

#DMUglobal Exploring Sustainable Development in Ahmedabad, India



Description of opportunity and academic activities

This is a joint DMU Square Mile India trip with the Faculties of Technology and Business and Law. It has the aim of exploring how the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are implemented on the ground in Ahmedabad, India, from the perspective of business, law and technology.

Ahmedabad is the largest city in the state of Gujarat in the West of India. It is an important economic and industrial hub, one of the fastest growing cities, and it was selected as one of the first Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under the Government flagship '[Smart Cities Mission](#)'. For example it is the home to several high tech companies providing IT consultancy and App development to global as well as local customers. A city of contrasts, recently, the Historic City of Ahmadabad (or Old Ahmadabad) was declared as India's first UNESCO World Heritage City.

The trip will investigate many of the 17 SDGs: ending poverty (SDG1), gender equality (SDG5), sustainable energy (SDG7), promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work (SDG8), infrastructure and innovation (SDG9), resilient cities (SDG11), sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG12), and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, and access to justice to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development (SDG16).

Six key activities are proposed, two are faculty specific, and four are joint proposals between the faculties:

Energy and the built environment (Technology IESD led): Access to clean and secure energy is vital for poverty alleviation and development. As cities develop the challenge becomes ensuring the energy supply is low-carbon and sustainable. This activity will involve scoping the challenges and opportunities for smart city developments and exploring the links between smart cities in India and the UK. Students will evaluate the performance of new buildings being developed by the School of Architecture and compare with the existing stock (e.g. Monitoring thermal comfort) which will be beneficial for future buildings we will be delivering. Other activities will be around investigating how/why residents use energy in this low-income community.

Establishing legal entities (Business and Law: Law-led): Students from the Law School will assist local residents in both deciding which are the best business entity options to act as vehicles for engagement and trade, and suggest how to set up them up.

This might involve an umbrella organisation to act as a trading platform for the local community. This business entity will be able to make and receive payments on behalf of local workers. This is important as the range of trading platforms used as a part of international trade increases. Second, it is likely to incorporate a community fund, constituted with engagement from the local community with charitable aims (to be determined by its members, but this may include other DMU Square Mile projects and funds for education). As a part of this activity, local residents will be enabled to set up their

own organisations.

It is expected that Law students will be assisted by Law students from Gujarat National Law University.

<p>The following two are a joint venture between the two Faculties:</p> <p>Business and trade development in the ‘Loving Community’ (Business-led): Students will carry out an assessment of existing manufacturing activity within the community to identify goods that are sustainably made and suitable for scaled production.</p> <p>We will then explore product and market development opportunities to support the creation of sustainable income streams for local communities.</p> <p>Different business development options are to be explored such as selling existing products through online platforms and/or expanding the product range by producing De Montfort University branded goods (marketing approval dependent).</p> <p>DMU business students can help with market research activities and advise on positioning, costing and pricing, logistics, etc. Law students will provide support on import and export of goods and tariffs.</p> <p>As this project progresses over time, other faculties may be engaged – e.g. in product design, development and manufacture.</p> <p>Ultimately, the community may establish collective platforms through which they can build brands and sell their product ranges internationally.</p>	<p>The role of mobile phones (Tech:CSI-led): Mobile phone technology is transforming the lives of people all over the world. Affordable technology allows people to connect and communicate in new ways. This communication also poses ethical challenges as well as offering a range of business and economic development opportunities.</p> <p>Mobile apps allow the sharing of information to facilitate smart city developments and citizen engagement.</p> <p>The activity will involve developing an understanding of the use of mobile phones within Square Mile India will be developed. Then proposals for possible Apps will be designed. These will be pitched to developers at a software house to get feedback and input as part of a fact-finding visit. Secondly, a meeting with Ahmedabad Smart City development officers will be arranged to talk through and understand the role of mobile communications in Smart City development</p>
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The following is a joint venture between the two Faculties:

This activity aims to explore if and how women, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, are integrated in the co-creation of a smart city and its business, as well as what roles they play.

Gender equality: As gender inequality cuts across the several SDGs (SDGs 1, 5, 8) outlined above, this activity will investigate women's empowerment in the city of Ahmedabad through the prism of a smart city and entrepreneurship and innovation.

Placing gender (in)equality at the core of one of our trip's activities will also afford us insight into how women engage with business and technologies, in particular mobile phones. Specifically, we will explore if and how access to and use of digital technologies may empower women.

Such insight will further help us understand how use of mobile phone technology is interwoven into the development of areas mostly inhabited by women, particularly those categorised as slums, and how they then may become part of a smart city if at all.

As part of this trip, we will visit a women's association/club (e.g. Her Expertise, <http://www.herexpertise.com/ngos>) to understand the sort of activities that help to empower women in the city.

Community media (Tech: LMS-led): Whose voices are being heard in the media.

This activity will have two distinct angles as we both seek to capture the whole week through innovative 'bottom-up' community media. Also we'll look at how media and the local film industry are a gateway to explore perspectives on the renovated practices in film production.