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Planting Pages

A course for emerging children's books publishers

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What is the need for a course for emerging children's publishers in India?

Reading opens the door to critical thinking, language, and imagination—the foundations of learning across disciplines. Children's books nurture curiosity and wonder, fuelling creativity, resilience, and innovation.

Books in a child's mother tongue are essential for meaningful learning, emotional connection, and cognitive growth. Reading in the language children first hear at home builds confidence and comprehension while preserving local knowledge, oral traditions and cultural identities.

India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognises the relationship between mother-tongue learning and multilingualism, promoting multilingual education as a pathway to inclusivity, equity and deeper learning.

Yet children's publishing—especially in Indian languages—continues to face challenges including limited markets, a shortage of trained professionals and limited resources. Planting Pages responds to this need. It's an attempt to equip emerging publishers with the knowledge, practice and networks needed to create high-quality children's books in Indian languages.

THE COURSE AIMS TO

Introduce the essentials of publishing, deconstruct industry protocols, share best practices, and build a collaborative culture around children's publishing.

Planting pages

Guided by experienced publishers and professionals, Planting Pages combines structured learning with mentorship. Participants develop their capacities over time while sharing knowledge, building networks and learning through collaboration.

By bringing together passionate emerging publishers and industry experts, the programme seeks to energize and catalyse children's publishing in India.

This will be the pilot roll out and application is by invitation only.

Course Details

Planting Pages is designed as a high-engagement blended learning experience, with multiple opportunities to interact with faculty, mentors, peers and programme organisers throughout the programme.

- **TWO IN-PERSON CONTACT PERIODS**
  The programme includes two intensive contact periods. The first focuses on foundations, cohort formation, individual learning goals and capstone projects. The second supports reflection, advanced learning, project feedback and implementation planning.
- **BI-WEEKLY ONLINE LEARNING**
  Interactive sessions with faculty, guest speakers and industry practitioners, with discussion, reflection and peer learning around key themes in children's publishing.
- **REGULAR MENTOR CHECK-INS**
  Mentors guide individual projects and professional development through periodic calls, progress reviews, troubleshooting and feedback.
- **ASSIGNMENTS**
  Two structured assignments during the distance-learning phase help participants apply concepts directly within their organisational or publishing contexts.
- **CAPSTONE SUPPORT**
  Each participant develops a capstone throughout the programme, with ongoing faculty and mentor feedback.
- **OPEN OFFICE HOURS**
  At least two dedicated sessions provide an informal space to discuss challenges, seek clarification and receive additional support.
- **FINAL CAPSTONE PRESENTATION**
  Participants present their project, learning, achievements, challenges and future plans to faculty, mentors, peers and invited stakeholders.
- **CERTIFICATE**
  A completion certificate will be given to participants who successfully complete the course.

The course also includes

- Guest lectures and master classes by experienced practitioners.
- Assignments and applied learning tasks.
- Field exposure to production and printing.
- Peer review, mentor feedback and networking.
- A capstone project developed through the programme and presented at the end.

Course at a glance



Course Duration	January 2027 - July 2027
Structure	2 terms • 3 months each • 5 core modules
Format	Blended learning with intensive in-person contact periods and distance learning **Contact 1:** 28th January 2027 - 3 February 2027 (Eklavya Campus, Bhopal) **Contact 2:** 6th May 2027 - 9th May 2027 (Bangalore)
Learning	• Guest Lectures • Master Classes • Assignments • Mentorship • Field Exposure • Peer Learning
Language	Hindi and English
Course Fee	INR 30000 + 18% GST Note that scholarships are available for limited seats. In case you want to avail for a scholarship, please mention it in the application form along with the rationale.

Core Modules

1. **READER**
   Understand children as readers—their psychology, reading behaviours, languages, contexts and ways of engaging with stories.

2. **BOOK**
   Explore children's books as literary, visual and physical objects across genres and formats.

3. **CREATION**
   Move from ideas to manuscripts through writing, editing, illustration, storyboarding, dummy-making, translation and critique.

4. **CUSTOMER**
   Understand the ecosystems where books are read, bought and mediated—families, educators, libraries, schools, bookstores and digital audiences.

5. **PUBLISHER**
   Navigate editorial processes, pitching, submissions, contracts, rights, production, marketing, distribution, grants and independent publishing models.

Important Dates



Call for Application	5 Nov 2026
Close of application	23 Nov 2026
Communication to the selected participants	10 December 2026
Contact Session 1 — Bhopal	28 January 2027 - 3 February2027
Distance Period 1 with online sessions and assignments	4 February 2027 - 5 May 2027
Contact Session 2 — Bangalore	6 May 2027 - 9 May 2027
Distance Period with capstone project and mentoring	10 May 2027 - 30th June 2027
Online capstone project presentations	3 July 2027 - 4 July 2027
Course Closure	10th July 2027

Eligibility criteria:

- Early-stage Indian language publishing houses interested in children's publishing
- Existing Indian languages publishers who want to publish for children
- Organizations working in the field of education for children and youth, in developing content for children
- Publishers and Organizations already publishing for children but are interested in building a better understanding of the field of publishing.
- Individuals with prior experience in children's literature and publishing.
- At least one idea or manuscript to work with during the course.
- 2-3 years of experience in content development/editing/publishing/working with children(desirable).
- Minimum 18 years and above

Selection Process:

- Interested persons will need to fill an online application form. A complete application including a CV must be submitted before the deadline.
- This is a pilot roll out and application will be by invitation only.
- Maximum 2 participants can be shortlisted from an organization.
- All applications will go through a two-step shortlisting process, and will include a scheduled telephonic interview.
- Applicants will be informed of the status of their application via email by December 1, 2026.

Core Faculty



Bijal Vachharajani

Bijal Vachharajani is an award-winning children's author, editor, and pioneering climate fiction writer. Her books include A Cloud Called Bhura, Savi and the Memory Keeper, and When Fairyland Lost Its Magic. She edited Go Wild, an anthology celebrating the Earth, and was previously the Commissioning Editor at Pratham Books.



Pankaj Saikia

Pankaj Saikia is an illustrator, author, and visual storyteller based in Guwahati, Assam. He creates picture books and graphic narratives for children, and has authored two picture books and illustrated numerous titles. His wordless picture book Theatre of Ghosts featured in the PARAG Honour List 2023. His work has also been exhibited internationally in Singapore.



Thejaswi Shivanand

Thejaswi Shivanand is an independent scholar of books and Indian publishing history. He is a library educator at Champaca Children's Library, Bengaluru and earlier worked as a school library educator at Centre for Learning School, Bengaluru for 13 years. He works with schools and library-focussed organisations across the country in the professional development space to support the growth of communities of readers. He has developed and taught courses for adult practitioners on children's literature and libraries, served on multiple juries of children's book awards including the Parag Honour List, guest edited two children's books including Deepa Bhasthi's book for children, and contributed plenary addresses, invited articles and book chapters on Indian children's literature in conferences, journals and books.



Tultul Biswas

Tultul Biswas is Director of Eklavya Foundation. She has extensive experience in teacher education, educational outreach, advocacy, and children's publishing. Her work focuses on stories featuring thoughtful, independent children and hands-on learning materials. A passionate translator working across Hindi, English, and Bangla, she also anchors sessions on childhood and its representation in children's literature.



Vinutha Mallya

Vinutha Mallya is a journalist, editor, and educator with over 25 years of experience in news media and book publishing. She has held senior editorial roles at the People's Archive of Rural India, Mapin Publishing, and the Times of India Group. She teaches publishing at FLAME University and the National Book Trust, and advises PublishingNext.

APPLY NOW!

Note: Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
For any other queries, write to
plantingpages@eklavya.in

About

Eklavya Foundation

Eklavya Foundation is a registered non-profit NGO based in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh (India) and has been active in the field of education and publishing since 1982. Eklavya has published over 500 titles for children and educators in over 15 scheduled and non-scheduled Indian languages. Eklavya's publishing and dissemination efforts, guided by its school and community-based programmes, have reached millions of readers across the country. The focus of publishing has been to produce books that reflect the life and environment of young readers, especially those from the marginalized and underrepresented communities, while keeping the language accessible, and price affordable.

Parag

Parag, an initiative of the Tata Trusts, was set up to support the development of and access to good quality story books for children in Indian languages. We support school and community libraries so that children have free access to books and an open and vibrant environment that supports reading for pleasure. We also work to nurture the children's literature sector through awards, professional courses and linking various stakeholders together through events for teachers, librarians and facilitators.

Wipro Foundation

Wipro Foundation represents the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of Wipro Limited. Going back over two decades, It focus on social initiatives in Education, Health, Ecology, Disaster Response, and Cities and Public Spaces.

Building a more humane, inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society.