A too Initiative

Every other industry has its rooms.

Education never had one.

Announcing

The SandBox

India's First Residency For Entrepreneurs in Education

13-15 FEBRUARY **2027**

The Mansion House, Alibaug

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

Twenty Founders | All of India

THE MENTORS



Aakash Chaudhry
Founder & MD, **Sparkl Edventure**

Rohan Pasari
Founder & CEO, **Manifest Global**

Amy Baker
CEO & Co-Founder, **The PIE**

THE NEED

India builds education companies faster than almost anywhere. Their founders build alone.

Every other industry in India has its rooms. Technology has them. Consumer has them. Financial services has them — places where the people building a sector sit together, compare notes and leave sharper than they arrived.

Education has never had one. The result is a sector where a founder in Indore has no way of knowing that a founder in Chennai solved the same problem eighteen months ago. Lessons that should travel do not.

Why general founder programmes do not fit

Accelerators and founder cohorts assume a consumer business: fast funnels, monthly sign-ups, a buyer who is also the user. Education works differently, and the differences are structural.

Split decision	The person who pays is rarely the person who uses, and a third party — a counsellor, a principal, a parent's peer group — usually decides.
Calendar-bound demand	The window in which a company can be chosen is set by an academic year, not a marketing plan. Miss it and the next one is twelve months away.
Slow distribution	Reach is built through trust — schools, counsellors, word of mouth — which takes years to establish and cannot be bought with performance marketing.
Delayed outcomes	The result a product promises arrives years after the sale, which makes it difficult to evidence and easy to overstate.
Policy exposure	Curriculum reform, visa regimes and regulation can reshape a business in a quarter.

Where The Sandbox comes from

More than 200 founders build inside The Outreach Collective — across test prep, edtech, schools, admissions technology, counselling, study abroad, skilling, assessment and teacher development. Over four years they have met, learned, collaborated and built alongside one another here.

The Sandbox is the next step: from a community that convenes founders to a programme that helps them grow as entrepreneurs.

THE PROGRAMME

A residency, not a conference.

Twenty founders spend two days in one house on the Alibaug coast with three mentors who have built at scale, working on their own businesses and alongside each other.

Alibaug is a morning from Mumbai and a long way from the working week. A serene coastal town, and the right backdrop for hustle with a pause in it.

20
founders, selected by application from across India

3
mentors who have built, scaled and sold in this sector

2
days, residential, away from the working week

What happens

The Talks

Each mentor takes the full room on their own journey — how they built, what it cost, and what they would do differently. Across the three talks the ground runs from scaling a consumer business in India and taking a single-city operation national, through what changes when institutional capital arrives, to the global landscape of learning and higher education and where Indian companies now sit within it. Conversation with the room follows each talk.

Peer Studios

Founders work in small groups on the questions each of them is currently sitting with, and return to those questions later with what the room has learned in between. You decide what you bring and how much you share. The value is in being understood by people who know the sector, and in hearing how someone else is approaching the same problem.

Off the grid

Long meals, time on the coast and an open afternoon. The most useful conversations at a residency often happen outside the sessions, and the programme leaves room for them.

The room

Twenty founders from across the country, across segments, stages and channels — and in some cases building in the same category as one another. Both are useful. Difference widens what a founder can see; proximity means someone in the room has stood exactly where you are standing. The cohort usually turns out to be as valuable as the mentors.

Open to founders from across the country, whether or not they are members of The Outreach Collective. Selection is made on the application and the eligibility criteria, and on nothing else.

THE DAYS

How the three days run.

The minute-to-minute schedule is shared with the selected cohort.

Saturday 13 February

12 noon	Arrival, check-in and lunch
3:00–6:00 pm	**Sessions**
8:00 pm	Dinner

Sunday 14 February

9:30 am–1:00 pm	**Sessions**
1:00 pm	Lunch, and the afternoon open
4:00–7:00 pm	**Sessions**
8:00 pm	Dinner

Monday 15 February

9:00–11:00 am	**Sessions**, and close
11:00 am	Departure

> There is no pitching and no demo day.

The Mentors.







Aakash Chaudhry

Founder & MD, Sparkl Edventure

Founder and Managing Director of Sparkl Edventure. He was previously co-founder of Aakash Educational Services, which he helped build into one of India's largest test-preparation networks before its sale, and is a founder and trustee of Plaksha University. He brings the offline playbook: physical scale, franchise economics, brand, and demand built around an examination calendar.

Rohan Pasari

Founder & CEO, Manifest Global

Founder and CEO of Manifest Global, the Singapore-headquartered group built out of Cialfo, now running seven brands including BridgeU, Comet and Explore. The group serves close to half a million students a year across more than 150 countries with over 1,750 school partners, and is backed by Tiger Global, Square Peg, SIG and SEEK. He brings the question most of this room is sitting with: how a company built in this region travels beyond it.

Amy Baker

CEO & Co-Founder, The PIE

Co-founder and CEO of The PIE, which she built from nothing into the business international education relies on to understand itself — its news, data, conferences and awards. She brings a founder's account of building a company in this sector, and a reading of the global landscape in learning and higher education: which markets are moving, which models are working elsewhere, and where Indian companies now sit within it.

OUTCOMES

What you leave with.

1 Mentorship from three founders who have built at scale

Three journeys told first-hand — how they built, what it cost them, and what they would do differently — each followed by conversation with the room, and an open session with the mentors besides. Across the two days you also put your own question to them, in a room small enough that it gets a real answer.

This is the part of a founder's experience that is rarely said from a stage, and almost never said to twenty people at once.

2 Enrolment in

HARVARD BUSINESS IMPACT | HARVARD ManageMentor®

Harvard ManageMentor's Premium Collection is a comprehensive online learning resource covering 42 leadership and management courses and certificates — trusted by leading global organisations to build practical skills for today and tomorrow.

Every founder in the cohort leaves with this enrolment. It is part of the experience, included in the fee, and yours to use long after the two days are over.

POWERED BY

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WHO IT IS FOR

Eligibility.

- **Founder or co-founder** of a business in education, working in the business full time.
- **An operating company** with revenue and customers. The Sandbox is not for ideas or pre-launch ventures.
- **Any segment:** test prep, edtech, schools, admissions technology, counselling, study abroad, skilling, experiential learning, assessment, teacher development.
- **Any stage** from early traction to real scale, and any channel — selling to families, to institutions, or to both.
- **Open to members and non-members** of The Outreach Collective alike.
- **Able to attend in full.** Partial attendance is not possible; the cohort depends on everyone being in the room for the whole of it.

How founders are chosen.

Twenty founders are selected from across India. The room is composed with care, across stage, segment, channel and geography, so that the twenty learn as much from each other as from the three mentors. Founders working in the same category are as welcome as founders working in different ones.

Selection is made on the application and the eligibility criteria, and on nothing else. The Sandbox is built for founders who are in the work rather than observing it, and who are prepared to be as useful to the other nineteen as the room is to them. That is what the application is written to find.

Key dates

Applications close	25 December 2026
Selections announced	5 January 2027
The Sandbox	13–15 February 2027

THE APPLICATION

What we are looking to understand.

Seven short questions, none of them a pitch. Each is there to show us something a website cannot.

The business	What you have actually built — what it does, who it serves and who pays for it. We are reading for an operating company, not a plan.
Your conviction	Why you started, and whether that reason still holds. It is usually the clearest signal of what a founder will bring to a room like this.
Your candour	What is working in the business and what is not. Founders who can name their own weak spots get more out of two days than founders who cannot.
What you are carrying	The decision or the problem in front of you right now. This is the material the mentors and the room will work on with you.
Where you are headed	What you want to be true about the company in three years, and what stands in the way. It tells us whether this is the right room for you at this point.
What you want from the mentors	What you would put in front of Aakash, Rohan and Amy. It shapes how the sessions are built and how the room is composed.
What you will give the room	What you are willing to share. A cohort only works when every founder in it is useful to the other nineteen.

It takes most founders half an hour. We read for clarity of thought, not polish. Nothing in the application is shared outside the selection process.

The fee

TOC members	₹25,000 plus taxes
Non-members	₹30,000 plus taxes

Payable with the application and refunded in full if you are not selected. What it covers for selected founders is on the next page.

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

Application link

Applications close 25 December 2026. Questions about eligibility or the programme can be sent to Bijoya@theoutreachcollective.in.

Dates, venue and cost.

Dates	Saturday 13 to Monday 15 February 2027. Arrival from 12 noon on the 13th, departure by 11 am on the 15th.
Venue	The Mansion House, Alibaug, Maharashtra.
Residential	Accommodation and all meals are included.
Transfers	Founders make their own way to Mumbai. Scheduled transfers run from Mumbai airport to Alibaug on 13 February and from Alibaug to Mumbai airport on 15 February. Slot timings are confirmed with the cohort.
Fee	₹25,000 plus taxes for TOC members, ₹30,000 plus taxes for non-members. Payable with the application and refunded in full if you are not selected. For founders who are selected it covers the residency in full — two days, accommodation, all meals, scheduled transfers from Mumbai, and enrolment in Harvard ManageMentor for every founder in the cohort.
Cohort	Twenty founders, selected by application. Open to members and non-members of TOC.

Twenty founders. All of India.

Applications are open until 25 December 2026 at **Application link**. Questions about eligibility or the programme can be sent to **Bijoya@theoutreachcollective.in**.

The Outreach Collective

India's largest professional community in international education — a thousand members in four years, more than 200 of them startup founders. A Section 8 not-for-profit, holding no position in any member's business. TOC works with individuals, institutions, companies and government bodies to raise the capability of the people who make up India's education ecosystem, through weekly learning sessions, certificate programmes and convenings across the country. Highly Commended as PIEoneer of the Year 2026 at the PIE Awards in London.

The SandBox

A TOC INITIATIVE