

OBJECTIVE

After 15 years of being a culture journalist, I had a brief spell in the academia, and finally found my calling in the social development sector. I currently work as a consultant in multiple capacities with the US-based non-profit, Seeds of Peace. I am passionate about peacebuilding, especially interfaith harmony, and developed India's first Interfaith Art and Dialogue Forum called IN SYNC in June 2023. But I am happy to lend my skills to all manner of social justice work, including diversity, equality, inclusion, democracy, and citizenship. Communications, partnerships, and project management are strongest suits and I am currently looking for full-time, permanent opportunities.

CONTACT

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- Versova, Mumbai

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY
SAINT DAVID, LAMPETER
PhD., Interfaith Studies
2023 (ongoing)

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE,
UNIVERSITY OF MUMBAI, MUMBAI
MA, Ancient Indian Culture
2016

SNDT WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY, PUNE
MA, Clinical Psychology
2006

Urmi Chanda

COMMUNICATIONS | PROGRAM MANAGEMENT | SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP & DEVELOPMENT

Urmi is a multipotentialite, who has worked across sectors in various capacities for nearly 20 years. Her primary experience is in print/ digital media, but she is now a part of the development sector. Her strengths are communications, operational processes, and has worked in a few non-profits in various capacities. She is parallelly an academic, with an ongoing PhD in Interfaith Studies, and continues to moonlight as an occasional journalist, a podcaster, and an activist when she is not leading non-profit projects or facing a deadline on an academic presentation or a research publication. She is invested in social justice and steps in to help wherever her talents are called for.

EXPERIENCE

SR. PROGRAMS COORDINATOR SEEDS OF PEACE
[INDIA PROGRAMS]
Dec 2020 - present

As the senior programs' coordinator, I have handled the communications and operational aspects of all programs that take place in a year since 2020, notably The Samvaad Project: An Interfaith Dialogue Facilitation Training program; the Core Leadership Program(s); and Part of Us: A Capacity Building program for Hijras and Transfolk. I design and deploy marketing materials, handle outreach, oversee logistics, and even create and deliver programming content.

COORDINATOR GATHER [INDIA HUB]
Jul 2023 - present

In this experimental role at GATHER – the impact arm of Seeds of Peace, I oversee the creation and mobilization of communities of social entrepreneurs, especially the Seeds of Peace alumni. I have created a format called the 'Changemakers' Café', which brings together and catalyzes social impact actors and projects across a variety of causes.

SKILLS

- Professional communications
- Research
- Programming
- Program/ Operations management
- Partnerships
- Visual Design
- Leadership and team building
- Writing and editing

INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

- **Research Consultant** at Past Preservers for a Netflix production (Aug - Sep '22); Juggernaut Productions (Jan – Feb '22); Abundantia Entertainment (Jun – Aug '18), Jaipur Virasat Foundation (Jul – Sep 2017), Face Entertainment for Epic Channel (Mar – Dec '17), Swastik Productions (Dec '16 - Feb '17), Reliance's BIG Magic (Jul '16 - Dec '16)
- **Contributing Writer** at Sapan News, scroll.in (Since 2014) [Winner of Likho Awards for Excellence in Media via Scroll], at Hindu Businessline INK and Sunday Magazine, (Since Sep '18), First Post (since September 2018), Mumbai Mirror (since Jun '19), The Chandigarh Tribune (since Nov '19), Mythology columnist at bonobology.com (2016-17), Outlook, Print, the Wire, etc.
- **Editor**, Culture Wire – a monthly newsletter by Arts and Culture Resources, India (May '20 - Nov '20)
- **Podcaster & Youtuber**, Dr. Happy – the mental health podcast (Jan – Dec 2022); and Culture Express (Jun – Dec 2018)

FELLOW AND NATIONAL COORDINATOR NAVODAYA NETWORKS FOUNDATION

Jul 2022 – Jun 2023

Navodaya Networks Foundation is an organization formed by some of India's most respected activists, journalists, lawyers, artists, and educators, and is dedicated to supporting grassroots organization working towards strengthening Indian democracy and upholding Constitutional values. I was its first Fellow and national coordinator, and helped create a work culture while instituting operational frameworks and protocols and liaising with like-minded organisations to kickstart multiple projects. I continue my association with Navodaya as an active member, leading its Religion & Peace Hub.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ROLES IN THE PAST

Programs Manager and Communications Consultant

Indian Documentary Foundation | Jul '17 – July '22

Research Consultant

Lord Cultural Resources, Canada South Asia office, November '17 – October '19

Assistant Editor, StyleSpeak and Spa Mantra

C&E Media, Mumbai | Jan '12 – Sept '14

Chief Sub Editor and Senior Correspondent,

Which? Right Choice magazine, Hill Road Media, Mumbai, Jul '11 – Dec '11

Senior Executive (Editor – QC cell)

Mirum (then, Social Wavelength), Mumbai | Jun '10 – Jun '11

Senior Copy Editor, Pune Mirror

The Times of India, Pune | May '08 – Dec '09

Copywriter

Setu Advertising, Pune | Jun '07 – May '08

OTHER EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

1. PG Basic & Advanced Diplomas in Comparative Mythology, Dept. of Sanskrit, University of Mumbai [2013-14]
2. PG Basic and Advanced Diplomas in Mysticism, Dept. of Sanskrit, University of Mumbai [2014-2015]
3. Certificate in Manuscriptology, Vaidika Samshodhana Mandala, Pune
4. Certificate in Hinduism, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai