

Perspective and Strategic Plans



THE GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE

(Deemed to be University)

Ministry of Education (Shiksha Mantralaya), Govt. of India

Accredited by NAAC with 'A' Grade (3rd Cycle)

Gandhigram – 624302, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu, India

GRI – Perspective Plan

ONE YEAR PLAN (2024 - 2025)

- Renovation of the entire campus before the submission of Self Study Report for the 4th Cycle of NAAC
- Raising the Institute revenues and also the student strength (initiating plans for accommodating foreign students)
- Establishing hostel and accommodation facilities for boys and girls
- Fulfilling the requirements for achieving the Central university status
- Planting trees to reach the long-time goal of Green Campus project with the support of State Forest Department (the first visit of the department is over and the sight is identified)
- Establishing a Centre for Disability Studies, connecting all disciplines to conduct workshops, seminars, creating institutional funding and applying for national and international funding support
- Establishing a Science Lab to undertake interdisciplinary research involving innovation and problem solving
- Making the stakeholders aware of NEP and going for massive admissions
- Creating portals for online learners of Rural Centric GRI Specific Programs like Gandhian Policy for Management, Peace Science, Rural Health, Rural Development, Rural Nutritious Science, Panchayat Raj etc.
- Establishing a Centre for Placement with a full time Director to look after the same

TWO TO THREE YEAR PLAN (2025 - 2027)

- Creating Institute funded GRI Fellowships for scholars to undertake research on unique programs
- Initiation of putting efforts to reach higher h-index
- Initiation of encouraging more teaching faculty to get into the International acclaim
- Establishing an Incubation Centre in a separate building for initiating research and creating patents more
- Constructing a new Administrative Block with a separate Meeting Hall to conduct all meetings
- Plan of action for modernizing the Guest House
- Establishing a Skill Development Centre for students of all disciplines
- Arriving solutions for the issues connected with Sanitary Inspector / Agriculture / Botany / Zoology / Biotechnology / Home Science programs


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FIVE YEAR PLAN (2024 - 2029)

- Introducing new programs and construction of buildings for the same with all infrastructures and faculties
- Construction of new Auditorium with a capacity of 2000
- Construction of a New Sports Stadium with modern facilities
- Creating Institutional Funds for fees waiver to deserving students
- Inviting foreign university faculty as Researcher at Home for facilitating research ambience among students
- Signing MoUs with foreign universities as per the norms of UGC
- Visiting foreign universities as experts from GRI faculty
- Creating a Centre for Education Technology to contribute GRI values and ideology


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GRI – Strategic Plan

Gandhigram Rural Institute (GRI), founded in the year 1956, by two dedicated disciples and contemporaries of Mahatma Gandhi, functions with distinctive characteristics such as rural-centric, inclusive development, knowledge support through action research and extension activities. The vision of the institution is “Promotion of a casteless and classless society through instruction, research and extension”. The mission of the Institution is “providing knowledge support to rural sector to usher in a self-reliant, self-sufficient and self-governed society”. The basic tenets of good governance viz., transparency, accountability, autonomy and participatory decentralized governance has been a hallmark of this institute right from its inception. The Institute has grown in to a pioneering one excelling in all the three dimensions of education namely teaching, research and extension.

The Government of India has announced and launched a new educational policy, namely the National Education Policy 2020 in July 2020. The Gandhigram Rural Institute has charted a roadmap for the phased implementation of National Education Policy-2020 from the current academic year. As part of the implementation efforts, the institute has already taken formidable steps such as institutional strategic action plan with short term, midterm and long term goals; registration on Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) to provide a wider learning opportunities for the students, introduction of integrated UG-PG programmes with multiple entry and exit options; and revamping the curriculum with focus on multi-disciplinary, Indian Knowledge System, Learning Outcome-based Curriculum Framework and integrated approach to learning. In fact in a pioneering effort, the Institute went for outcome based education (OBE), in 2018 itself. It offers wide range of vocational and professional programmes (Agriculture/Engineering/ Energy/MBA) in pursuance of the national target of 50 percent student engagement in vocational education. In fact, GRI offers as many as 9 B.Voc. degree programmes, that focus on experiential learning. As propounded in NEP-2020, GRI, with enrolment of more than 4000 students, is on its way to become a Central Rural University. Besides, it has devised appropriate mechanisms to produce quality research with an aim to be a research-intensive institute with credible research outputs in the next 15 years. This apart the institute encourages students to go for online courses and probably is one of first institutions to draft and implement a credit transfer policy.

Through extension activities, the institute has been contributing to rural centric programs in the neighbouring villages which is a testimony that it is engaged in community upliftment. The institute developed a model called “Participatory Rural Appraisal” which aims at facilitating the rural community to find solutions of their own to their problems. Many value-based courses are offered to achieve the holistic and community engagement aims of NEP. The institute has adopted

the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in 1994 itself and has developed a manual for its implementation. The CBCS provides opportunities for both slow and fast learners, with facilities like a break of study and redoing of courses. It takes appropriate steps in helping and encouraging students from socio-economically disadvantaged background through Earn While You Learn Scheme, fee-waiver and other mechanisms of students' support. Students with physical disability are provided freeships for hostel and other facilities. The curricular framework evolved by the institute for a four-year undergraduate programme has every component of NEP included. They include multidisciplinary courses, ability and skill enhancement courses, internship and field placement in addition to project work.

With numerous feathers to its cap such as implementation of Samarth E-Gov project, memorandum of understanding with institutes of repute, creation of world class infrastructure, timely promotion of teachers and other staff, commendable research contribution and output, advanced library delivery system, students with diverse socio-cultural and linguistic contexts, integrated approach to multidisciplinary learning and conducive ecosystem for community engagement, the institute has now become a coveted destination for the aspirants of quality higher education and research. Even during the difficult times of COVID-19 pandemic, it ensured that students were not deprived of knowledge. With inspiring past behind, it has to carry on this legacy in future. To continue the pace and escalate it further, it has institutionalised strategic plan of next 15 years. The plan is made keeping in mind the vision, mission, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of the university.


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STRATEGIC PLAN (2024-2039)

Keeping this self-evaluation (SWOC) in mind for implementation, the institute has prepared the strategic plan for next 15 years (2024 – 2039). It has identified eight areas of strategic importance. For all these strategic areas, the strategic plan documents the short term (less than two years), mid-term (three to five years) and long-term goals (More than five years) for the institute.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

The institute firmly believes that a carefully designed infrastructure and campus will provide an optimal environment for students to learn and grow. Despite being a small institute, state of the art academic blocks (for Science, Arts, Agriculture, Engineering, Energy and Sanitary Course) have already been constructed with minimal infrastructure facilities. As envisioned in NEP, university believes in sharing the resources and infrastructure with other relevant stakeholders. Plans of university related to infrastructure and campus development are presented below.

	Short Term (2024-25)	Mid Term (2025-28)	Long Term (2028-39)
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH	Construction of Pending Academic Buildings Renovated Library Building	Separate Academic Buildings for Each School	Setting up facilities like Central Instrument facility which will provide the state of the art research grade equipments for research in Science
	At least one Smart Classroom in all the Departments	Strengthening of Departmental Libraries	Business Park (Creating Spaces for Displaying Skills, Talents, Products, Patents)
	Lecture Theatre and Conference Halls	Setting up centres for Human Resource Development and Career Counselling and Guidance Centre	
CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT	University Auditorium	Procurement of Major Equipments that have become obsolete with passage of time	Establishment of an upgraded Health Centre
	Procurement of Equipment		

	Short Term (2024-25)	Mid Term (2025-28)	Long Term (2028-39)
	Sewage Treatment Plant and Drainage Waste disposal plant Water treatment plant	Digitization of the Campus with Seamless Wi-Fi Access Smart Campus with Greater Utilization of Solar Power A World Class Stadium and Multi-purpose Hall for Indoor games	
	Cycle stand Black topping of Internal Roads and Roads	Residential Quarters to accommodate all the employees and Parks	Community Centre for the residents of the University
	Renovated Creches / Child Care Centre for the Resident Kids	Well-developed sports ground with all modern facilities	
	Guest House for Visitors to the University Students Activity Centre	Full Fledged Cafeteria for Students and Employees of the University	

MOTIVATED, ENERGIZED AND CAPABLE FACULTY

The Institute is meant for students and teachers. The interaction between students and faculty needs to be best to its potential. For this, the faculty energy and motivation play an important role. National education policy considers it as an important parameter for ensuring quality in higher education. Keeping its importance in mind, the institute includes this parameter as one of its strategic areas. It has plans of looking at this strategic point from two dimensions. One is to increase the number of faculty along with non-teaching staff so that student-teacher engagement is optimal for which it plans to have around 200 regular faculty members in coming years along with approximately 100 non-teaching staff. The projections are given below:

Second dimension to this strategic area is empowering these faculty members along with their supporting staff in best possible way. The institute plans to keep the faculty energised and motivated. Specific plans in this direction are presented below.


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Filling all vacant posts of faculty	Connecting the quality research with fast track promotion	Autonomy to institute to review and increase teaching positions as per requirement
Continuing the transparent criteria and process of faculty recruitment	Arrangements of incentivising the researchers in university	Engagement of faculty for extra workload in anticipation to the sanction of UGC
Compulsory faculty induction programme for newly recruited faculty	International research exposure to each faculty	Better incentives to faculty for taking up consultancy projects
Providing seed grants to newly recruited faculty	Freedom to teacher to review and amend the curriculum	Establishment of mechanisms for faculty exchange programmes with foreign universities
Timely promotion under career advancement scheme	Empowering the teachers with strategies for innovative assessment	Complete autonomy to faculty for collaborative research with foreign scholars
Encouraging faculty to adopt innovative and technologically advance pedagogy		Maintaining the recommended student teacher ratio
Providing all necessary technological infrastructure to faculty to carry out academic and research work		Engaging faculty with professional development programmes
Providing autonomy to the principal investigators for research projects		
Organising Capacity Building/Faculty Development programmes for teaching/non-teaching staff at regular intervals		
Financial support to faculty for participation in FDPs at national and international level		

MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND HOLISTIC EDUCATION

Today, the world is moving towards multidisciplinary education system for the holistic growth of the learners. The purpose of education will not be solved without making multidisciplinary approach a way of life at the higher education institutes. National Education Policy has given special impetus to the multidisciplinary and holistic education. As part of NEP

implementation, the institute plans to move more rigorously towards multidisciplinary and holistic education. Short term, mid-term and long term goals are devised for this purpose.

Short Term (2024-26)	Mid Term (2026-30)	Long Term (2031-39)
Preparation of roadmap for curricular reforms	Integrated UG and PG programmes in vocational and professional courses	Integrated UG, PG and research programmes in all disciplines
Implementation of NEP	Restructuring of departments and schools in view of fresh orientation and focus of NEP	Introduction of multidisciplinary programmes
Incorporation of traditional knowledge systems and indigeneous technologies into the curriculum	Establishing stronger collaboration with institutions of higher learning and industry for better tieups and joint programmes	Special community-based vocational programmes with the support of local artists, entrepreneurs, etc.
	Establishment of multidisciplinary research centre	Restructuring the programmes with renewed focus on global competency

RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND RANKINGS

An institute will be able to serve the purpose of its existence only if it is able to translate the research from institution to industry and the beneficiaries. We believe that Universities needs to be fairly integrated with teaching and research that aim at a developed community. The best universities across the globe are considered excellent particularly because of their focus on research and innovation. If a university improves in research, it will be innovative and its ranking would improve. GRI has envisioned itself to be a research- intensive institute for which it has devised the strategies for phased implementation as below:

Short Term (2024-26)	Mid Term (2026-30)	Long Term (2031-39)
Establishing connect with neighbouring schools for teaching internship, collaborative community engagement	Partnering with ministries/ organisations/ institutions such as Ministry of Social Justice, NCERT/NCTE	Attempt to secure the place in QS world university and Times Higher Education Ranking
Project work/dissertation/internships be conducted in collaboration with industry	To secure ranking among top 100 universities in NIRF ranking	To have NBA accreditation, where ever needed
	Exploring the internship opportunities with foreign universities	Establishment of centres of excellence to promote research

	Offering consultancy in areas of vocational and professional skills	
Incentive to faculty and students for quality research and innovation	Institutionalisation of liberal grants mechanism for multidisciplinary research	
Prioritisation of research areas	To connect with research institutes and funding agencies	Sensitizing the faculty members to practice and publish competing research works in reputed and peer reviewed international journals
Establishment of incubation centres in partnership with industries/sector-skill councils.	Exploring opportunities of commercialisation of research – lab to market approach	
Establishing Research Promotion Board for giving impetus to cutting edge research	Separate funding and support system at the Department level for organizing national and international level lectures/ seminars on regular basis	
Hostel facility for all the research students so as to motivate them for quality research		
To institutionalising Intellectual Property and consultancy policy	Engagement with industry for research	
Research awards for faculty and scholars		

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

GRI currently has over 4,000 students from 6 states studying across 8 schools. It is constantly attempting to increase the students' intake and thus contribute to the 50 percent enrolment ratio target of NEP. Intake can be increased by expanding the programmes and departments of study in institute. It has plans of having more than 10000 students on campus by offering more programmes and addition of new departments in next 15 years.

National Education Policy has given special emphasis on equity and inclusion in higher education. This includes providing appropriate financial and other support to students belonging to socio-economically disadvantaged groups, providing scholarships and gender balance in admissions. The institute considers this as an important parameter and has devised plans to promote equity and inclusion.


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Increase the intake capacity, thereby increasing GER	Technological support for the initiatives towards inclusive and quality higher education	Quality residential facility to attract international students
Introduction of more number of skill-based courses to increase employability potential in UG and professional programmes.	Making the admission processes and curriculum more inclusive	Establishment of Skill Centre under Department of Vocational Studies
Emphasis on student wellness and Support in financial and other terms	Promotion of gender neutrality at the level of faculty, counsellors and students	Managing sponsorship for under-privileged students
Academic and professional support to students from socio-economically disadvantaged groups, investing more in schemes like Earn while You Learn to support more students.	Introduction of special courses and programmes on Disability Studies and Gender Studies.	
Ensuring that buildings are wheelchair accessible Partnership with ministries /	Establishment of Centre for Disability Studies.	Implementation of the remaining targets relating to Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education as envisioned in NEP-2020

TECHNOLOGY USE AND INTEGRATION

National Education Policy has termed ‘Technology and Integration’ as a key area for higher educational institutes. GRI has evolved mechanisms to adopt and integrate technology with its various processes. It has made many of its process like leave application, recruitments, exams, students’ registration, fee payment, admissions, fully online. It has adopted many modules of Samarth e-Gov and implemented it in its functioning. It aims to continue this endeavour and its plan towards technology integration as below:


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Best possible use of technology based education platforms like DIKSHA/SWAYAM	Exploration of technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning for state-of-the-art learning experience	Continuous use of cutting edge technology in teaching learning process
Implementation of technology across the educational processes	Sensitise the students and teachers towards ethical issues related with AI based technologies	Conducting research on disruptive technologies
Creation of courses and instructional material for courses in cutting edge domain	Making technological devices accessible to socio-economically disadvantaged groups.	
Introducing teaching learning process in blended mode for vocational and undergraduate programmes	Preparation of digital plans of university keeping in mind national educational technology forum and digital initiatives of government of India	Exploring the possibility of offering PhD and master's programme in machine learning and artificial intelligence
Preparing teachers for high quality content creation		Digital content in multiple Indian languages
One smart classroom with latest ICT facilities in each department		Striking the balance between traditional and ICT initiatives for better outcomes
Procurement of educational software and hardware for technology enabled learning		


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GLOBAL REACH OF HIGHER EDUCATION

GRI is committed to be a global place of learning which produces global citizens. NEP has also given emphasis on internationalization and globally competitive universities. The institute has devised some thrust areas which aim to achieve in next 15 years to become a globally competitive university.

Short Term (2024-26)	Mid Term (2026-30)	Long Term (2031-39)
Academic bank of credit to facilitate the transfer of credits between universities	Mutually beneficial MOUs with foreign countries to promote faculty/ student exchange	Centre for Sanskrit, Persian and Russian within University campus
Promotion of collaborative academic and research initiatives with foreign universities	Construction of separate hostel for International students	Setting up campuses in neighbouring states and other countries
	Offering digital / online programmes of global relevance	Exchange of students of GRI with Foreign institutions
		Twinning/dual and joint degree programmes in collaboration with foreign universities

PROMOTION OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS, LANGUAGES, CULTURE AND VALUES

National Education Policy envisions Indian languages, art and culture as key area of focus for higher educational institutes as Universities have an important role to play in sustaining the rich culture of this nation. As per UNESCO, 197 Indian languages are endangered. Realising its responsibility, the Institute aims to contribute towards this in a phased manner as projected below:

Short Term (2024-26)	Mid Term (2026-30)	Long Term (2031-37)
More holistic and experiential pedagogy	Providing training to teachers intermittently for holistic professional development	Setting up centres for Sanskrit, Persian, Russian, German languages
Integration of co-curricular and extra-curricular with curricular aspects		
Developing School of Education as a model for cutting-edge pedagogy		
Establishing coordination with classical language institutions	Introducing Department of Translation Studies, Department of Linguistics and Department of Comparative Literature, as envisioned in NEP	Establishment of Chairs to promote Indian Knowledge System
Introducing departments and programmes in Indian Languages		
Establishing coordination with National Mission for Mentoring		

Short Term (2024-26)	Mid Term (2026-30)	Long Term (2031-37)
Introducing scholarships for people of all ages to study Indian languages, arts and culture		
Introducing in-residence programmes for authors, cultural historians and linguists	Promotion of Oriental Studies through academic programmes and researches	Introducing the academic programmes on Ayurveda

INTEGRATED HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

To make university a multidisciplinary university, integration of various academic and non- academic activities is necessary. This becomes even more important when university has plans of increasing the programmes offered and the departments. GRI today is having 61 programmes offered by 18 departments. It plans to increase this to 120 programmes under 40 departments in the near future.

GRI believes that the departments and programmes should not exist in isolation. For the desired outputs, various streams have to come together. A snapshot of University's plans is given below.

Short Term (2024-26)	Mid Term (2026-30)	Long Term (2031-39)
Integration of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Engineering, Science, Mathematics, Professional and Vocational Education	Exploring research programmes in vocational studies	Conceptualising advanced incubation centres and technology development centres in research and innovation
Integration of Co-curricular and extra-curricular with curricular aspects	Providing financial assistance and scholarships to socio- economically disadvantaged students pursuing vocational programmes	Adoption of imaginative and creative pedagogies for vocational and professional disciplines
	Department of vocational studies to offer short term skill-based certificate courses	Collaborations with foreign universities, research institutes, industry to boost vocational education
Identification of professional and life skills to be imparted to students	Mitigating fees for pursuing vocational programmes, particularly in case of SEDGs	Transition to only multidisciplinary and integrated teacher education programme
Minimum of 50 hours of continuous professional development of teacher every year	Special merit-based scholarships to attract the students to join vocational programmes.	Enhancing the capabilities of teachers with trainings, autonomy in research and academics
	Development for dissemination of employable skills and training	Exploration of establishment of medical college within campus

CONCLUSION

GRI is a relatively small institute and is on the direction of development with creative thinking, mutual cooperation and partnership. It belongs to students, teachers and staff from across the country and is committed for progressive nation building. The institute fraternity understands the aspirations of its stakeholders as well as the expectations of the people of the country. The strategic plan of the institute has been framed keeping in mind those aspirations and expectations, and the institute is confident of achieving it over the years. The entire education system in India and around the world is passing through revolutionary digitization. As the institute progresses ahead, GRI won't lag behind and there will be a lot of emphasis on E-governance. In future, the entire institute will be linked through latest databases and software which will be made available to all the schools, departments and centres for hassle free exchange of ideas. Student centric Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in line with LOCF (Learning Outcome-Based Curriculum Framework) and NEP will be further strengthened to make education broad-based and at par with global standards which will also in turn ease the mobility of students. Despite being small in terms of number of students and size, GRI is progressing in research, innovation and teaching, and it strives to excel in all these fronts and make a mark both at national and international level. The footprints of GRI have already started appearing in elite institutions in India and abroad. It hopes to become self-sustaining in the coming times and plans to focus on solid waste management, E-waste management, energy generation, rain water harvesting, sports academy, organic farming, solar power plant more rigorously in future. As the students of the institute are the biggest assets and are future of India, GRI is moving ahead keeping the goal of holistic development of the students and will focus both at the academic front as well as on mental well-being of students. The institute is striving to develop necessary modern facilities for the rural students in the field of higher education. Pursuing its strategic plan, GRI will work towards realizing the dream of Self reliant India, Saksham Bharat and Strong India.


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