

Indian B-Schools Think Global, Train Sights on Foreign Students

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Indian business schools have taken a step towards becoming international classrooms, with premier business school SP Jain Institute of Management & Research (SPJIMR) becoming one of the first in the country to sanction 36 seats in its flagship MBA programme for foreign nationals.

The move follows a sanction by regulatory body All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) last year allowing institutes to enroll 15% international students over and above the sanctioned intake.

The Mumbai-based SPJIMR is the first to latch on to the opportunity to add global diversity to its classes by opening its ongoing admission for the batch of 2014-16 to foreign nationals. The institute will admit 15% foreign nationals over and above its 240 seats for local students. "Indian business schools are very India-centric - a sharp contrast to top global institutions. Indian B-schools need to be global, attract talent from across the globe and place talent globally," says Atish Chattopadhyay, deputy director, PGDM programme, SPJIMR. International students can add to diversity, lead to learning experience, boost forex earnings for the country and lead to foreign placements, he says, adding, "It will help create global managers. With our graduates being

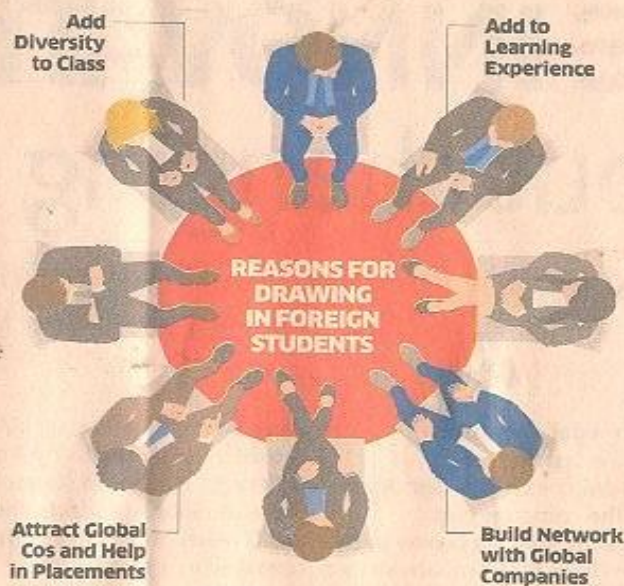
placed in different countries it will also lead to a clout with global companies."

This year, the institute has advertised the international students' seats on its website, and plans to conduct roadshows in foreign countries to attract students. It has received 32 applications from countries such as UK, Africa, South East Asia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The admission process is open till March.

However, there is still some way to go before the move can gain wider acceptance. While most top institutes in the country, including the Indian Institute of Management, intend to globalise the classroom, so far the intake of foreign nationals has mostly been in the form of short-duration student exchange programmes.

"One of the reasons for the poor showing of Indian institutions in foreign rankings is (the lack of) internationalisation," says SS Mantha, chairman, AICTE. The representation of international students in technical institutions is almost miniscule. About 15% to 20% of seats in technical institutions go vacant every year, he explains.

However, because of the confusion surrounding AICTE-University Grants Commission regulations, it may be difficult for many institutes to take in foreign nationals from this year itself, says Mantha. A Supreme Court judgement in April last year had stripped AICTE of its regulatory powers, stipulating that technical institutions affiliated to universities do not fall under AICTE's purview.



India is still seen as a technical hub, not an education hub. However, there is a growing interest among foreign students in learning from emerging economies, particularly India

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HOW INSTITUTES ATTRACT FOREIGN NATIONALS

SP Jain Institute of Management & Research has sanctioned 36 seats in its flagship MBA programme for foreign nationals

Institute has advertised international students' seats on its website, and plans to conduct roadshows abroad next year

ISB has tie-ups for student exchange with 43 global schools

Institute conducts marketing drives in US, Europe and Singapore to attract foreign nationals to its post-graduate programme in management