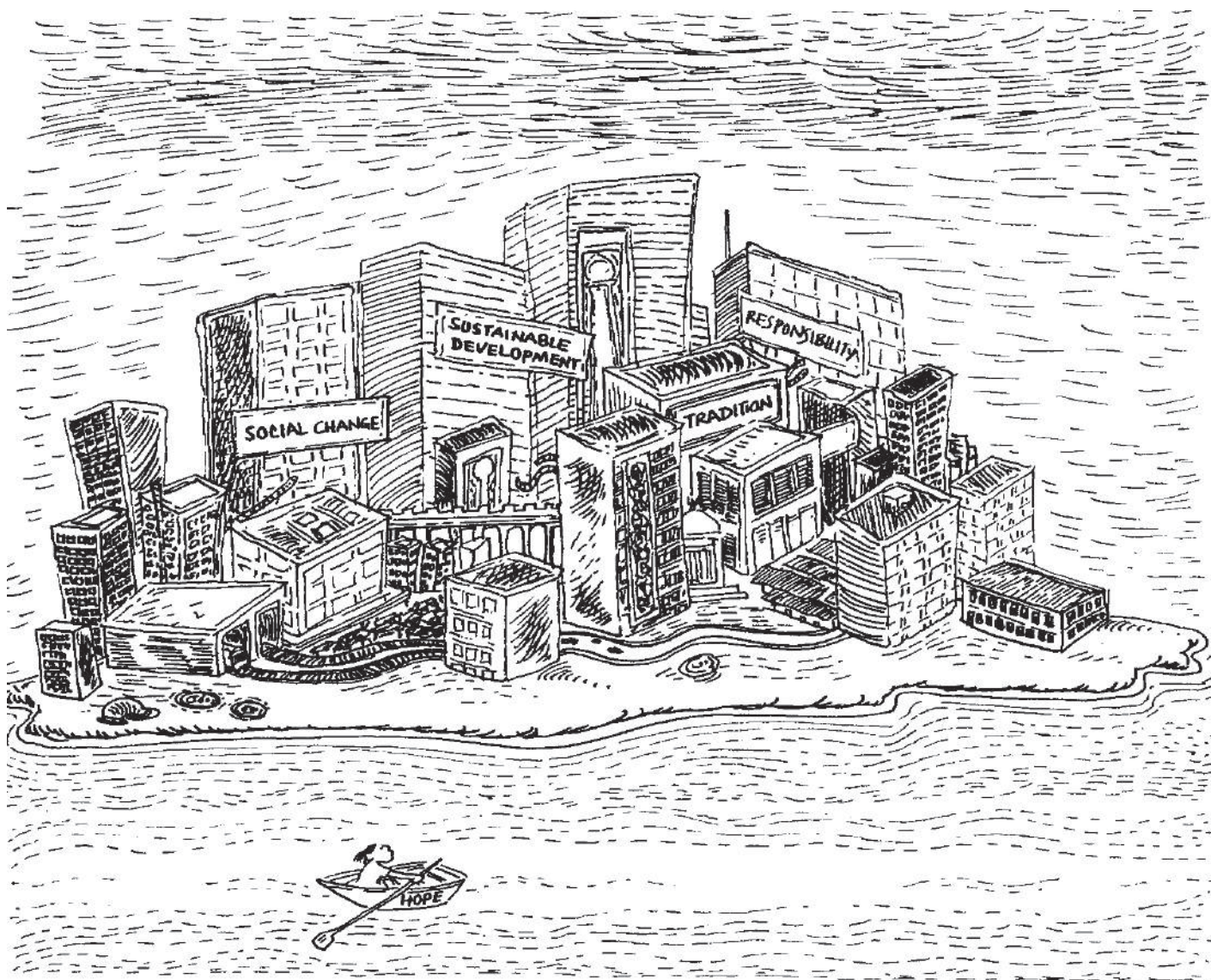


FELLOWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY SYLFF ASSOCIATION

ISSUE #8 SEPTEMBER 2013



FROM THE EDITORS

It is a proud moment for all of us to announce that the SYLFF Programme at Jadavpur University (JU) is completing ten years. A decade ago, our university won the endowment from the Tokyo Foundation (TKFD), at that time the only university in India to have done so. Since then the programme at JU has fostered the inquisitive minds of many young researchers who have endeavoured to go beyond the accepted boundaries of their respective disciplines to produce research that contributes to the betterment of the society. Today, we can happily say that, staying true to the spirit of the SYLFF Foundation, we have produced leaders, not merely academics. In this very special edition of *Fellows*, the annual newsletter of the Jadavpur University SYLFF Association, we present a collection of brief writings that reflect on the decade that has passed, of various experiences and hope, and the promise that the years ahead hold for all of us.

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FELLOWS, NEWSLETTER OF THE JADAVPUR
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the SYLFF Programme at JU, visit:
<http://www.jusylffprogram.org.in/>

Our University is Proud to be Part of a Global Network

SOUVIK BHATTACHARYA
Vice-Chancellor, JU



It is heartening to note that Tokyo Foundation has developed ties with 69 universities and consortia of higher learning in 44 countries under the SYLFF initiative. They have truly formed one exceptional global society transcending borders and we feel immensely proud to be part of this network.

From the very beginning, this Programme was focused on nurturing leadership attributes and capabilities in individuals so that they are able to contribute creatively and effectively in this disparate world of such a variety of values, culture, social and political structures and with such wide variation of resource access and financial conditions.

Global problems can impact every nation and typically they call for global solutions—a network such as SYLFF would be in a position to come up with sustainable systemic solutions led by transnational individuals.

JU got its unique leadership character historically. In pre-independence era eminent Indians spearheading the nationalistic movement, and leaders from Bengal in particular, dreamt of an institution which could empower the youths to be self-reliant by providing them with the best of knowledge, technical education and awareness of social, cultural, political and economic realities of the

state, the nation and the world.

The tradition of nurturing leaders continues on this campus. Innovative initiatives, hard work and leadership provided by the faculty members and supported by the administration won for the students of the university the SYLFF endowment in 2003. Through a goal-oriented vision governed with care and cooperation, the JU-SYLFF team has shown how a mission can be taken forward brilliantly.

JU-SYLFF fellows have achieved global recognition through their research output published in high-ranking peer-reviewed journals. But equally important is the financial management and coordination of the programme that can keep the endowment growing over time to secure the future of this highest-valued fellowship. Through the dedication of the SYLFF mentors and the steering committee at Jadavpur University, we have achieved both.

We do need thinking minds to sustain the way forward for humanity. Hence our endeavour is to ignite research minds in youths of today who will shape the future course of human society they live in. This has given our excellent faculty members an opportunity to mentor visiting students from other countries who want to understand Indian reality vis-a-vis global reality. I believe with global exchange of ideas of best minds, future world would value diversity, collaboration, cooperation and understanding for global peace.

I hope JU is able to leverage on the rich experience of the first decade in terms innovative research in the context of internationalising higher education and how we want to shape future research in this work domain. Some disruptive thinking would be welcome. My best wishes are there always with the entire JU-SYLFF family.

'India, a Country I Hold Dear to My Heart'

YOHEI SASAKAWA
Chairman, Tokyo Foundation



I would like to convey my heartfelt congratulations for the tenth anniversary of the inauguration of the SYLFF Programme at Jadavpur University. Initiated in 1987, the SYLFF Programme was established with the purpose of nurturing leaders who will tackle global challenges and contribute to the peace and well-being of humankind. Currently, the programme is located in 69 of the world's top universities. Here at the Jadavpur University, close to 30 outstanding fellows have emerged and I am happy to hear that graduates are engaging in various activities to make for a better society.

This marks my 47th visit to India, a country I hold dear to my heart. Over my 40 years of working toward the elimination of leprosy and the eradication of the stigma and discrimination that it entails, India is the country that I have been working most extensively in—a major reason being that it carries the largest number of new leprosy cases per year. Through my work, I have met countless people affected by leprosy who are living in very harsh conditions and enduring fierce stigma and discrimination.

It is clear there is a wall that stands between people affected by leprosy and society. And the wall is much higher and thicker than we can imagine. People affected by

leprosy have started to take steps to tear this wall down. But at the same time, there are also still people who remain silent out of fear that discrimination may worsen as a result.

Hearing that SYLFF fellows of Jadavpur University are proactively visiting leprosy sanatoria and colonies to meet and get to know people affected by leprosy, gives me hope. Your actions can drill a hole through the wall that stands between people affected by leprosy and society. Just like this, your actions can change society. Every one of you have the potential to become change agents.

As SYLFF fellows I sincerely hope that you will push forward, with strong determination, and address the diverse issues awaiting you to create a better society in the future.

Ten Years Completed, Many More Miles to Go

JOYASHREE ROY
JU-SYLFF Project Director



JU-SYLFF has completed the first ten years of its journey. Through leadership we won the endowment and through hard work we could design a robust, transparent programme. JU-SYLFF fellows get the highest-valued fellowship in the country and global exposure, but staying true to the SYLFF spirit they are also giving back to the Programme by assuming sole responsibility of organising the ten-year celebrations.

What next, I wonder? Do we get complacent that our goal is achieved, mission accomplished? Yes, the first ten year's mission is fulfilled; but the lessons we learnt through these years are that hard work, leadership and strategic governance are essential to any institution's journey. Goals are never fixed: they are like waves and the new one is always upon us, waiting to be crested.

Our SYLFF theme is built on a moving goal. To understand contemporary issues we all need to remain contemporary. Academia needs to be ahead of time and must anticipate a problem and seek its solution before the problem takes over society. Social complexities are changing with the introduction of new technologies, new actors are emerging in the social sphere, unfinished development agenda are challenging the paths of development that have so far been followed. So our difficult task of selecting young women and men with a thinking mind, compassionate heart and fearless leadership potential continues.

This is no single person's job. It is not about money alone but about providing direction to enthusiastic young minds through proper coordination.

Direction is not to dictate the course of action. Direction is to open up opportunities, provide options, set examples through stories of success and failure so that young thinking minds can remain engaged and come out fearlessly in search of truth that breaks the barrier of ignorance. Social change must continue until each and every human being lives comfortably in sync with his or her surroundings.

JU-SYLFF: An Unmatched Record of Excellence

MARI SUZUKI
*Director for Leadership
Development, TKFD*

I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations on the tenth anniversary of the JU-SYLFF Programme.

In February 2012, on my first visit to Jadavpur University, I recall JU-SYLFF representatives showing me around Kolkata. I was deeply impressed by these students, who paid great respect to their own country's history and tradition. With their guidance, I was able to trace the footsteps of Rabindranath Tagore, visiting Tagore House and the Star Theatre, where people gathered and exchanged ideas. I learned that these discussions helped articulate an identity for your country and were a driving force for independence.

Fellows cherish great thinkers of the past and are eager to learn from history. They are also very enthusiastic about new things and show flexibility toward novel ideas. In 2011, for example, we relaunched the Sylff Research Abroad grant program to support fellows' research in a foreign country for a doctoral dissertation. JU fellows have been awarded SRA grants during every application period—a feat unmatched by any other institution: Rimple Mehta in 2011, Anindita Roy and Sreya Maitra Roychoudhury in 2012, and Shamasree Dasgupta in 2013. This is a clear demonstration of the enterprising and open-minded character of JU fellows.

Reading the SRA applications submitted by the JU fellows has greatly familiarized me with their research. I was touched by the great compassion they expressed toward less privileged people, such

as children growing up in the red-light district, migrant women in a detention centre, and victims of ethnic conflict. JU fellows never fail to pay attention to people in need even when they are striving for academic success.

It is my sincere hope that fellows will continue to not only learn from the past but also show a strong commitment to exploring new frontiers while demonstrating empathy for the less privileged.

Research And Education for Common Good

ELLEN E. MASHIKO
*Former executive director,
Scholarship Division, TKFD*

Congratulations! The tenth anniversary of the JU-SYLFF Programme has brought back many indelible memories that began in 2001 when the initial visit was made to explore the possibility of establishing a SYLFF endowment. It has also brought to mind a conceptualisation, an image, of the Programme.

Borrowing from DNA and RNA research, imagine a double helix, the intertwining of two helixes around a shared axis. The helixes are research (the creation of knowledge) and education (the imparting of knowledge), the fundamental “business” of universities. The axis is a commitment to seeking the common good for all people through high quality research and education, and proactive engagement of local, national, regional and global communities—SYLFF's mission.

Another aspect of the schema is the interstices, the spaces created by the intersection of the two helixes and axis, which are too often overlooked. The potential for exciting individual and shared intellectual, academic, professional, and

personal interaction and learning are immeasurable, such as,

- Enrichment of discipline-based research and exploration of theme- or issue-based trans-disciplinary collaboration,
- Sharpening of critical thinking skills and expansion of creativity,
- Strengthening leadership abilities and skills, and
- Identifying, reaffirming and focusing shared concerns and taking joint action.

In sum, the potential for shared learning which enriches individual SYLFF fellows' academic, professional and personal lives, as well as their collaboration with the ultimate goal of empowering others for the common good is limit-less.

The success of the double helix conceptualization does not happen by chance. The ongoing participation of graduated and currently enrolled SYLFF fellows, thoughtful direction of the Programme director, and strong institutional support by Jadavpur University are prerequisites. If the past decade is an indication of the commitment and active participation by these three parties, the next decades of JU SYLFF will surely enjoy sustainable development of an increasingly resilient Programme.

Keep Connecting the Dots Across the Atlas

CARLOS
MORENO-LEGUIZAMON
SYLFF Fellow

Howard University In Washington D.C.; Jadavpur University in India; University of Greenwich in the United Kingdom; all these places in the world map appear as a network of dots still growing. Congratulations on the first 10 years of work and networking. Hope you will connect more dots in the future!

Nurturing Future Leaders of the Country: Words From JU-SYLFF Steering Committee

PROF. SIDDHARTHA DUTTA
Pro Vice-chancellor



JU-SYLFF is one of our flagship programmes. We take great pride in this unique initiative and laud its positive contribution in the career advancement of the fellows who are the future leaders of our country.

DR PRADIP KUMAR GHOSH
Registrar



As the administrative head I have tried my best to facilitate the administrative process for a smooth functioning of the JU-SYLFF Programme. It is a programme that opens doors to the academic world for the deserving students. We are proud of this prestigious endowment granted to our university.

SANJAY GOPAL SARKAR
Joint Registrar



I have been closely, and passionately, associated with the JU-SYLFF Programme since its inception. The programme focuses on building the leadership potential of the students and provides a great opportunity to the students of Jadavpur University who join this institution with high expectations.

PROF. RAJAT ACHARYA
Dean



Although I am in the Steering Committee for the first time, in the capacity of Dean (Faculty of Arts), as a teacher of this university, I have been aware of the SYLFF Programme since its inception. The student-exchange programme under SYLFF provides a unique opportunity to those enrolled in the Faculty of Arts to expand the frontiers of their knowledge and to know about altogether different cultures, customs and values which otherwise they would not have experienced.

GOUR KRISHNA PATTANAYAK
Finance Officer



Managing the SYLFF Programme has been an interesting activity for me because unlike other financial grants, the SYLFF endowment provided an opportunity to be innovative with regard to investment planning and fund management so that the fellows get maximum benefit, since all spending is dependent on earning and investment. Also our fellows are outstanding and through sheer determination they have been successful in acquiring a range of financial support from Tokyo Foundation under the Fellows Mobility Programme (FMP) and the SYLFF Research Award (SRA). Hope to see more and more bright students and more milestones ahead.

Madhuchanda Ghosh (PhD, 2004): SYLFF has given me the opportunity of getting a rich



cross-cultural exposure besides gaining a valuable research experience. I could get rare access to my subject group, which included Japanese policymakers, Japanese Parliamentarians including a former Prime Minister, and academic experts. Such exposures help develop leadership attributes.

Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay (MA, 2004, PhD, 2006): SYLFF has given me critical confidence



to interrogate and work beyond my class, ethnic and national frames. I hope that in future more intense interaction between generations of JU-SYLFF Fellows results in the development of an inner intellectual force which would run the SYLFF Programme.

Abhishek Bose (MA, 2004, PhD, 2006): I was one of the first three Jadavpur University students to get the benefit of SYLFF.



What I learnt during my years under the Programme was not confined to academics. I also learnt how to manage time and resources. The JU-SYLFF Programme even made it possible for me to make a documentary film, "Gaanwala", on people who sang in local trains in West Bengal. It was an off-beat subject and my research did not fit within any one academic discipline, but thanks to SYLFF Programme at Jadavpur University I could deal with it the way I always wanted.

Duke Ghosh (PhD, 2005):

JU-SYLFF has given me an opportunity to become a researcher. It taught me to respect multidisciplinary research. It has also helped me gain the first taste of international exposure.



Sreya Maitra (MA, 2007):

Regular exchanges within the JU-SYLFF Programme taught me that curiosity and information build an independent opinion only when refined with meaningful research and mature scholarship.



Nilanjan Pande (MA, 2007):

JU-SYLFF provided me international exposure along with opportunity of academic assimilation. I feel expanding the scope for the applicability of various research works conducted under SYLFF would enrich the programme further in the coming years.



What makes the JU-SYLFF Programme special? Where Humanities and Social Sciences Matter

SWAPAN CHAKRAVORTY
Mentor

SYLFF is a unique programme in that at our university we do not have any substantial grant of this nature for the Faculty of Arts. The gains from the programme have been many and I list the three major ones: (i) it allows researchers to work with a peer group from other disciplines who sit in on seminars and ask questions and even join the process of selection. (ii) The Fellows' Mobility Programme enables the researchers to produce excellent work at JU while using the resources of Universities abroad. This has broken the routine of Indian academics producing quality research overseas while discharging regular teaching responsibilities at home. (iii) It has inculcated a sense of urgency in delivering result on time, since the grant is time bound.



PARTHA PRATIM BASU
Mentor

In an age when the study of humanities and social sciences seem to suffer a degree of neglect, the SYLFF Programme not only constitutes a rare morale-booster for the advanced students of these streams but also remains a signal contribution to the cause of the civil society as a whole.

SHIBASHIS CHATTERJEE
Mentor

It is little wonder that the SYLFF Programme is successfully completing ten years at Jadavpur University. SYLFF remains the sole internationally acclaimed flagship programme of the Arts Faculty that has successfully launched our students to an altogether different level. SYLFF fellows are always special. They are recruited through as demanding a process as one can conceive, mentored scrupulously by supervisors under the watchful vigil of the SYLFF board, encouraged to undertake high quality, peer-reviewed interdisciplinary work, and, in the process, transformed as scholars. All SYLFF fellows have excelled in their chosen areas of life. While their intellectual endowments were native, the SYLFF training had been indispensable for their all round success. With a commitment to reach international standards, the SYLFF Programme must continue to maintain its uncompromisingly high standards and make us proud of our best talents on campus.



The first batch of JU-SYLFF fellows interacting with the then Executive Director, Scholarship Division, TKFD, at the university guest house.

What makes the JU-SYLFF Programme special? A Model for the Rest

RADHARAMAN CHAKRABORTY
Selection Committee Member

It is a pleasure to write the following words about JU-SYLFF Programme of which I have a very positive assessment. Since my direct and somewhat infrequent association with it is connected with the selection process of fellows, I must first of all put on record the enormous care the Jadavpur University SYLFF cell takes to ensure a most objective and transparent system of processing the applicants' data. Then the interactive mode in which the viva is held, giving ample scope to enrich one's academic potential, is something I wish our general university set-up took care to adopt. I wish the final research product of the high net worth SYLFF scholars got due publicity in academic journals here and abroad.

SAMITA SEN
Mentor

I have been associated with the JU-SYLFF Programme from 2007. I have mentored an MA and a PhD student in this period. This programme is unique for many reasons: it offers merit-based fellowships to students at many levels of post-graduate studies; it is exclusively for students in humanities and the social sciences; it provides mentoring and monitoring within a well-regulated structure that seeks to draw out the potential of promising students. I was struck by the regularity with which students reported their work

and took feedback from faculty members and each other. Such a system substituted for the lack of regular post-graduate seminars in our systems. I was also struck by the sincerity and commitment of students to the programme, given that a great deal of administrative work is routinely done by them. I hope this programme will continue to flourish and students will continue to find through it opportunities for self-development.

AMITA CHATTERJEE
Mentor

There are many scholarships which are available in Indian universities in the present day, but most of them only focus on academic merit of the students. However, the JU-SYLFF Programme stands apart in that it takes into account a student's all-round achievements. This is also beneficial for our students as they learn to become leaders and more socially aware. The contribution is not only at an academic level but also with a larger social outreach and impact.

GAUTAM KUMAR BASU
Selection Committee Member

I was a part of the JU-SYLFF Selection Committee in its inaugural year in Jadavpur University in 2004-05. I also conducted a couple of seminar presentations by the JU-SYLFF fellows. I consider JU-SYLFF a well-organised academic programme.

Sreerupa Sengupta (PhD, 2008): *JU-SYLFF gave me the opportunities for international academic exchange and travel and allowed me to carry out multidisciplinary research. The progress review workshops inspired me to think out of the box and provided critical insights for my doctoral research.*



Shubhasree Bhattacharyya (PhD, 2009): *JU-SYLFF has played a major role in shaping the ways I perceive the life of a researcher. Demands of individual leadership, active participation in multi-tasks, a focused and well delineated structure combines here with a strong sense of community.*



Shyamasree Dasgupta (MPhil 2009, PhD, 2011): *JU-SYLFF gives me confidence. The exposure that JU-SYLFF provides amplifies our leadership potential. I envisage JU-SYLFF becoming a solution-giving think-tank in the next ten years.*



Neha Chatterji (Fellow, MA, 2009): *To pursue serious research at the master's level is a rare and invaluable exposure and JU-SYLFF had provided me with the confidence and abundant institutional and financial support for it. I hope to see JU-SYLFF retain its excellence while its researchers' community swells in the years to come.*



Rimple Mehta (PhD, 2010):

JU-SYLFF gave me an opportunity to focus all my energies on my research and gave me the confidence to strive towards making a meaningful contribution through it. It gave me the space to explore my potential and respond to new challenges.



Saumyashree Ghosh (MA, 2011): *Being a JU-SYLFF fellow*

has most importantly taught me how to clearly articulate a research problem rooted in the contemporary and interrogate my position. JU-SYLFF continues to guide and shape my career. It is a family I could always fall back on. I hope in future years this bond will grow and become a great intellectual force to reckon with.



Anindita Roy (MPhil, 2012): *JU-SYLFF means an umbrella of generous support for me.*

Under it, I had the financial security to single-mindedly focus on my research. It also widened my horizons and let me explore diverse avenues through the SRA Grant, which made possible an advanced research in my field at two universities in the United Kingdom. However, beyond the research and their grants, JU-SYLFF is a body of fellows, mentors, committee members, and a project director who holds together a family closer home, the JU-SYLFF family—a family (now mine, too) which accepts potential and carves brilliance from it.



What makes the JU-SYLFF Programme special? Where Disciplines and Cultures Meet

SUPRIYA CHAUDHURI
Mentor

I have been associated with the JU-SYLFF Programme from the moment of its inception. It has created a true sense of interdisciplinarity, research orientation, and internationalization in the Jadavpur University community. SYLFF scholars, shaped by the programme's combination of rigour, flexibility, and innovation, are actually making a difference in the world.



ABHIJIT ROY
Mentor

Inter-disciplinary approach, eagerness to bring about meaningful

changes in society and innovative thinking are some of the significant qualities that I think the SYLFF programme at Jadavpur University has nurtured right from its inception. A great boon for the students is also the very enriching cross-cultural experience the programme offers.

PAROMITA CHAKRAVARTI
Mentor

I have been associated with SYLFF as a student mentor for over five years. SYLFF has helped globalise our university by enabling students of a state institution to share their research with the rest of the world and to forge relationships across national borders.



International participants at the SYLFF Regional Forum in 2007 observing Social Action Day with underprivileged children at Calcutta.

Down Memory Lane: Vignettes from the Past



Aritra Chakraborti (PhD, 2012): *JU-SYLFF has broadened my boundaries of vision, encouraging me to reach beyond my limitations. I hope in future JU-SYLFF continues to inspire people to take up the mantle of leadership.*



Shounak Set (MA, 2013): *JU-SYLFF shall enable me to emerge as a leader capable of negotiating the turbulent waves of the twenty-first century when barriers between disciplines, societies and states are turning increasingly irrelevant.*



Nikhilesh Bhattacharya (PhD, 2013): *The handsome fellowship amount paid under the JU-SYLFF Programme means I can devote the next three years to my doctoral research and not worry about a job right now.*



Judhajit Sarkar (MA, 2013): *JU-SYLFF has given me the opportunity to stand upright on my disciplinary ground even while—and precisely by—embracing modes of critical thinking not immediately available to my disciplinary formation. This has not only provided me with the confidence to speak but also with the confidence to keep my mouth shut when it is more important to 'listen'. This is one hallmark of JU-SYLFF which I hope it will retain in future as well.*



What makes the JU-SYLFF Fellows Special? Thinking Out of the Box

SANJUKTA BHATTACHARYA
Mentor

The JU-SYLFF programme has opened up new opportunities at both the Masters' and doctoral levels for students of Jadavpur University. The students selected for the programme have been among the brightest in the university. They also think out of the box, as can be seen from the wide range of research topics they have taken up for study.

the programme has inspired students to come up with innovative projects and the presentations, even of the candidates whose proposals were rejected, have been interesting and exciting. The programme also allows researchers to work closely with a group of peers and mentors, a unique quality that has helped them to improve the quality of their research.

ANUP SINHA
Selection Committee Member

NILANJANA GUPTA
Selection Committee Member

The JU-SYLFF Programme has enabled young researchers of Jadavpur University to carry out research work of excellent quality while maintaining the programme's commitment to inter-disciplinarity and social relevance. Every year,

I have been associated with the JU-SYLFF Programme for a long time as an external member of the Selection Committee for the academic awards. I have been very impressed by the wide range of projects that come up for selection, and the scholarship of the students who compete for the fellowships.



The Vice-Chancellor, Jadavpur University, attending the pre-application research orientation workshop conducted by JU-SYLFF in August 2013.

What makes the JU-SYLFF Fellows Special? Local Concerns, Global Connect

SUDESHNA BANERJEE
Mentor

As a SYLFF mentor, I have cherished my association with the ten-year journey of an academic enterprise that has maintained globally comparable heights in research and displayed an uncanny ability to select the most deserving for its fellowships. Even within SYLFF global mandate of engagement with development, the JU-SYLFF vision has sensitized development discourse to the specifics of the local and its distinctive cultural-political contours. I envision JU-SYLFF reinforcing this culture-sensitive exploration of the interface of the global and the local in the contested arena of development discourse.



Jadavpur University because of its openness to innovative research ideas and the freedom that it gives its beneficiaries. I think that the programme can only get stronger over the years, and continue to produce high quality research.

DALIA CHAKRABORTY
Mentor

Students of my department (sociology) at Jadavpur University have been discussing their SYLFF proposals with me all these years. One way to invigorate the programme will be to organise a meeting of the past, the existing and the pro-



spective fellows, where they can exchange their experiences and expectations in presence of the SYLFF office bearers.

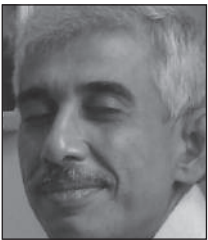
IPSHITA CHANDA
Mentor

Having grown with SYLFF in the last decade, I can record that it has introduced a most scholar-friendly yet rigorous culture of research, enabled mentors and candidates to rise to the challenges of the applicability of cutting edge ideas to actual life-situations and provided some very intellectually stimulating yet convivial lunches.



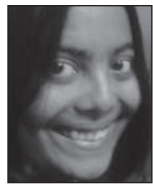
AMLAN DASGUPTA
Mentor

I was asked to supervise a dissertation on guitar artists in Kolkata. It was a very refreshing experience, different from the usual academic work that I do in the Department of English: at the same time, it was close to my interest in contemporary music history. The candidate was very bright and brought a lot of interesting ideas and issues into the discussion. I enjoyed working with her, and was very happy with the result of the candidate's labours. The SYLFF programme I think works well at



JU-SYLFF Fellows with Akiko Matsunobu, then Executive Director, TKFD, and Project Director, JU-SYLFF Programme, at the JU Central Library.

Anwesha Sengupta (MA, 2013): *JU-SYLFF has given me an opportunity to research*



on what I have identified as a problem. This has greatly humbled the 'I' in me and at the same time given the 'I' a lot of confidence. The process of becoming a JU-SYLFF fellow itself is one that has taught me to think like a researcher, articulate my goals and understand my strength and weaknesses better.

What is your research question?

A haiku by

Deeptanil Ray (PhD, 2008):

*Blowing from the east
Enveloping, this evening,
Some wind. Hard rain falls.*

*To the clouds we speak
Warm university days
Old birds heading home.*

*You think that you know:
What is your research question?
There are many more.*



JU-SYLFF Fellow Payoshni Mitra, who is also a gender rights activist, with other international participants at Building a Better Asia Retreat 9 in 2011.

What makes the JU-SYLFF Fellows special? Reaching beyond academia

ABHIJIT GUPTA
Mentor

Since its inception, the JU-SYLFF Programme has produced a group of scholars who have delivered research work of great quality in a disciplined fashion. Reaching beyond academia, the JU-SYLFF fellows have made significant contribution to society and it will be a feeling of great satisfaction to see this trend continue in future.



INDRANI SANYAL
Selection Committee Member

SYLFF connotes a conscientious voyage into the culture of India of every hue—loud or pale—through the bubbling ideas of young creative talents and their active participatory roles for initiating a social change.

SAMANTAK DAS
Mentor

SYLFF at Jadavpur University has served its Fellows extremely well, particularly in giving them exposure to a larger, international, world of institutions and ideas. It should now integrate the work done by SYLFF Fellows to the curricular framework of the university, for the greater benefit of the larger JU family.



HIMADRI BANERJEE
Selection Committee Member

I had the privilege of meeting a number of wonderful young personalities communicating their opinion in a language not known to me. JU-SYLFF fellows have gone beyond the limits of the campus to wider fields of success. I regard these as some of the most invaluable experiences of my life.



ANINDYAJYOTI MAJUMDAR
Mentor

From a platform for nurturing budding researchers, JU-SYLFF has evolved into a great family of scholars and academicians in ten years. Celebrations of success must recommit SYLFF to strive for even higher standards of excellence while expanding itself to embrace and interrelate with greater cross-cultural participation

Sylff Asia Pacific Regional Forum of 2007 Revisited

DUKE GHOSH
SYLFF Fellow

The summer of 2006 brought a surprise for the SYLFF fellows of Jadavpur University. Amid our usual routine—research, teaching, association activities, progress report workshops, etc.—we were told that at the request of the Scholarship Division, the university had decided to host the Asia Pacific Regional Forum of 2007.

We were elated but hesitant; it was a grand privilege—but an even bigger responsibility! The forum would involve almost 60 participants from as many countries. And it meant a range of activities—logistics for international travel, accommodation of guests, scheduling conference sessions, deciding on the venue and sites for social action, and most important, coordinating with various ministries and departments of the government to obtain the necessary clearances and communicating the same to the Indian Mission in the country of each participant.

The build up to the Forum required endless rounds of interaction—deciding on activities, responsibilities and deadlines. A committed network involving fellows, the JU-SYLFF steering committee, the Scholarship Division and the academic community of the University worked in tandem—setting targets, monitoring progress and taking timely decisions. The toolkit provided by the Scholarship Division highlighted the importance of working with a well charted guideline so as to avoid overlooking important issues relating to critical activities and deadlines.

The Forum was held in November 2007. The theme of the fo-

rum, “Human Rights and Creative Leadership,” attracted interest of all participants and each session was characterised by intense discussions and insightful oral and poster presentations.

The participants also involved themselves in a day-long social action programme – working with patients suffering from leprosy, underprivileged children and patients with mental disorder. The representatives from Asia Pacific for the next Sylff Fellows’ Council were also elected during the Forum. I was fortunate to be one among the two representatives elected.

The forum gave the Sylff fellows of JU a chance to meet and befriend and interact with people from diverse culture and exchange ideas with an international academic community. Also, the resounding success of the forum revealed to us the importance of planned action, quick and efficient decision making skills, and the necessity of a plan B while organizing an international event of this scale. It was a real once-in-a-lifetime experience!

Working with the brightest minds

Sayanti Mitra
SYLFF Project Assistant

During my association (2009-



2013) with SYLFF, I had the opportunity of interacting with many bright minds representing this global

academic network which patronise young visionaries and future leaders. Working for this Programme has been a learning experience: learning the essentials of effective communication and multi-tasking. The Project Director’s guidance has been enormous in terms of clear thinking, problem-solving and skill enhancement. Today I can see myself evolved into a more efficient and confident person. Thanks to SYLFF and all its stakeholders for giving me this wonderful opportunity to learn and work together for a good cause.



A session in progress at the SYLFF Asia Pacific Regional Forum 2007 on Human Rights And Creative Leadership at Jadavpur University.

Involving young minds to build a Better Asia

SREERUPA SENGUPTA
JU-SYLFF Fellow

In 2006, Nippon Foundation, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, TKFD and the Asian Dialogue Society began a unique project called Building a Better Asia: Future Leaders' Dialogue (BABA). BABA aimed at holistic development of young minds and inculcating in them a shared value system for a better life. The main objective of the programme was to nurture future leaders of Asia. The week-long retreats gave young researchers and activists an opportunity to interact with Asian leaders, to develop and share their skills and ideas, to discuss critical issues concerning Asia and the world and to appreciate and celebrate the richness and diversity of Asia. These retreats focused on a range of issues such as human security, sustainable development, common security, good governance, poverty alleviation and ecological balance,

with each retreat releasing a Communiqué. BABA was discontinued in 2011.

How it helped JU-SYLFF fellows:

Duke Ghosh (BABA 1, 2006): It was an exposure to the discourse on the possibility (and impossibility) of an Asian Union.

Ritajyoti Bandopadhyay (BABA 2, 2007): BABA gave me an opportunity to share my ideas with emerging and established leaders of China, South Asia and South East Asia.

Payoshni Mitra (BABA 3, 2008 & BABA 9, 2011): It has been a great experience where I could share my work and concerns with like-minded individuals from different parts of Asia.

Sreerupa Sengupta (BABA 7, 2010): It taught me how to network at the grassroots and motivate people into action.

SYLFF Research Abroad Programme

SUBHASHREE BHATTACHARYA
JU-SYLFF Fellow

The SYLFF Research Abroad (SRA) Programme is a unique one where fellows get the opportunity to apply for funding for travel to any country of the world to conduct a part of their research. Through this they get to situate their work in an inter-cultural comparative matrix, interact with mentors and researchers abroad, carry on field findings and reference work. The current SRA format has broadened the horizons further. The options are neither limited to SYLFF institutes nor do the fellows need to adhere to a given time frame. In the true spirit of SYLFF the new framework allows researchers to design their trips entirely providing them with the fullest scope to expand and enrich their research.

How it helps JU-SYLFF fellows:

Rimple Mehta: SRA enabled me to carry out research in two detention centres in Europe. The credibility associated with this award helped me gain access to these closed institutions. It also gave me the freedom to steer my research in a way which best suited the larger aim of my thesis.

Rimple visited Central European University, Hungary between September 2012 and February 2013.

Sreerupa Sengupta: The SYLFF Research Abroad Programme has been of an immeasurable value as it gave me the opportunity to widen my vista of knowledge – both academic and cultural.

Sreerupa visited Howard University, Washington D.C. and The American University in Cairo, in 2009.



JU-SYLFF fellow Sreerupa Sengupta (first from right) with other international student participants at Building a Better Asia 7 meet in Bangkok in 2010.

Small Gestures That Make a World of Difference

ANWESHA SENGUPTA
JU-SYLFF Fellow

*With inputs from JU-SYLFF fellows
Sreya Maitra and Shounak Set*

Small gestures can sometimes make a world of difference in the fight to break down the wall that separates people affected by leprosy from society. This became apparent from a brief conversation held during a recent visit by JU-SYLFF fellows to the Premananda Leprosy Mission of Kolkata, run in association with the Leprosy Mission in Canada—a non-government organisation.

Naomi, a physiotherapist at the Mission, told the visiting fellows how the JU-SYLFF Association had once distributed a few special cups that people affected by leprosy can hold without getting blisters, as sometimes happens with normal cups. She said it was a remarkably thoughtful gesture on the part of JU-SYLFF and that those who received the cups still cherish the gift.

Such gifts (the JU-SYLFF Association had also donated a colour television set to the Mission in 2008) form a small contribution to the Mission's sustained effort to banish social prejudices against leprosy and provide comfort and cure to people affected by the disease. Though small, these gestures are not insignificant, because they are true to TKFD's principal aim of bringing people together.

From its inception, the JU-SYLFF Association has engaged with the Leprosy Mission's work as part of the Social Action Programme under the provision of TKFD's Social Network Programme. Apart from periodic visits to the Mission, JU-SYLFF fel-

lows have organised movie shows as well as cultural performances involving both fellows and patients. They have also toured the well-equipped wards specialising in leprosy, dermatology, surgery, ophthalmology and physiotherapy.

During the Jadavpur University SYLFF Regional Forum 2007, SYLFF fellows from different institutions across the world were taken to the Leprosy Mission on the day of Social Action.

The JU-SYLFF Association pledges to continue its work with the Leprosy Mission. During the recent visit to the Mission, JU-SYLFF fellows took part in a meeting that discussed the possibility of organising a fund raiser in the form of a fete. The fellows have promised to try and help by selling lottery tickets on the Jadavpur University campus, helping out as volunteers on the day of the fete, and perhaps sponsoring one of the prizes of the lottery.

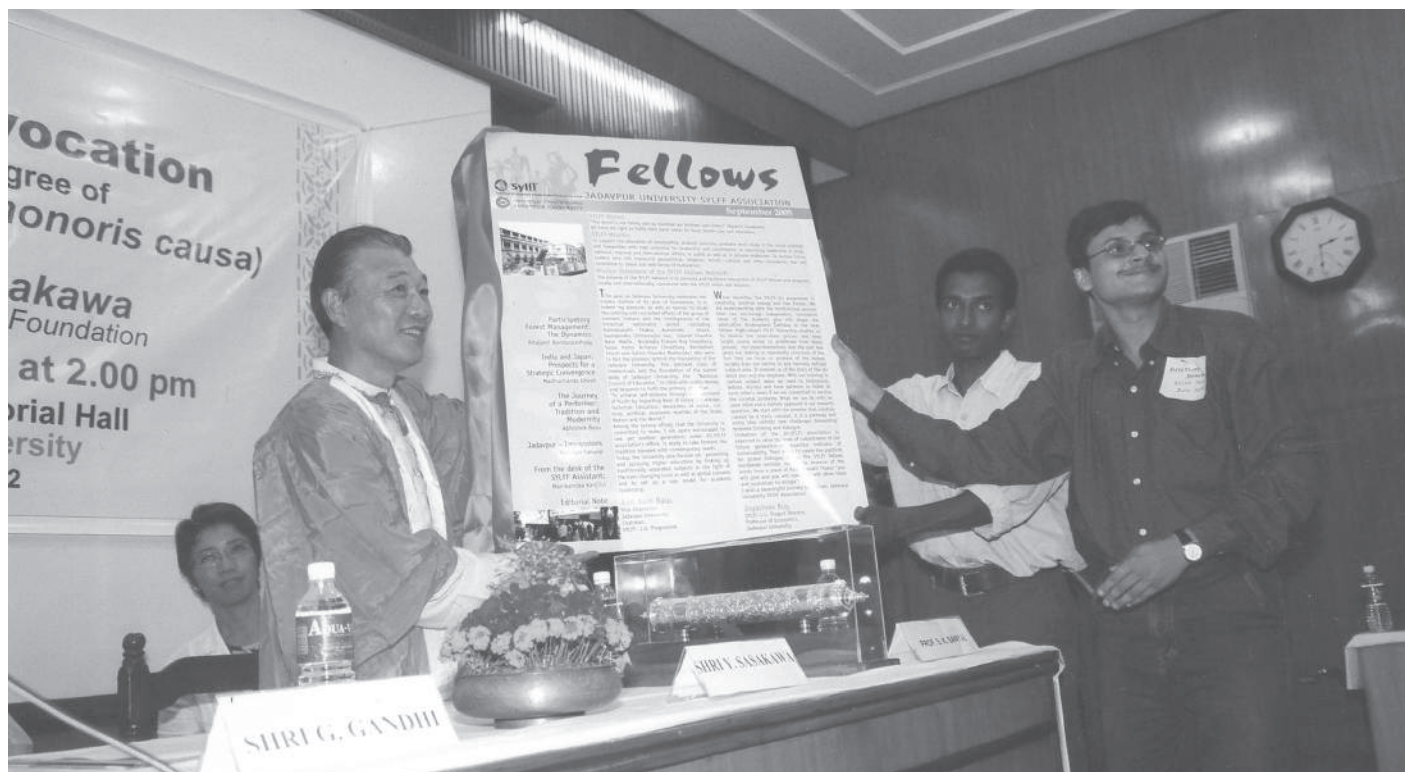
As a new JU-SYLFF fellow, it was my first visit to the Leprosy Mission and I found the experience extremely rewarding.



JU-SYLFF fellows on their visit to the Leprosy Mission at Rajabazar Calcutta on a Christmas Eve.



Leprosy patients enjoying the screening of a movie show organised by the JU-SYLFF Fellows at the Premananda Memorial Leprosy Hospital.



The launch of the first edition of Fellows by Dr. Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman, TKFD in 2005.

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY AND THE RYOICHI SASAKAWA YOUNG LEADERS FELLOWSHIP FUND (JU-SYLFF)

FELLOWSHIPS in SOCIAL SCIENCES and HUMANITIES

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF THE SYLFF PROGRAMME AT JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY!

Every year, JU-SYLFF awards fellowships to postgraduate students and young researchers aspiring to do MPhil or PhD at JU who show leadership potential and whose proposed areas of study come within the parameters of the theme: "Tradition, Social Change and Sustainable Development."

For details, visit

<http://www.jusylffprogram.org.in/>