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The University of Manchester



Master of Leadership for Development

An interview with...

Abhinav Nath

Founder & CEO,
NexTrack Consulting
Gurgaon, India



Our **Master of Leadership for Development** attracts applicants from around the world with an interest in making their mark in international development. **Delivered in partnership with the University of Melbourne**, this course brings a collaborative approach to help students develop the skills and international networks that they need to succeed in this space. We spoke to Abhinav Nath, one of our September 2021 cohort, about his background, career interests and what drove him to choose this master's.

SETTING GOALS

"Living in a country like India, power structures are very strong. Even if you want to bring about change, it's not easy," Abhinav tells us, "so I am really looking forward to understanding how to tackle issues which are so embedded within a country's culture."

Abhinav Nath wants to change society. Based in Gurgaon, India, Abhinav spent years pursuing his goal of being a professional soccer player, a journey which took him first to England and then to the United States. After winning a coveted partial scholarship to study at the University of Charleston and play for one of the best college soccer teams in the country, he began to realise his dreams lay elsewhere.

On his return to India after six years abroad, he became involved in education consultancy, first for an American firm and then one based in Singapore. Then in 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, Abhinav started his own business. "We help students gain admission to colleges and universities overseas, mostly to the US or UK," he says. He also works as an advisor at a non-profit school.

With an interest in international development, Abhinav wants to learn more in order to effect change in his home country of India. Close to his heart is the issue of women's empowerment and how to break down the barriers that still affect almost half the citizens of the world's largest democracy. "It's not easy to change values and beliefs so easily," he tells us.

MAKING REAL CHANGE

A desire to tackle these inequalities led him to choose our Master of Leadership for Development. Abhinav was also drawn to this master's as a bridging step between his existing career and his desire to make an impact in the development sector.

"It sounded exciting. As I did more reading on it, it really appealed to me and I was sure that this was something I wanted to do," he tells us, "I have always been passionate to do something in the developmental sector, but I never had the courage to take that first step."

For Abhinav, this master's is just that. As a burgeoning entrepreneur, the focus on leadership further attracted him to this course. "I believe that would help me in running my own business as well. So both those themes combined into one course, I just knew I had to do this."

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

As a member of our 2021 cohort, Abhinav is looking forward to starting the programme. Due to begin this September, Abhinav anticipates working with academics and other students to enhance his understanding, firmly gaining the tools to take into the development field.

"Interacting with professors and just kicking off the course itself would be very exciting for me...I am looking forward to learning more about how some of our experienced faculty has gone about bringing change in their own communities and or the world," he says.

These interactive and international aspects of the course are also major bonuses for Abhinav. "I am looking forward to interacting with my peers as well since we're all coming from such diverse backgrounds – there is so much to learn from each other," he says.

In his desire to make change in society, Abhinav accepts that there may be challenges ahead – and he hopes that this master's will help him to meet those. "[I want to develop] a better understanding of how to bring about change in the developmental sector. While you may be very passionate to change something, maybe your society isn't ready," he reflects.

INEQUALITIES AND THE PANDEMIC

Abhinav hopes the collaborative aspect of the course will aid him in developing an organisation in his future career. "I am also hoping to learn how to build a team together who believe in the same mission and also how to work with stakeholders to grow a non-profit organisation," he tells us.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to transform the way we live, we asked Abhinav how he has been managing his well-being during this turbulent time. "The pandemic gave us lots of time for self-reflection," he tells us, "so getting back to basics and simplicity really helped me during these times." For Abhinav, staying connected was also very important. "I think also [spending] time with family and friends has allowed me to connect with people on a much deeper level," he says.

The pandemic has thrown various issues into stark relief. While poverty, inequality and lack of access to healthcare predated the COVID-19 crisis, they have been exacerbated by it. As we look forward to the end of the pandemic, development leaders are working to alleviate these problems.

Through studying the Master of Leadership for Development, Abhinav hopes to shine a light on the issues plaguing society and be an important part of tackling them. Building on his experience in education, he wants to create a curriculum about women's issues to share with the network of schools built through his business. By focusing his development work on educating people about these injustices, Abhinav aims to spark societal change. For him, the Master of Leadership for Development is the way to start.



September start

Begin studying in September



Flexible format

Transform your career while you work



2-5 years

Part-time master's



International collaboration

Delivered in partnership with the University of Melbourne



Online learning

Benefit from fully-online interactive course delivery

GET IN TOUCH

Email: studyonline@manchester.ac.uk

www.manchester.ac.uk/leadershipdev

The University of Manchester

Oxford Road

Manchester

M13 9PL

UK

Tel: +44(0)7825 274 113

