



Impact Report

# Threads of knowledge

Preservation of intangible cultural heritage for an inclusive and sustainable planet



Bhaktivedanta  
Research Center

BRC

Ancient Indian Manuscripts  
10+ million

Ancient Indian manuscripts serve as windows into the rich tapestry of knowledge, wisdom, and cultural heritage that has shaped the diverse facets of civilization for centuries

## The fall from grace

1206 AD

The destruction of Nalanda stands as a harrowing chapter in the annals of history

**9 million manuscripts in the Nalanda University burnt to ashes**

Erasing valuable insights from fields as diverse as philosophy, grammar, astronomy, medicine, and more, shattering the collective heritage of humanity

1800s - till now

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) has been removed from the Indian education system

96.7%

of over 1 crore manuscripts in India are on the verge of extinction

Rural India

## Reviving manuscripts and scriptures



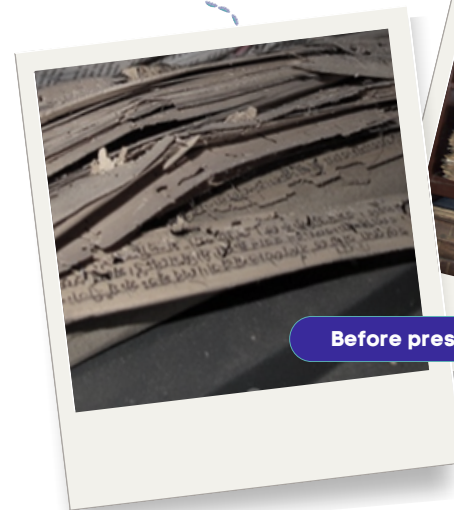
Collect



Preserve



Educate



Before preservation →



After preservation →



# A STORY OF HOPE

## Incubating culture, values, knowledge, and wisdom

Culture is an anchor to our identity and the cohesion of communities. Manuscripts and ancient scriptures are the common heritage of humanity. These become more apparent with multilingual learning in the global context.

India has been contributing to the field of literature, science, technology, and spirituality since ancient times

India possesses an estimated ten million manuscripts, probably the largest collection in the world

These manuscripts cover a variety of themes, textures and aesthetics, scripts, languages, calligraphies, illuminations and illustrations

Their fragile existence hangs like a fine thread as 96.7% of over 1 crore manuscripts in India are on the verge of extinction. Only 3.3% of these manuscripts have been digitized. The rest are likely to become extinct.

This intangible knowledge demands urgent action. To preserve the fading whispers of knowledge and wisdom, we at the Bhaktivedanta Research Center (BRC) are united with compassion and resilience.

Our work contributes to the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) - the first international agreement to establish a legal framework for preserving intangible cultural heritage, as an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization.

Our work in preservation and accessibility of intangible cultural heritage is **community-based**.

It is an **inclusive** way of promoting respect for cultural diversity.

At BRC, we aim to help unearth and preserve the precious wisdom hidden in our ancient manuscripts and books spread across the remote corners of the Indian Subcontinent



**9,000+**

manuscripts in a dilapidated condition at Ishvara Pathshala, Coomilla, Bangladesh



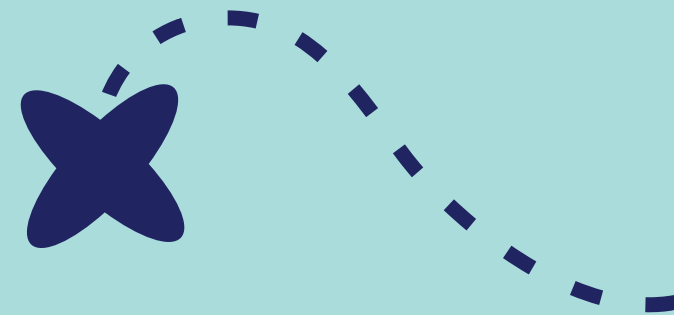




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# Progress at a glance



Scholarly articles or books  
published based on  
preserved manuscripts

**7+**

languages

Hindi, Bengali, Sanskrit,  
Marathi, Braj Bhasha,  
Telugu, Tamil

**1**

Indigenous  
language

Bangla Sadhu  
Bhasha



**7500+**

Number of manuscripts  
preserved

**70**

Physical

**4500**

Digitized

**3000**

Catalogued

Reach out to the rural &  
urban locations for the  
search of manuscripts



INDIA



BANGLADESH



**33**

Academic conferences  
organized



**3**

books  
published

**25**

books in  
pipeline





**18**

Exclusive ancient books collections

**40K+**

Books

**150K+**

Digital books



**2**

University affiliations



**50+**

Research scholars



**200+**

Volunteers



**6**

Digital libraries



**30+**

Research projects



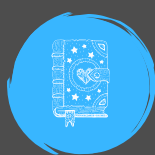
**250K+**

Volunteering hours



**2**

Museums



**12**

Rare artifacts exhibit shows across India



**40+**

Rare artifacts

# Creating value and contributing to sustainable development



The Charter on the Preservation of Digital Heritage  
 The Memory of the World (MoW)  
 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)  
 Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

International Council on Archives (ICA)

The Recommendation on the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage Including in Digital Form

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)  
 Guidelines for Planning the Digitization of Rare Book and Manuscript Collections

ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)



Creating Markets, Creating Opportunities

## Performance Standards (PS)

PS 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

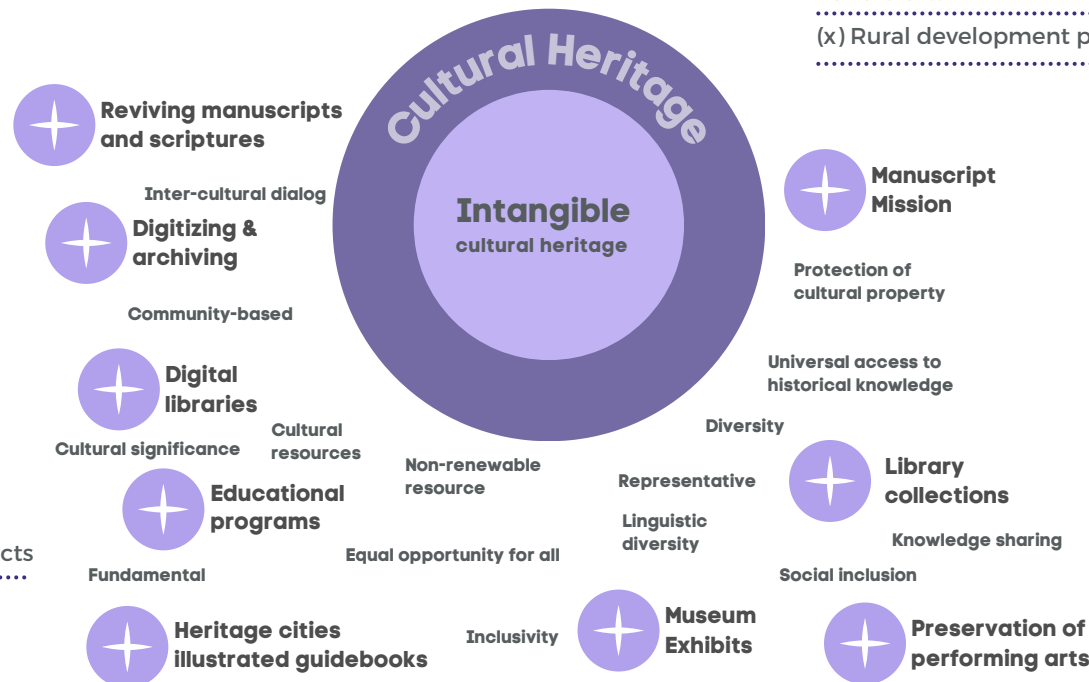
PS 8: Cultural heritage

PS 10: Indigenous peoples

Global Reporting Initiative



GRI 413: Local Communities



## SCHEDULE VII



- (ii) Promoting education, including special education and employment enhancing vocation skills especially among children, women, elderly and the differently abled and livelihood enhancement projects.
- (v) protection of national heritage, art and culture including restoration of buildings and sites of historical importance and works of art; setting up public libraries; promotion and development of traditional arts and handicrafts
- (x) Rural development projects







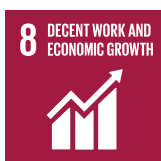
## THE GLOBAL GOALS

# 6 SDGs

(Sustainable Development Goals)



**Target 4.7** By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.



**Target 8.5** By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value



**Target 9.5** Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending



**Target 10.2** By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status



**Target 11.4** Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage



**Target 16.10** Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements



1.0

# Cultural heritage

## Preserving the intangible assets of India

The concept of cultural heritage recognizes the importance of preserving and transmitting aspects of human culture from one generation to another. At BRC, we are creating an impact in the space of India's intangible cultural heritage - hidden in probably the largest collection of manuscripts in the world. Culture can strengthen the sense of who we are and grant us an awareness of the necessity to protect our heritage from destruction. It can also be an incubator of values, knowledge, and wisdom

### Impact indicator(s)



**Community and social development**



**Diversity and inclusion**



**Safeguarding cultural heritage**



**Linguistic diversity**



**Access to documented heritage**



**Engaging with indigenous people**



## 1.1

## Reviving manuscripts and scriptures: Embracing the beauty in the scars

As part of BRC's manuscript mission, teams are sent out to remote corners of India and Bangladesh to collect and digitize rare manuscripts. Over the past decade, BRC has conducted over 50 visits to distant villages, libraries, and temples across India and Bangladesh to digitize over 4500 manuscripts.

At BRC, we collect, preserve, research and publish these ancient manuscripts from the remotest corners of India



This initiative is aligned with the Government of India's National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)

1954 .....



Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is the first international agreement to establish a legal framework for preserving intangible cultural heritage, as an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization.

Collect



Preserve



Research



Publish



# What is at stake is our values and identity – the wisdom from the past

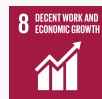
SDG linkage



Focus



Others



Intangible cultural heritage refers to "traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts".

1.2

## Heritage library collections: Preservation and accessibility of documentary legacy

The library collection involves physically and digitally preserving manuscripts and books through the creation of physical and digital libraries and museums. Over the past decade, BRC has also added and catalogued 40,000 physical books, 150,000 digital books and 4,000 academic journals from the early 16th century to the present day.

The collection includes a large number of texts on Indian culture and Heritage. The libraries are spread out in Kolkata, Mumbai-Palghar, Pune, and Puri.

# Common heritage of humanity

Digitized in 40,000+ images at BRC. Scholars, researchers, and enthusiasts can now delve into the rich tapestry of the past, extracting insights, unraveling narratives, and unearthing the gems hidden within the pages of the Daily Nadia Prakash.



✓ The Daily Nadia Prakash, 5000+ issues published between 1927-1947, laminated, indexed, and bound in 62 volumes.



✓ Collection at BRC Katraj, Pune Rural



✓ David Haberman Collection at BRC Palghar, Mumbai Rural



SDG linkage



Focus



Others



1992



The Memory of the World (MoW) program is a UNESCO initiative based on the fundamental premise that the world's documented heritage belongs to all, and should be identified and preserved.

1954



Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague Convention) sets out rules for the protection of cultural property during armed conflict.





**30,000+** books

**4,000+** journals

▼ The BRC Library in Kolkata stands as a testament to the harmonious fusion of classic intellectual pursuits and cutting-edge technological advancements, fostering a space where ideas thrive and knowledge knows no bounds. 📍 **Kolkata**



1.3

# Preservation of performing arts: Empowering cultural expressions with harmony

A digital archive on Kirtan is being developed to preserve the rich tradition of the devotional music form, which is on the verge of extinction in India. The project aims at mapping and documenting the genre's evolution since the 12th century. The archive hopes to trace the journey of kirtan music and lay it out for future generations.

Kirtana or Kirtan originates in Sanskrit and means "narrating, reciting, telling, describing" of an idea or story.

It also refers to a genre of religious performance arts, connoting a musical form of narration or shared recitation, particularly of spiritual or religious ideas.

Performing arts are a form of intangible cultural heritage because they are living expressions of a community's culture.

They are passed down from generation to generation, and they reflect the values, beliefs, and traditions of the community.

Restoration of the history and  
popularization of Kirtan



Kirtan  
Conference

34+

media  
coverages

Web media portal coverages

YouTube channel coverages

TV media coverages

Web media (video) coverages

Print media coverages

# The melody of inclusivity...

2003 .....



UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore (2003) provides guidance on how to identify, document, protect, and promote traditional culture and folklore.

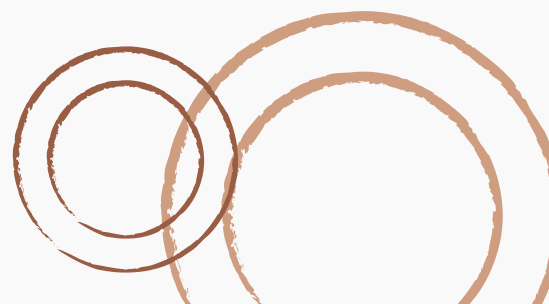
SDG linkage



Focus



Others





## 1.4

## Heritage cities illustrated guidebooks: Connecting with the tales and legacy of the past

The Bhaktivedanta Research Center is dedicated to preserving the captivating temple architecture of India, where rich cultural heritage and exquisite artistic intricacy intertwine.

Within these awe-inspiring temples, history comes alive, and the vibrant craftsmanship showcases the profound artistry of the region. BRC's mission is to create illustrated guidebooks of heritage cities using ancient texts, archaeological records, and iconography. By documenting and promoting the ancient glory of these sites, BRC aims to inspire tourism and contribute to the restoration of tangible cultural assets in our precious heritage sites.

### Kanchipuram

Kanchipuram's temples showcase architects' creative brilliance and sculptors' innovative divine imagery in Tamil Nadu's history. By using stone instead of perishable materials, they experimented and achieved remarkable temple architecture, exemplified by Kanchipuram and Mamallapuram. These grand edifices hold an exalted position in India's temple architecture development, blending architectural knowledge and sculptural sensitivity in their design and construction.

### Chennai

This proposed project aims to digitally document all Hindu temples within Chennai's administrative boundary, including inscriptions, to uncover architectural features and historical facets. A Coffee Table book will showcase high-quality photographs, revealing lesser-known aspects of religious and cultural history. Scholars worldwide can utilize this data to study Chennai's Hindu temple architecture and its evolution over time under various dynasties' patronage. This information complements the broader understanding of Tamil Nadu's history and cultural practices today.



SDG linkage



Focus



Others



This initiative is aligned with the National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana

2.0

# Digital heritage

## For global connectivity and resilience

96.7% of the more than 1 crore manuscripts in India are on the verge of extinction. As a means to mitigate this monumental challenge, we embraced technology to revive these manuscripts. The impact of our work in digitizing manuscripts safeguards fragile documents, making them globally accessible, enabling remote study, and fostering collaboration among researchers worldwide. At BRC, we aim to realize human gains, not just technological ones.

### Impact indicator(s)



**Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage**



**Preservation of Digital Heritage**



**Inclusive and effective learning environments for all**



**Community and Social Development**



**Promote universal access to historical knowledge and cultural resources**



**Ensure equal access to all in learning and education**

## 2.1

### Digitizing & archiving: Using technologies to achieve development goals

The project aims to use computer technology to develop a software package that integrates a variety of cultural information and helps the users (students, scholars, artists, and Research & Scientific Community, etc.) to interact and explore the subject available in image, audio, text, graphics, animation, and video on a computer in a non-linear mode, by a click of a mouse.

The system aims at being a digital repository of content and information with a user-friendly interface. The knowledge base thus created will help scholars to explore and visualize the information stored in multiple layers. This will provide a new dimension in the study of Indian art and Culture, in an integrated way, while giving due importance to each medium.

#### Digitizing ancient Indian literature - global treasure trove of knowledge

In the digitization of ancient wisdom, conservation and scanning are followed by Optical Character Recognition. BRC's digital library spans over 20 million pages. The work is carried out in association with various libraries, and knowledge and technology partners.

We believe that no progress is sustainable without the cultural roots of the past, and preserving historical heritage is essential to achieving this

1. Digital images of virtually all manuscripts and authoritative print versions (books and journals)
2. Plain-text transcripts of all these versions
3. A search engine to locate words and phrases
4. A checklist of the contents of each manuscript
5. A bibliography of all authoritative manuscripts and print versions of each work



2000 .....



ICA/ISO 13028 is a standard titled "Information and Documentation - Implementation Guidelines for Digitization of Records," which provides guidance on the digitization of records.

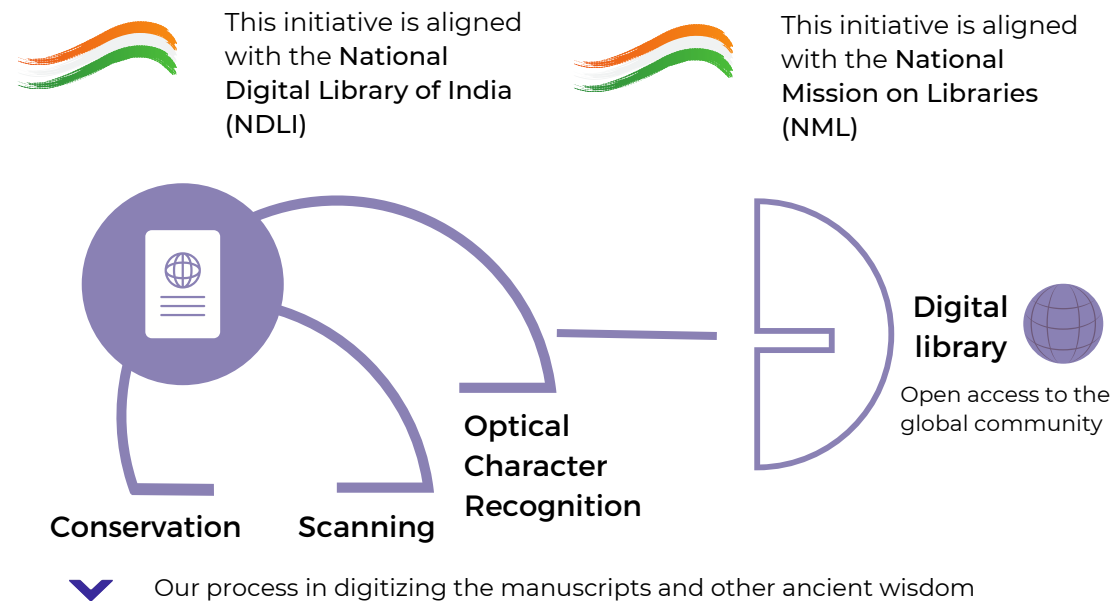
2.2

Digital heritage libraries: Using technologies to achieve development goals

Digital heritage is inherently unlimited by time, geography, culture, or format. Use of technology includes digital documentation, research management, and display/visualization and interpretation.

53.6% of the world now has access to digital technologies as per the 2023 study by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) - a specialized agency of the United Nations.

With this improvement trend, a higher number of people are empowered to access digital libraries globally. In this context, we at BRC are committed to placing more such rare and rediscovered manuscripts under the scope and influence of digital search engines. This would make cultural exchanges with indigenous people and languages accessible to all.



2000

**ICA**  
International Council on Archives  
Conseil International des Archives

ICA/ISO 15489-1:2016 is a standard titled "Information and Documentation - Records Management," which provides principles and practices for managing records throughout their lifecycle, including digital records that may be part of digital library collections

At BRC, we aim to realize human gains, not only technological ones

SDG linkage

Focus

Others



1M+

people have open access to our digital library

150K+

digital collection of books

7+

languages

30M+

pages in our digital libraries



✓ A 500+ year old manuscript digitized in Nabadwipa, West Bengal



✓ Inside BRC Kolkata, where scanning is an integral part of our functions



## FEATURED STORY

The Darshan Manisha Digital Library preserves and shares significant philosophical works that showcase India's intellectual heritage. Right before the introduction of English education in India, a new style of philosophising emerged, especially in Bengal, known as Navya-Nyāya. The Darshan Manisha Digital Library focuses on Navya-Nyāya scholarship from the 15th to 17th century, works from the Nabadwip tradition, and interpretations of classical Indian philosophy in a modern context. By digitizing and uploading these materials, the platform aims to facilitate research and critical analysis, enriching the philosophical repertoire and celebrating Bengal's profound contributions to the world's intellectual legacy.

3.0

# Community investment

## Outreach and engagement for sustainable cities and communities

The term Bhaktivedanta refers to one who has realized that devotional service to one's concept of the divine is at the pinnacle of all knowledge. At Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, this understanding of grateful service is extrapolated to every one of our caring dealings.

### Impact indicator(s)



**Enabling upward socio-economic mobility**



**Access to relevant content for upskilling**



**Inclusive and effective learning environments for all**



**Linguistic diversity**



**Promote universal access to historical knowledge and cultural resources**



**Ensure equal access to all in learning and education**



**Mother tongue-based education**

3.1

# Museum exhibits: Promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity

BRC offers its Rare Book & Manuscript Library collection for exhibitions for the community and beyond. This exhibition looks closely at the hand-written text in early modern Indian History. The exhibits go beyond the purely academic to embrace our role as a cultural center in a way more akin to a museum than a traditional library. We celebrate the collections through engaging exhibitions, lectures, and conferences.



2 museums



40+ rare artifacts



50,000+ people reached through museum exhibits

## FEATURED STORY

The manifestation of the magnificent museum at Ultadanga, Kolkata was a consequence of a BRC research spanning about three years on the various historical events that happened there during 1918-1930, captured primarily in the journals as well as the books from that period.

This hallowed building located at “1, Ultadanga Junction Road” holds a very special position in the history and evolution of the Gaudiya Vaishnava movement. It was here that HDG Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada, the renowned Vaishnava Acharya, and revivalist, established the Bhaktivinoda Asan in November 1918. This building also housed the first Gaudiya Maṭha in 1920, and in 1922 it was here that Bhaktisiddhanta sowed the seed of ISKCON in the heart of a young Abhay Charan De, who later became popular as HDG Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the Founder - Acharya of ISKCON.

▼ At Bhaktivinoda Asan, located at 1, Ultadanga Junction Road, the walls of the museum are adorned with researched artifacts from BRC, creating an immersive experience for visitors.

SDG linkage



Focus



Others



This initiative is aligned with the National Digital Library of India (NDLI)

3.2

## Manuscript mission - Collecting ancient manuscripts through field visits at the remotest corners

As a part of the Manuscript Mission initiated by BRC, our teams are dispatched to distant regions of India and Bangladesh with the purpose of gathering and converting precious manuscripts into digital format.

Throughout the previous ten years, BRC has undertaken more than 50 expeditions to remote villages, libraries, and temples across India and Bangladesh resulting in the digitization of a significant collection of over 4500 manuscripts.

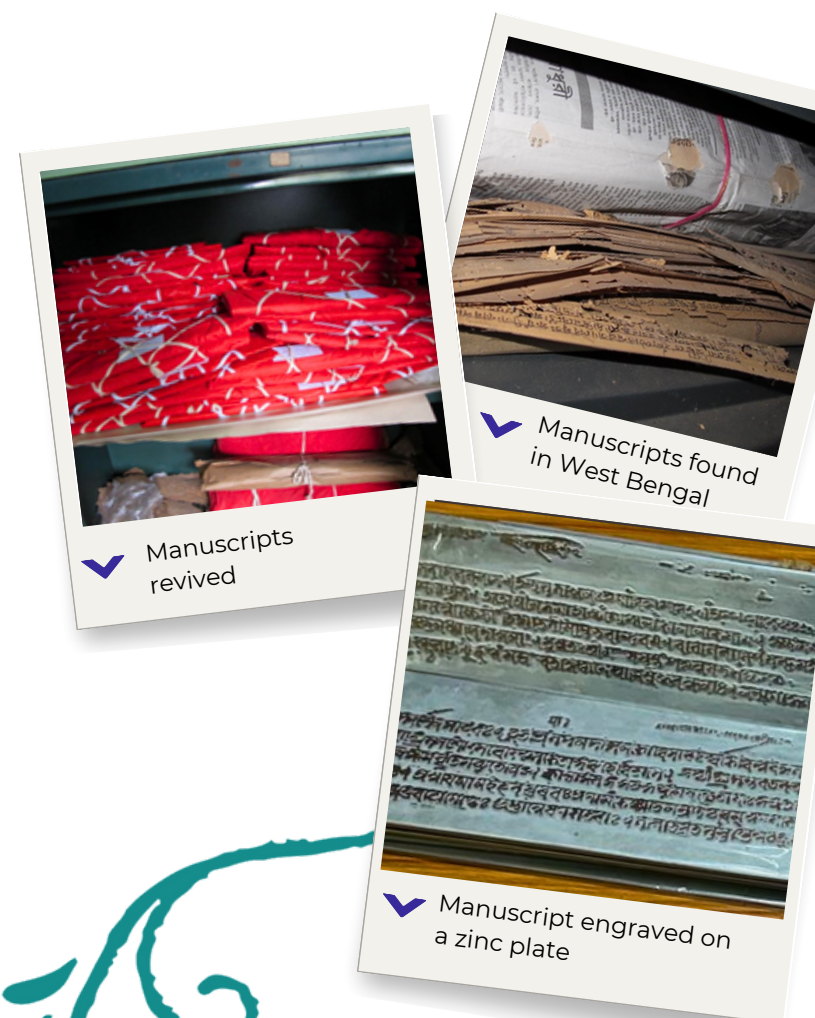


**2000+**  
people reached  
through field visits

# Creating a positive impact on local communities

Our community outreach and engagement happen with our one-of-a-kind “Adopt a Shashtra” initiative when we involve the onlooker to parent a text or body of work.

BRC also engages the community by being resource-rich in tradition and a sense of humility coursing at anyone who wishes to interact and engage with BRC - The body of living heritage we carry, in tandem with our students and partners, as One.



SDG linkage



Focus



Others





4.0

# Knowledge for all

## Making cultural heritage accessible to everyone

At Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, we ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned in studying India's intellectual contributions to society. We are driven by the need for heritage preservation in order to maintain the diversity and richness of our intangible cultural heritage.

### Impact indicator(s)



**Community and Social Development**



**Equal opportunity for all**



**Linguistic diversity**



**Enabling upward socio-economic mobility**



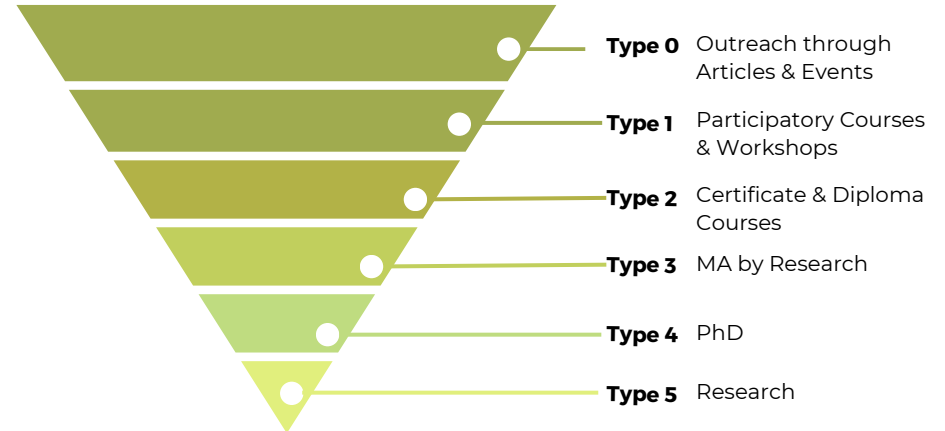
**Promoting multilingual learning**



**Access to relevant content for upskilling**

▼ The funnel of true opportunity is a pathway that leads to endless possibilities and potential. It represents a narrowing path where genuine chances for growth and success emerge. As we navigate through the funnel, we encounter valuable experiences and choices that shape our journey of realizing our dreams and aspirations.

Increasing  
Volume



2005



The adoption of the 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions was a milestone in international cultural policy.

## FEATURED STORY

From the best universities in the world, come the brightest stars and the most memorable associations. Radha Blinderman's research project was on "Why Krsna and Sakti have their own grammar: Rivalry and Innovation in sectarian grammars of Sanskrit." She expressed at the outset an interest to be affiliated with the Bhaktivedanta Research Centre. And we extended to her all academic courtesies. Her work raises awareness at the local, national, and international levels of the importance of intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation.

▼ Radha Blinderman - Collaboration with a distinguished PhD Scholar from Harvard University



4.1

Educational programs



30+

Research projects



25+

Books in pipeline



33+

Conferences organized and attended



100+

Speakers



500+

Students



17

MoUs



3

Books published



25+

Partner institutions



✓ Dr. David Haberman, Professor and former Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at Indiana University, USA, conducting the course on 'Lived Religion' at BRC Mumbai.

SDG linkage



Focus



Others



# At the BRC, we specifically dive into the areas of access equity and inclusiveness



## Conferences

Our conferences have been geared towards finding solutions to meeting highly relevant sustainability goals on behalf of our cities and communities. We emphasize through our conferences that 85% of the current jobs depend on soft skills and essentially look for people with a strong spiritual background, solid work ethic, and integrity. In addition to perpetuating knowledge of ancient Indian literary heritage, BRC frequently holds conferences, workshops, and lectures in several disciplines in collaboration with other renowned academic institutions across the world.



### ✓ **Hinduism and Ecology: Towards a sustainable future**

A four-day conference organized in December 2017 with Yale University, USA at BRC Global, Mumbai Rural

## FEATURED STORY

In December 2017, Bhaktivedanta Research Centre organised a four-day conference on 'Hinduism and Ecology: Towards a sustainable future' in collaboration with Yale University, USA at BRC Palghar, Mumbai Rural. Over thirty academic scholars participated in this conference. The participants highlighted the contributions of Vedic texts to the solution of the Ecological Crisis.

## Research

BRC has the privilege of the support and guidance of reputed scholars in worldwide academia in the areas of philosophy, humanities, aesthetics, history, comparative religion, cultural heritage, and other social sciences



✓ BRC team conducting interviews for research work



Themes

Sustainability

Environment

Water conservation

Climate change

Ayurveda

Reverse migration



## Publications

BRC publications offer a platform for the latest research on Indian Knowledge Systems in India and globally. Our publication series welcomes historical, philosophical, and ethical studies in various traditions of Indian Knowledge Systems with emphasis on important texts including annotated translations of primary sources.

BRC also publishes new research work that explores the ways in which the studies contribute to social and cultural change or adaptation and how it lends meaning to individual and collective lives.

## Academics

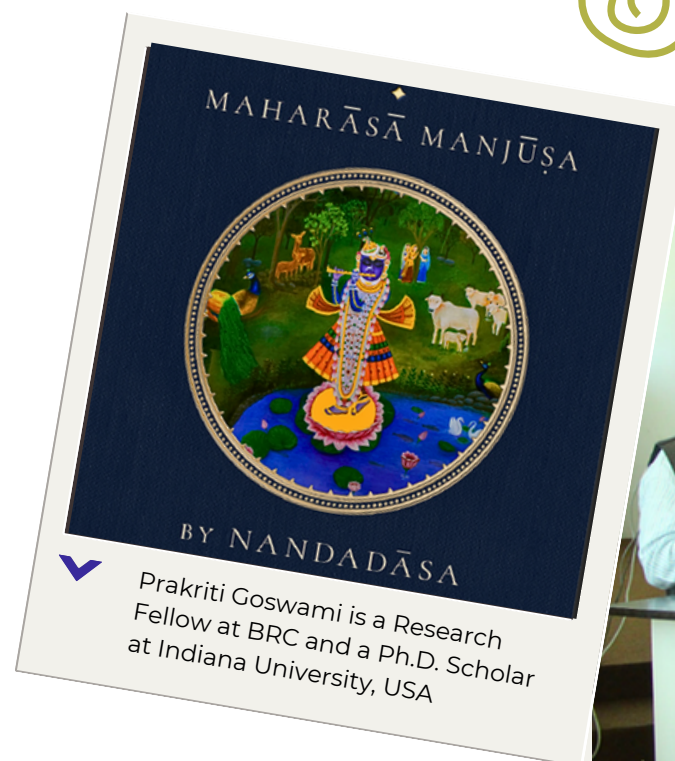
This pillar of BRC's work involves teaching ancient Indian literary wisdom at well-established academic institutes affiliated with globally reputed universities, where our Ph.D. and Masters's students study philosophy and religious studies.

The Bhaktivedanta Research Center admits to both postgraduate and Ph.D. programs and awards degrees in philosophy under the purview of the University of Mumbai. BRC also holds language courses, Certificate courses, and Diploma courses (in art, aesthetics, culture, and philosophy).

### Empowering underprivileged students by enabling them to pursue higher education

Through our efforts, we offer free education, along with essential provisions such as food and accommodation, ensuring that every student has the necessary support to fulfill their academic aspirations.

## Social-emotional development and learning

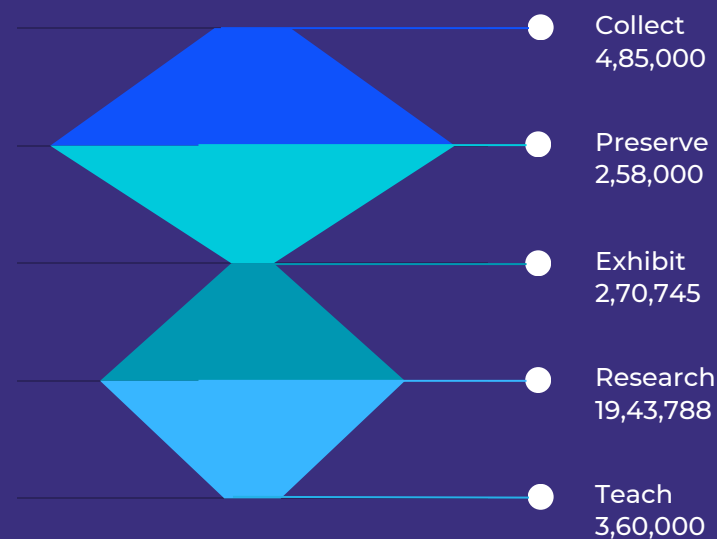


One among the multitude of academic lectures and conferences organized by BRC

# Economic performance and scalability

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
General Donation Received	38.86 lakhs	26.91 lakhs	35.31 lakhs
Operating Capital Turnover Ratio	58.79	5.96	2.55
Fixed Assets Turnover Ratio	29.78	19.89	28.37
Working Capital Turnover Ratio	11835.44	404.31	182.65

Allotment of funds as per core activities  
(Budget 2022-23)



## Vision, Mission, and Core Values

To be a leading global institution serving India's literary heritage by collecting, preserving, researching and teaching its ancient wisdom through state of the art means for the welfare of the society at large.



## Strategic planning

We have developed specific targets, timelines, and performance indicators to measure progress and success.



## Leadership

We are guided and mentored by exceptional leaders with a vision for an inclusive and shared world. All our activities are aligned with this to drive our organization's success.



## Organizational structure and governance

The team is aligned with our organizational vision. We have 20+ people in our organization with clear roles and responsibilities. We also have advisors who guide our activities at large.



## Monitoring and evaluation

- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- ✓ Collecting and analyzing relevant data



## Technology and innovations

- With each passing day, we strive to be tech-enabled in our works — strategic and operational.
- ✓ Upgrading digital systems
- ✓ Implementing efficient data management processes
- ✓ Utilizing appropriate software solutions



## Funding

We have diversified funding sources. This is aligned with a robust fundraising strategy.



## Collaboration

We partner and collaborate with diverse organizations at different locations, creating impact together.



## Sustainable and replicable model

We have established successful preservation models that can be replicated at different locations and communities



# Academic advisors

Globally connected for an inclusive and shared future



**Dr. Ferdinando Sardella**  
Associate Professor  
Department of Ethnology,  
History of Religion and  
Gender Studies  
Stockholm University



**Dr. Graham Schweig**  
Professor  
Christopher Newport  
University, Virginia  
Distinguished Teaching &  
Research Faculty  
Graduate Theological Union,  
Berkeley, USA



**Dr. David Haberman**  
Professor and Former  
Chair Dept. of Religious  
Studies Indiana University,  
USA



**Dr. Ravi Gupta**  
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## History of BRC

### Turning the pages back...

In the 1850s to 1940s, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, a prominent philosopher, and social revivalist in colonial Bengal, compiled an extensive collection of 3,000 books, journals, and documents in Bengali, English, and Sanskrit, covering the cultural history and philosophy of Bengal and India. Sundarananda Vidyavinode, the Secretary and Editor to Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, safeguarded this precious collection for over 70 years by moving it to his home in Dhaka and later to Kolkata.

In 2009, Ferdinando Sardella, a Ph.D. student at the University of Gothenburg, acquired the collection from Bodhayan Swami while researching in Bengal. This acquisition led to the establishment of the BRC, founded by Ferdinando Sardella and Dennis Harrison. The center, located in a five-story building in Ballygunge, Kolkata, was donated by Shri Madanchand Shamsukha, serving as a home for the library, research center, and guest house. This historical treasure continues to be a valuable resource for studying the history, philosophy, wisdom, arts, literature, and religion of Bengal and Bangladesh.

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