



VIT-AP
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES



Organizes

TWO-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR

on

**Towards a Digitally Empowered Rural India:
Transforming Livelihoods, Promoting Social Inclusion, and
Advancing Sustainable Development**

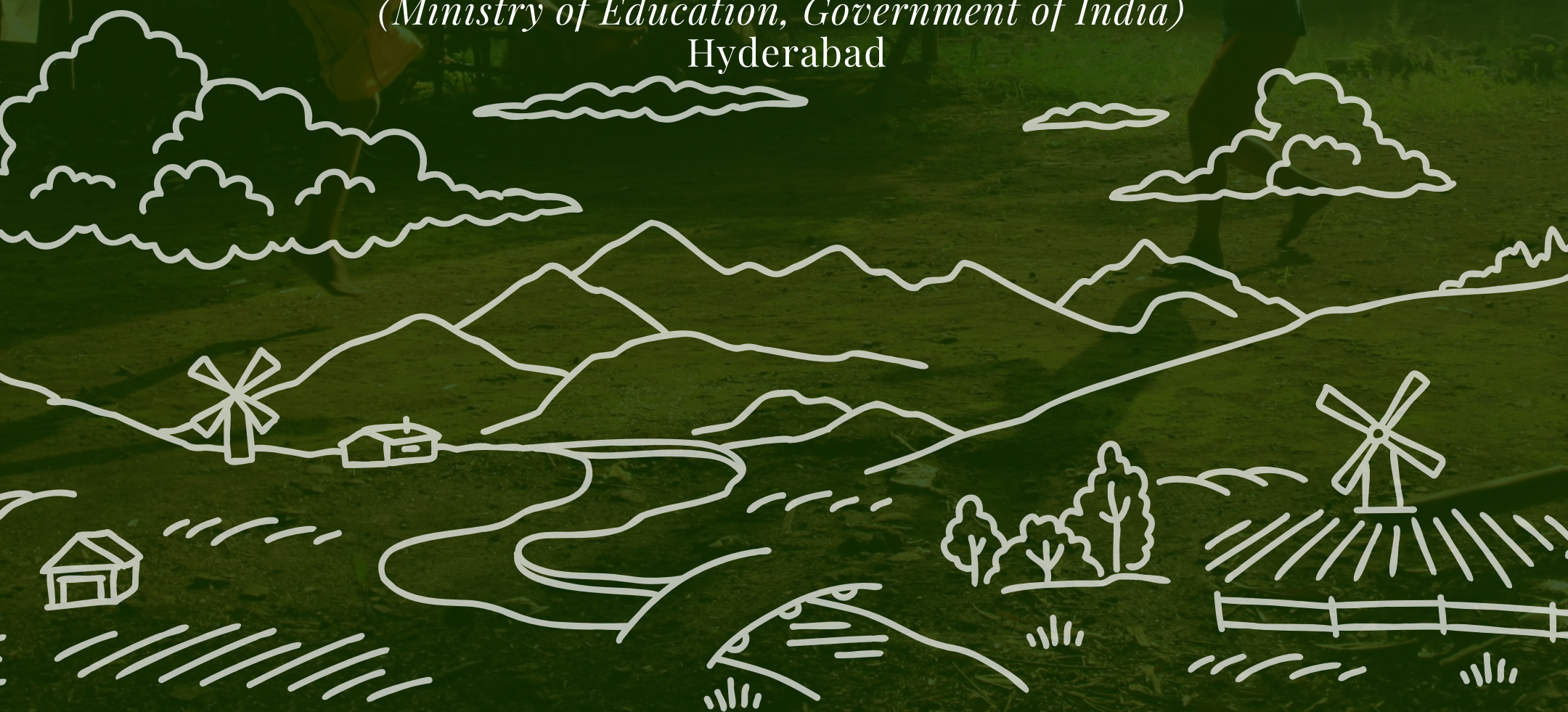
4 & 5 December 2026

Sponsored by

**Indian Council of Social Science Research Southern Regional Centre
(ICSSR-SRC)**

(Ministry of Education, Government of India)

Hyderabad



Concept Note

India's rural landscape, home to nearly two-thirds of the nation's population, stands at a critical juncture of transformation driven by the rapid spread of digital technologies. From mobile banking and e-governance platforms to digital agriculture, telemedicine, and online education, technology is reshaping the socio-economic fabric of rural communities, opening new avenues to bridge long-standing developmental gaps. Initiatives such as Digital India, BharatNet, and the JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) trinity have built the infrastructural and institutional foundation for this shift, yet challenges remain – the digital divide across gender, caste, class, and geography, limited digital literacy, infrastructural gaps, and concerns around data privacy and cybersecurity in rural settings continue to constrain the full potential of this transformation.

Against this backdrop, the National Seminar on "Towards a Digitally Empowered Rural India: Transforming Livelihoods, Promoting Social Inclusion, and Advancing Sustainable Development" brings together academicians, researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners to critically examine how digital technologies can reshape rural India. The seminar explores the transformation of rural livelihoods through improved access to markets, financial inclusion, and skill development; the promotion of social inclusion by empowering women, marginalized groups, and persons with disabilities; and the advancement of sustainable development by aligning digital interventions with long-term economic and environmental goals. Through this multidisciplinary dialogue, the seminar aims to generate evidence-based insights and actionable recommendations to guide India's path towards an inclusive, digitally empowered rural future.



Thrust Areas

We invite research papers that engage with the following sub-themes, but are not limited to:

- Digital Transformation and Sustainable Rural Livelihoods
- Social Inclusion, Equity, and Digital Empowerment in Rural India
- Digital Infrastructure, Connectivity, and Rural Access
- Smart Agriculture, Allied Sectors, and Technology-Driven Rural Development
- E-Governance, Digital Public Services, and Citizen Empowerment
- Digital Financial Inclusion and Rural Economic Participation
- Digital Skills, Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Employment Generation
- Community Institutions, Social Capital, and Grassroots Digital Innovations
- Technology, Sustainability, Climate Resilience, and Rural Well-being
- Policy, Governance, and Institutional Frameworks for Digital Rural Transformation
- Education, Health, and Human Development in the Digital Era
- Emerging Technologies (AI, IoT, Big Data, and FinTech) for Rural Transformation
- Building Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Digital Rural Economies for Viksit Bharat @2047
- SDGs, Sustainable Development, and the Future of Rural India in the Digital Age



Resource Persons



Dr. Gangadharan K

Indian Institute of Banking and Finance, Mumbai



Dr. L. Venkatachalam

Shiv Nadar University, Chennai

&

Former RBI Chair Professor

Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), Chennai



Dr. Chandra Sekhar Bahinipati

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Tirupati



Dr. Srinivas Sajja

National Institute of Rural Development and

Panchayati Raj (NIRD-PR), Hyderabad



Dr. V. Karthick

Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC),

Bangalore



About the University

VIT-AP University, established in 2017 as a partnership between the globally renowned Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) group, is a premier private research university located in Amaravati, the capital of Andhra Pradesh. Spread across a sprawling 200-acre campus, the university is offering a diverse portfolio of undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes in Engineering, Law, Management, Science and the Social Sciences. Drawing on VIT's decades-long legacy of academic excellence since 1984, VIT-AP has rapidly established itself as a hub of innovation, research, and international collaboration, distinguished by state-of-the-art laboratories, a vibrant multicultural student community, and strong industry and academic partnerships. With its world-class infrastructure and commitment to promote research and knowledge exchange, VIT-AP University is proud to serve as a nurturing ground for academic dialogue and continue its endeavour to advance scholarship and innovation.

About the School

The VIT-AP School of Social Sciences and Humanities (VISH) has evolved into an independent School that combines the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities that have been present at the university since its inception in 2017. The school focuses on providing students with language skills and a broad perspective on culture, society, politics, psychology and economics. Apart from the production and dissemination of the disciplinary concerns, the faculty of the School also provide students with a well-rounded education that would complement other disciplines of study offered at the University resulting in individuals who are capable of applying new knowledge and solving problems. The varied courses offered by the School enable the students to gain highly marketable skills ranging from critical thinking and problem solving, to knowledge application and evidence-based analysis.



Call for Papers

The seminar invites academicians, researchers, policymakers, professionals, practitioners, research scholars, and students to submit original research contributions aligned with the seminar theme and sub-themes. Contributions may include empirical studies, theoretical and conceptual papers, case studies, field-based research, policy analyses, systematic and literature reviews, and other evidence-based research addressing broad theme of the seminar.

Abstracts should not be more than 300 words, accompanied by 5–6 keywords. The abstract should clearly present the research problem, objectives, methodology, key findings or expected findings, and major implications of the study. The word limit excludes the title, authors' names, affiliations, and contact details. Abstracts should be prepared in Times New Roman, 12-point font, with 1.5 line spacing and 2.54 cm (1-inch) margins on all sides. The first page should clearly indicate the title of the paper, author(s)' name, designation, institutional affiliation, contact number, and e-mail address. All abstracts will undergo a blind peer-review process and will be evaluated based on originality, academic rigour, methodological soundness, relevance to the seminar theme, and contribution to the existing body of knowledge. Authors of accepted abstracts will be notified and invited to submit their full papers and complete the registration process.

Full papers should be 6,000–7,000 words, inclusive of references, tables, figures, and other supporting materials, and should be structured appropriately to include the Title, Abstract, Introduction, Review of Literature, Theoretical or Conceptual Framework, Objectives/Research Questions, Methodology, Results and Discussion, Policy Implications, Conclusion and References. Citations and references should follow the APA 7th Edition style.



All submissions must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Authors are solely responsible for the originality, accuracy, ethical compliance, and academic integrity of their submissions. All papers will be subjected to plagiarism screening, and submissions involving plagiarism, data fabrication, falsification, or other forms of academic misconduct will be rejected. The use of generative AI or other AI-assisted tools must comply with applicable academic and publication-ethics standards; AI tools must not be used to fabricate data, results, references, or other scholarly content. Submissions containing inappropriate or undisclosed AI-generated content may be rejected in accordance with the seminar's academic integrity guidelines.

Publication

Research papers submitted to the seminar will undergo a peer-review process and will be evaluated based on their originality, academic rigour, methodological quality, and relevance to the seminar theme. Selected papers will be considered for publication in the Seminar Proceedings with an ISBN, subject to successful peer review and compliance with the publication guidelines.

Registration Fee

UG & PG Students	Rs. 300
Research Scholars	Rs. 400
Academicians and Industry Professionals	Rs. 500

Participants from VIT-AP University are exempt from the registration fee

Registration and Payment Link: <https://shorturl.at/xczaD>

Separate registration is mandatory for all co-authors



Scan to register and pay



Important Dates

Last Date of Submission of Abstract	: 01 November 2026
Intimation of Selected Abstracts	: 05 November 2026
Submission of Full Paper and Registration	: 25 November 2026
Date of the Seminar	: 04 – 05 December 2026

*Submit your abstract, adhering to the submission guidelines, to
ruralindia.seminar@vitap.ac.in*

Organizing Committee

Chair

Dr. Priyanka Ghosh, Dean, VISH

Convenors

Dr. Maneesh P, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Ashraf Pulikkamath, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Muhammad Navas Ka, Assistant Professor, VISH

Organising Committee (Faculty)

Dr. Ritu Varghese, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Ganesh M, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Pema Choden Bhutia, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Soumik Sarkar, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Krishna Nair J, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Aishwarya Dhawan, Assistant Professor, VISH

Dr. Soumyadeep Chakraborty, Assistant Professor, VISH

Organising Committee (Research Scholars)

Athira R, Ph.D Scholar, VISH

Philip Barla, Ph.D Scholar, VISH

Siddapuram Krishtaiah, Ph.D Scholar, VISH

Rajashree Patra, Ph.D Scholar, VISH

Anoopika K P, Ph.D Scholar, VISH

Aswathi Das, Ph.D Scholar, VISH

