

## IIMA honours nine alumni with the Young Alumni Achiever's Award 2022

**June, 2023:** The Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA), a premier global management institute, announced the winners of the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of its Young Alumni Achiever's Awards 2022 (YAAA 2022) today. Initiated in 2015, these awards are given to its alumni under the age of 45 in recognition of their outstanding achievements and contributions in the areas of Corporate Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Academics, Social/Public Service and Arts/Entertainment/Sports.

The awards were given away by Professor Bharat Bhasker, Director, IIMA and Professor Sunil Maheshwari, Dean (Alumni and External Relations) at an event organised in the campus today, which was attended by members of the larger IIMA community. This year's winners are as follows:

### Corporate Leadership

1. **Mr Aditya Sharma**, Partner at McKinsey (PGP – 2011)
2. **Mr Prabhjeet Singh**, President of Uber India and South Asia Entrepreneurship (PGP 2006)
3. **Ms Sucheta Mahapatra**, Managing Director of Branch International (PGP 2006)

### Entrepreneurship

1. **Mr Sandeep Deshmukh**, Co-Founder of ElasticRun (PGPX 2011)
2. **Mr Saurabh Garg**, Co-founder of NoBroker.com (PGP 2004)
3. **Ms Vineeta Singh**, Co-Founder of Sugar Cosmetics (PGP 2007)

### Social/Public Service

1. **Shri K Thavaseelan**, IAS (PGP 2009)
2. **Mr Srijan Pal Singh**, Former Advisor and OSD to the 11th President of India & CEO and Founder of Kalam Centre, (PGP 2009)

### Arts and Entertainment

1. **Tanuj Solanki**, Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar Winner, (PGP 2009)

The IIMA has a strong network of more than 40,000 alumni spread across the country and the world. Several of the alumni have made their mark in different fields and have earned accolades for their contributions in diverse fields. Their successes have strengthened IIMA's position as a premier management institution offering world class education. The IIMA alumni are engaged closely with their alma mater and have been supporting several initiatives by giving their time, thought and resources.

### **Winner Profiles Follow**

## IIMA Young Alumni Achievers Awards 2022

### Corporate Leadership

**Aditya Sharma | PGP 2011 | Partner at McKinsey**



It is a privilege and honour to receive this award from my alma mater. Being recognized by IIMA from amongst its illustrious alumni group feels very special. It would be immensely satisfying if this journey could inspire others to pursue their passion and dreams.

IIMA has been a major catalyst in my personal and professional journey. It provided a strong launch pad for my career, enabled unparalleled access to an inspiring peer and alumni group, and strengthened my belief to strive for the best. Life at IIMA instilled learnings and capabilities that proved to be vital professionally like excellence under pressure, collaboration and resilience. I am really grateful and proud to be an IIMA alumnus. It will forever be a special place as I met my life partner on campus!

Aditya Sharma is currently leading the Asia Banking Analytics practice. He previously led India's Financial Services and Strategy & Corporate Finance practices. He was featured in Forbes India 30 under 30 list in 2018. He is one of the Youngest Partners across leading Professional Services Firms and among the first awardees in professional services in India. He has 8+ publications, including McKinsey's seminal three-volume report on Indian banking and Op-Ed articles. He has helped Indian financial institutions to develop a model that simplified access to credit, strengthened financial inclusion, and supported growth in small businesses, in Tier 2, 3 & 4 locations and industrialized analytics across more than 100 use cases at a leading Asian bank. He Developed 200+ senior leaders at a bank through an integrated personal leadership and business transformation program. He was a core part of the ACT Grants initiative supporting multiple COVID-relief initiatives across India in 2021 and collaborated with a large Indian bank to launch at-scale nationwide digital servicing journeys during the pandemic to support customers in getting remote service without going to the branches. He collaborated with IIM-A faculty and alums to develop a 5-year vision and blueprint to enhance institutes' pre-eminence in management education and support developing the next generation of talent. He always followed his passion for learning and exploring, even against conventional wisdom. Explored 10+ sectors/functions in consulting – each time learning and unlearning and evolving professionally. He continues to follow his hobbies & interests while focusing on excelling in his professional aspirations.

## Prabhjeet Singh | PGP 2006 | President of Uber India and South Asia



“I believe the award is a recognition less for me but for the impact Uber has had on the lives of millions of riders and drivers and the cities we operate in. It is no doubt a peak professional moment to have your alma mater recognize you. It is also a reminder of the responsibility we carry to have a wider impact with the privilege of the IIMA education.

IIMA with its world-class faculty, brightest peers and the unique pedagogy helped me not only hone my basics but taught me how to think bolder and better. The illustrious alum group continues to be an incredible network that I rely on professionally.”

Prabhjeet Singh was recognized as ET 40 under 40 top business leaders of the country. He was a SAC member at IIMA and was awarded the KVS Gold medal for best outgoing all-rounder and Aditya Birla Scholar. He has 16 years of post-MBA experience and is currently the President of Uber India and South Asia. He recently held the position of Associate Partner at McKinsey & Co. He helped launch Uber in 100+ new cities. He led the capability-building service line that helped transform skills for 40,000+ mid to senior executives across companies. While at McKinsey, he was the only consultant invited to the government committee on 'capability building in the banking sector.' He led several India-first innovations, including scaling up Auto, Moto, Intercity, and High-Capacity vehicles, and introduced Uber Bus in India. He built two new service lines in McKinsey and helped adapt diversity, inclusivity, and cultural norms at Uber. He led the transformation into shared mobility and advised iconic companies in India and SE Asia on performance transformations, building digital-first businesses at McKinsey. He steered Uber Medic during Covid and worked with Max Foundation and Gurgaon First.

## Sucheta Mahapatra | PGP 2006 | Managing Director of Branch International



“I am delighted for this award - and grateful to be considered by IIM A. The institute is really close to my heart and being formally recognised means a lot. I have IIM A to thank for instilling the early values of - hard work, humility, relentless pursuit of excellence and giving me the opportunity to make lifelong friends. I hope this award serves as a platform for me to pay it forward - a signal to women entering the corporate world - that they can aspire for fulfilling business careers too.

It is an absolute privilege to be recognised by IIM A. I owe a lot to the institute - the early grounding in hard work and hustle, lessons on leadership and some lifelong friendships - all came from my two years at IIM A. I stand on the shoulders of giants - many generous folks associated with IIM A who lent a hand when it mattered.”

Sucheta is an accomplished business leader with an enviable track record of setting up and scaling tech-enabled businesses. She is the MD for India at Branch International (a16z and Visa-backed FinTech) and is building one of the first full-service digital banks in India. She is also a member of the Board of Governors at IIM Sambalpur. Prior, Sucheta was the COO for WeWork in India. She has held leadership positions with Airtel and Bain & Company in India and abroad. She has broken the glass ceiling by becoming a CXO before age 40. Sucheta is known for her strategic thinking, strong leadership, and grit. Outside work, she is a mother to two daughters and loves cooking and the outdoors. She is an active angel investor in start-ups and, with her husband (Prabhjeet Singh, IIMA Class of 2006, CEO of Uber India), now stays in Bangalore. She attained academic excellence early on, being an All India #1 in the Class X school, leaving examinations, being a Gold medallist in Engineering, and went on to get an MBA from IIM Ahmedabad. The years at IIM-A were formative, where she learned to dream big, believe that she could break existing biases in the corporate world, and learn valuable lessons on humility and resilience. In her early years as a management consultant with Bain and as Head of Strategy at Airtel, Sucheta mastered the business toolkit and how to steer others to drive impact. Subsequently, as a leader at Airtel and COO at WeWork, she learned how to be a true P&L operator, build new business grounds-up and take accountability for topline & bottom-line. Now, the buck stops with her in her current avatar as MD for a fast-growing FinTech. She drives the strategy, mobilizes resourcing and funding, and steers the business through crises like the pandemic.

Sandeep Deshmukh | PGPX 2011 | Co-Founder of ElasticRun



“Entrepreneurship is a journey of frequent near collapse experiences. And one really does not know the time to the destination. In such a journey, a recognition from the institute of the stature of IIMA, is a great stabilising event. An acknowledgement from such highly accomplished teachers and peer group, is a great motivation to stay on course for a long turbulent journey.

The biggest impact IIMA had on me is to know myself to a far greater depth - knowing what I really want to do, to what I can do and to what I would not be great at. Add to that the technical skill set that helped me transition from a hard core analytical techie, to more of a business leader. The last one is the realisation that if you can make it to this institute, you would have enough talent to survive the deepest of the troughs, and this confidence is the most crucial skill for an entrepreneur.”

Sandeep Deshmukh is the Co-founder and CEO of ElasticRun and founded the company in 2016. ElasticRun is a Deep-Reach Logistics technology platform, unlocking the next wave of consumption in India and a key player in servicing the low-density remote areas of India. The ElasticRun platform would channel trade, finance, and data of \$500 bn consumption in India through its network. It aspires to become the default enabler of Infrastructure for Indian consumption. Currently, ElasticRun's 12-month annualized revenues are at 1,800Cr+ (based on Jan 21 sales.), and the company's revenues have grown 145% annually YoY in FY20. The company provides livelihood to over 25,000+ partners with ~1,200+ full-time employees. Sandeep built ElasticRun to be a key player in the Indian e-commerce and FMCG industry. It is handling almost a million shipments per day on peak days. Its FMCG network serves goods of 100+ FMCG brands to 112,000 stores. The company's network has been built to service 28 states and over 400+ cities in India. In tie up with banks and NBFCs, It offers credit services to a large number of small Kirana stores. Sandeep's vision is backed by marquee international VC investors - Naspers Ventures, Kalaari Capital, and Avataar Venture Partners (previously part of Norwest Venture Partners). Its last funding round was in Oct '19, when it raised Series C funding of \$40mn led by Naspers. Across all the funding rounds, the company has raised \$62mn (\$55M in equity and \$7Mn in venture debt). As per the Jan '21 offers of investments by VC firms, the valuation of the company stands at \$325mn. ElasticRun is a pioneer in several technology disruptions in the Indian transportation and logistics space. All technology innovations are protected by patents. The company has filed over five patents in USA and India. Under Sandeep's leadership, ElasticRun has been able to attract some of the top-tier executives from global organizations. The current leadership team at ElasticRun has joined marquee organizations such as Amazon, Infosys, ICICI, Mu Sigma, etc. The senior leadership comes from top-tier business institutes, such as IIMA, ISB, IIMC, etc.

## Saurabh Garg | PGP 2004 | Co-founder of NoBroker.com



Saurabh Garg is the 1st Generation entrepreneur who started the entrepreneurship journey very early in life. He founded NoBroker along with his Co-Founder Amit Agarwal. He decided to stay back in India after IIT. However, he had offers from Columbia University, LSE, and Imperial College as he believed India has a very high potential and entrepreneurship is his calling. He strongly believes that all students should realize that this is the best time to be in India.

His biggest way to contribute to society is to inspire the next generation, motivate them about entrepreneurship, and mentor them to build world-class companies in India. He is a regular speaker at start-up events and forums, including IITs/IIMs/Incubators, etc., motivating students and start-up enthusiasts and helping them learn from my experience. He is Advisor/Mentor and angel investor to more than 30 start-ups, many of which have grown to large scale. Three of these start-ups are run by IIMA alums. NoBroker became India's first property tech unicorn, posting a money valuation of \$1.01 bn, and the company raised a total of \$361 m from investors, including Paytm's Vijay Shekhar Sharma. Saurabh transformed the way real estate transactions are done in India. Before NoBroker, Indian real estate transactions were highly inefficient, and common people paid a huge amount of money as brokerage every year to rent/buy/sell properties.

The quality of service by brokers was poor, and the intermediation fee was very high (18% in rental and 2-6% in buy/sell). NoBroker busted the myth and made the entire transaction transparent,

“It is always special to get complimented by one’s alma mater. It is a validation for the hard work, dedication, and commitment that I have had towards my dreams. The award reinforces my belief that I am on the right path and making a positive difference to the lives of people. It is definitely a matter of pride for me. This recognition also comes with a sense of responsibility. It inspires me to continue pushing boundaries and strive for excellence. It also instils in me the desire to give back to my community and help young entrepreneurs scale and succeed. The award serves as a reminder that my achievements are not personal but also carry the potential to inspire and motivate others to pursue their dreams. IIMA has played a very key role in helping me pursue entrepreneurship. In both my startups, I have a co-founder who is my batchmate from IIMA. The trust and confidence you have because you have known the person for such a long time and who has similar values and aspirations as you is really important. The friends I made here are like family to me.”

IIMA has the smartest people on the planet in a competitive environment. And this prepares you for anything in life. You come out with the value that ‘Nothing is Impossible’ and look at everything from the first principles. You question the status quo and try to find if there is a better solution that can exist. And entrepreneurship is just that – making something significantly better, which is what we are trying to do for real estate with NoBroker.

Also, IIMA degree provided me with the confidence to go out and take risks. Even if things don’t work out, this degree ensures that you are still one of the most sought after professionals in the country.

cheaper, and faster by eliminating the middleman and connecting tenants/buyers directly with owners/sellers. NoBroker is the world's largest C2C platform. More than 7 lac people can find a home every year without paying any brokerage. This is a Gross Transaction value of 64000+ crore. NoBroker helps save brokerage worth more than 4500 crores every year. NoBroker is the only one-stop shop for the entire Real Estate journey. The company is India's No. 1 Packers and Movers aggregator and a pioneer of online Rent Payment platforms. Rs. 20000 crores of rent is paid through the platform annually. 3% of India's credit card spending happens on NoBroker. Every year, over 7 lac people can find a house, and 7 lac people can rent/sell a home without paying any brokerage in a very transparent and easy process. Thus, NoBroker enables 14 lac people to transact yearly with 0 brokerages, which is increasing daily. NoBroker rent payment platform allows lacs of people to pay rent through credit card and hence get 45 days of free credit, rewards, and other benefits. Almost 3% of India's credit card spending happens on NoBroker. More than 5000 people are employed at NoBroker and helping lacs of people save brokerage.

### Vineeta Singh | PGP 2007 | Co-Founder of Sugar Cosmetics



“Over the course of more than a decade of building together, certain dreams came true while others did not - but at all times, I knew that being an entrepreneur is what made me the happiest and IIMA is what ignited my entrepreneurial journey. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my alma mater; if IIMA had not happened, I wouldn't be building SUGAR or had the courage to start up on my own. This incredible institution has helped me in turning this vision of building a successful brand into reality.”

“I am incredibly grateful to the IIM Ahmedabad faculty for this recognition. IIMA has been my compass and a major factor in making my ambitions come true. My confidence has grown throughout my journey here, thanks to the teachers and staff's consistent support and motivation. Their presence has been invaluable, and I am truly indebted to them. I remember during my IIMA days, my co-founder (and life partner Kaushik Mukherjee) and I used to envision building a business from scratch.”

Vineeta Singh is the **Cofounder & CEO of SUGAR Cosmetics**. Vineeta co-founded SUGAR Cosmetics in 2015 with a single-point agenda of creating world-class makeup products with high-pigmentation that specifically catered to the Indian skin tone. In an industry dominated by global giants who adopted a one-size-fits-all approach, Vineeta aimed to create a truly inclusive beauty brand that creates world-class, functional beauty products with high pigmentation for makeup users of all skin types and tones.

An alumna of IIM-Ahmedabad, India's top management institute, and a serial entrepreneur, Vineeta advocates a fast-paced work culture where speed and experimentation lead the way for rapid innovation and a launch-packed calendar.

Highly respected in entrepreneurial circles for her business ventures, Vineeta is an investor on **Shark Tank India**, one of the most successful reality shows in the country. Through Shark Tank, Vineeta has been able to reach and mentor budding entrepreneurs from the remotest parts

of India, and her business acumen and warm presence on the show have won hearts across the world.

SUGAR is a brand built by women, for women - with a focus on core business fundamentals and an innate understanding of the customer and their needs, SUGAR boasts of an impressive workforce of 3000+ employees with over 75% of them being women. Under Vineeta's leadership, the startup clocked 60% growth in sales during the pandemic and even crossed 2.6MN followers on Instagram and 1.45 MN on YouTube, making SUGAR one of India's largest digital-first brands.

## Public Service

**Shri K Thavaseelan | PGP 2009 | IAS**



“It is a huge honour. It also pushes me to strive and work even harder in the days to come. I will cherish this award for the rest of my life.

Two of the best aspects of life at IIM A are the peer group and the rigorous nature of the programme. Once you have been through the process, you are set to face most things in life. IIM A gave me the courage and conviction to pursue what I had wanted to do in addition to equipping me with the skills & attitude to navigate different situations with ease.”

Thavaseelan has a field Posting in Nagaland, where the poverty index is higher than the state's average, with agriculture being the primary source of livelihood for the population. The state is also one of the most backward districts, with glaring developmental disparities compared to the rest. Nagaland continues to witness one of the longest and bloodiest standing insurgencies—one that has existed longer than the Kashmir insurgency. Because of this, Nagaland is considered as one of the toughest cadres, if not the toughest cadre, for any All-India Service (AIS) Officer to serve in

He urged MNCs to deploy their CSR funds to improve health infrastructure and improve Mon's health infrastructure (equipment & set up a non-profit ward). He set up a price monitoring committee to keep commodity prices in control. He installed IT equipment in colleges and schools to ensure that the teaching faculty and students could access information online and consume the same. With interventions in the Health Sector, the delivery of medical services was ensured right at the people's doorstep. Earlier, complex medical cases were referred outside the district for want of critical high-end equipment in the district, and there have been instances of lives being lost during transportation. The installation of requisite medical equipment in the District Hospital and Health Units ensured that the Medical Officers and Health Care Workers could treat most of the cases within the district and save lives. Installing IT equipment in colleges and schools ensures that the teaching faculty and students can access information online and consume the same. The key



takeaway is implementing large-scale initiatives at zero cost to the exchequer. The initiatives give one a ring-side view of what can be done in an extremely challenging environment with limited resources. He has won the National eGovernance Award 2020-21 (Silver) for 'Use of ICT in the Management of COVID-19' (2022) and Governor of Nagaland's Gold Medal & Commendation Certificate for meritorious service (2020). He was awarded SKOCH Award for Response to COVID (Silver) (2021) and SKOCH Crucible Award for Financial Inclusion (2020).

**Srijan Pal Singh | PGP 2009 | Former Advisor and OSD to the 11<sup>th</sup> President of India & CEO and Founder of Kalam Centre**



A recognition from IIMA means an unparalleled acknowledgement and appreciation from my alma mater, my professors and the institutions whose values I have always strived to uphold and propagate. It is a heartening day, to be back in the auditorium, with the students, and to recollect how a decade and a half ago I was in the same hall, starting my journey at IIMA. I think the recognition helps one build the faith to further move along the road less travelled with stronger resolve to overcome all challenges. IIMA has been the origin of much of my professional life.

Not just the formal education, but the informal interactions, ideations and thinking I had with my professors, IIM staff and my fellow students helped build the confidence to pursue an uncharted territory later in life. Moreover, it was IIMA that I got to meet Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, as a teacher for a special course and with whom I eventually worked till the end of his life.

Srijan Pal Singh rejected a PPO from BCG in 2009 during the recession and instead worked with Dr. Kalam. He went from an annual package of 27 LPA to 4.8 LPA in his first job while carrying an educational loan. He was the **Advisor** and **OSD** to the 11th President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam (2009 to 2015). He was instrumental in designing the PURA (Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas) scheme and bringing various PURA complexes across India, benefiting over 10,000 villages across a single knowledge platform as envisioned by Dr. Kalam. He was the founder of Homi Lab: A unique venture to provide low-cost, high-quality education on the subject of "Future" to all learners worldwide. He was the Chief Mentor and Founder of Kalam Centre (cofounded with Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam): The Kalam Centre runs 400+ free libraries across India in fourteen states catering to the most marginalized sections of society. He was stationed in high-threat Naxalite areas of Rayagada (Odisha) while working on an UN-WFP case. He dealt with great difficulties in the remotest of the villages that lack basic amenities for implementing the PURA project. He founded the Kalam Bharat Fellowship, where 600 teachers were recruited to act as auxiliary teachers across 300 govt schools and children correction centers across India, directly providing training in emerging skills to over 150,000 children from disadvantaged communities. His lessons from the UKCA Mars Mission India project were taken to underprivileged children in multiple languages free of cost. Department of Personnel and Training roped in Srijan and Kalam Centre to lead the work on drawing a plan towards making a lean and flexible governance model to respond to changing environment rapidly. He worked on issues classified as National Secrets. Two of his books were nominated in their category's top 5 best sellers in the prestigious Raymond Crossword Book Awards. He was awarded the 1st Distinguished Alumni Award by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Technical University (with an alum base of over 600,000 graduates) and the Distinguished Innovative Leadership Award by the Lucknow Management Association in 2019. He was featured in Forbes India magazine as one of the leading changemakers of India and has written 14 books, including three as co-author with Dr. Kalam.

## Arts and Entertainment

### Tanuj Solanki | PGP 2009 | Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar Winner



I cannot even describe that. To be seen and awarded by the institute that you owe so much to is everything. I'm humbled and honoured.

I don't think I could dream to be a writer without IIMA. One takes risks because of one's confidence, and I owe a large part of my confidence to IIMA. There is a culture of achievement at the institute, which also pushes its graduates to push themselves harder.

Tanuj Solanki is an award-winning fiction writer with four book-length works published by major Indian publishers, with some of the stories optioned for screen and stage adaptation. Tanuj received the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar (the highest award in India for an outstanding work of literature by a writer under 35) for his short-story collection, Diwali in Muzaffarnagar. His work, Neon Noon, was shortlisted for the Tata Lit Live First Book Award 2016. Tanuj's work was recently included in Aleph Book Company's A Case of Indian Marvels, an anthology of the works of the best Indian writers under the age of 40. The Machine is Learning was longlisted for the JCB Prize for Literature (the richest prize for novels in India) in 2020. His prominent works include Manjhi's Mayhem, The Machine is Learning, Diwali in Muzaffarnagar, Neon Noon, A Case of Indian Marvels, and Out of Print, Ten. Several of Tanuj's stories have been optioned for adaptation into movies/tv shows. His short stories, reviews, and articles have appeared in Vogue India, The Caravan, Scroll.in, and numerous other publications. Tanuj's fourth book, a novel titled Manjhi's Mayhem, was due from Penguin Random House India in November 2022. It has been called 'Indian noir at its finest' by Sudip Sharma. Tanuj is known for his deep dive into the world of Artificial Intelligence and people's lives. He has been acknowledged by various prominent newspapers and is praised for his fresh and fantastic writings that make ordinary characters immensely likable for the readers.

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#### **About IIM Ahmedabad:**

The Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) is a premier, global management Institute that is at the forefront of promoting excellence in the field of management education. Over the 60 years of its existence, it has been acknowledged for its exemplary contributions to scholarship, practice and policy through its distinctive teaching, high-quality research, nurturing future leaders, supporting industry, government, social enterprise and creating a progressive impact on society.



IIMA was founded as an innovative initiative by the Government, industry, and international academia in 1961. Since then, it has been consolidating its global footprint and today it has a network with over 80 top international institutions and a presence in Dubai. Its eminent faculty members and more than 40,000 alumni, who are at the helm of influential positions in all walks of life also contribute to its global recognition.

Over the years, IIMA's academically superior, market-driven, and socially impactful programmes, have earned high reputation and acclaim globally. It became the first Indian institution to receive international accreditation from EQUIS. The institute also is placed first in the Government of India's National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), India Rankings 2023. The Institute has been ranked number 1 in India, number 2 in Asia and the 35<sup>th</sup>, globally, in the Financial Times (FT) Executive Education Rankings 2023. The renowned flagship two-year Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) is ranked 26th in the FT Masters in Management Ranking 2021 and the one-year Post Graduate Programme in Management for Executives (PGPX) has been ranked 62nd in the FT Global MBA rankings 2022.

IIMA offers consultancy services and more than 200 curated executive education programmes in customized, blended, and open enrolment formats for a diverse audience comprising business leaders, policymakers, industry professionals, academicians, government officials, armed forces personnel, agri-business and other niche sector specialists and entrepreneurs. To know more about IIMA, please visit: <https://www.iima.ac.in/>

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