

Strategy, AI, & Sustainability: Innovating for a Better Tomorrow

12th IBS Conference on Marketing & Strategy (ICOMBS)

March 13-14, 2026

<https://www.ifheindia.org/IBS-Hyderabad/icombs-2026/>

Overview

In an era marked by the pressing challenges of climate change, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into sustainability practices has emerged as a transformative force. "AI-Driven Sustainability: Innovating for a better Tomorrow" captures the essence of how intelligent technologies are reshaping the global sustainability agenda—enhancing efficiency, enabling precision, and unlocking novel pathways for green innovation.

From a corporate standpoint, AI supports sustainability reporting and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) compliance by automating data collection, identifying ESG risks, and benchmarking sustainability performance. Natural language processing (NLP) tools can scan company disclosures and media reports to detect greenwashing or unethical practices, thus promoting transparency and accountability.

AI offers powerful tools to advance sustainability goals across sectors. However, its deployment must be guided by ethical considerations, inclusive governance, and a precise alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As we strive for a greener tomorrow, AI should not only optimise systems — it must also inspire a more intelligent and responsible relationship with our planet. AI is reshaping not only technological frontiers but also how businesses define value, strategy, and Sustainability. For future business leaders, understanding how AI intersects with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) imperatives is essential. This conference examines the managerial, ethical, and strategic implications of AI as a catalyst for sustainable development, enabling firms to thrive while contributing to a more resilient and responsible world.

Day 1: March 13, 2026

1. Pre-Conference Workshop on Paper Development using Qualitative research methods.
2. Inaugural Ceremony with academic and industry leaders.
3. Project Presentations by corporate partners.
4. Technical Paper Sessions across strategic tracks.
5. Plenary Session on AI-driven Sustainability.
6. Plenary Session on AI in Banking.

Day 2: March 14, 2026

7. Plenary Session on AI in healthcare.
8. Paper Presentations (Tracks 5–10).
9. Plenary Panel with industry leaders on AI and ESG, and innovation.
10. Valedictory Session and closing remarks

ICOMBS 2026 Conference Committee

Patrons

Prof. T Koti Reddy

Vice Chancellor (In-charge), ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education, Hyderabad



Dr. Kotireddy Tamma is a Professor of Economics at ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad, a constituent of IFHE (Deemed-to-be University). With extensive academic and research experience, he specializes in applied economics, macroeconomic policy, and sustainable development. His work focuses on the intersection of economic growth, financial inclusion, and policy innovation in emerging markets. Dr. Tamma has contributed to numerous national and international conferences and published in reputed journals. Passionate about teaching and mentoring, he integrates analytical rigor with real-world relevance, fostering critical economic thinking and responsible leadership among management students.

Prof. Venu Gopal Rao

Director, ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad



Prof. Venu Gopal Rao is the Director of ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad, a constituent of IFHE (Deemed-to-be University). With over three decades of academic and administrative experience, he has played a pivotal role in strengthening IBS's position as a leading management institution in India. His expertise spans strategic management, leadership development, and institutional excellence. Under his stewardship, IBS Hyderabad has advanced its research culture, fostered global collaborations, and strengthened its commitment to ethics, responsibility, and Sustainability. Prof. Rao is recognized for fostering innovation in management education and developing future-ready leaders through experiential and outcome-based learning approaches.

Prof. D. Satish

Dean, ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad



Prof. D. Satish serves as the Dean of ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad, part of IFHE (Deemed-to-be University). With extensive experience in academia and institutional leadership, he has made significant contributions to advancing management education and academic excellence at IBS. His areas of expertise include strategic management, organizational behavior, and leadership development. Prof. Satish has been instrumental in driving curriculum innovation, research orientation, and quality assurance processes that align IBS with global standards in management education. A passionate academic leader, he is dedicated to fostering a culture of integrity, innovation, and continuous learning among both faculty and students.

Prof. Mukesh Mishra

Area Chair (Marketing & Strategy), ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad



Prof. Mukesh Mishra is the Area Chair for Marketing and Strategy at ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad. With extensive experience in academia and industry consulting, he has made significant contributions to research and teaching in areas such as strategic marketing, brand management, and digital strategy. Prof. Mishra has guided several research projects and

case studies that bridge theory and real-world business challenges. His leadership in curriculum development and academic governance has strengthened IBS's reputation as a center of excellence in strategic and marketing expertise. A passionate educator and thought leader, he continues to inspire innovation, critical thinking, and industry relevance among students and faculty.

Core Team

Dr. Sudeepta Pradhan

(99487-48298)



Dr Sudeepta Pradhan has a Bachelor's degree in Law (LLB), a Master's Degree in Commerce (Utkal University), and a Master's in Business Laws (NLSIU, Bangalore). Her research interests lie in the fields of CSR, Stakeholder Management, Corporate Strategy, Responsible Tourism, and Qualitative research. She has published research papers in journals such as Technological Forecasting & Social Change, Journal of Innovation and Knowledge, Knowledge Management Research and Practice, Social Responsibility Journal, Journal of Travel Research, and The Qualitative Report, among others. Dr. Pradhan has received best paper awards at several national and international conferences for her research on CSR and Sustainability. She has authored teaching cases on CSR and corporate strategy and published chapters with reputable publishers, including Springer, McMillan Publishers India Ltd., and Abramis (UK). Currently, she is a Professor at IFHE University, IBS Hyderabad, in the Department of Marketing and Strategy.

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=ks69xjIAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>

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Dr. Anitha Acharya

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Anitha Acharya (PhD, PGDBA, and B.Com) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Marketing and Strategy at IBS Hyderabad, a Constituent of IFHE, Deemed to be University. Her PhD thesis is in the area of 'customer engagement'. Her current research interests include brand equity, word-of-mouth, customer engagement, and brand evangelism. She has both industry and teaching experience. She has over 10 years of experience in the industry. She has worked for corporations such as KPMG, ICICI Prudential, HDFC Standard Life, and IFFCO Tokyo General Insurance Company, among others. Her research works have been published in international journals such as *the Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations*, *the International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, *the South Asian Journal of Global Business Research*, and *The Qualitative Report*. She has been a Guest Editor for IGI Global. She has also written book chapters on green marketing.

Her scholastic work is accessible here:

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=v3FHU4kAAAAJ&hl=en>

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Dr. Vaibhav Sekhar

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Prof. Vaibhav Shekhar is a Professor in the Department of Marketing & Strategy and holds a Ph.D. Program Coordinator at IBS Business School, IFHE University, Hyderabad. With nearly two decades of combined academic and industry experience, he has made significant contributions to research, curriculum innovation, and institutional development. Dr. Shekhar earned his Ph.D. in Management from ICFAI University, Dehradun, and served as a Visiting Research Scholar at Bentley University, USA. Before academia, he worked in the Foreign Exchange and NRI Banking divisions at Axis Bank, gaining valuable industry insights.

His research interests include value co-creation, omnichannel retailing, service convenience, and the role of technology in service marketing. His work has appeared in reputed journals such as the *Journal of Service Theory & Practice*, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, and *International Journal of Bank Marketing*. He has co-authored book chapters, reviewed for leading journals including the *International Marketing Review*, and presented his research at premier global conferences such as ANZMAC (Australia), AGBA (IIT Delhi), IIM Calcutta, and the Academy of Marketing Science (USA).

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Organising Committee

Dr. Debajani Sahoo



Prof. Debajani Sahoo is currently a Professor of Marketing at IBS Hyderabad, IFHE University. Originating from the culturally vibrant state of Odisha, which is also the home of Lord Jagannath, Prof. Sahoo steadfastly pursued her academic career. She received a postdoctoral fellowship from the UGC in New Delhi and a PhD in marketing from Utkal University.

Prof. Sahoo's contributions to the marketing industry are truly extraordinary, and her career has been marked by exceptional quality and creativity. She wrote numerous other cases during her time at IIM Ahmedabad, including Emami-Fair & Handsome and the Voltas Room Air Conditioners campaign, "India ka dil, India ka AC," which was incorporated in the IIM teaching materials. She finished three ICSSR projects that focused on women's concerns and indigenous adolescent girls. Her research efforts on behalf of the tribal people were commendable. Her four seed projects on women-centric topics from IFHE University have been published in ABDC and Scopus-listed publications and are appreciated by the NAAC and UGC teams.

Her tourism-related research was recognised with the Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management's, Noida, 2019, and AGBA DISTINGUISHED GLOBAL SCHOLAR Award, which was presented at IIT Delhi in 2019. She mentored approximately 14 PhD students from several universities across various fields. Her book, "CRM Practices in Indian Star Hotels," was published by Lambert Academic Publishing in Germany.

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Dr. Farrah Zeba



Dr. Farrah Zeba is a Senior Assistant Professor in the Department of Marketing and Strategy at ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad, IFHE University, India. She holds a Ph.D. in Management and brings over a decade of combined experience in industry and academia. She was also a Visiting Scholar at the University of Memphis, Tennessee, USA, where her thesis proposal received an award. Her research focuses on integrating technology with positive psychology and transformative service research, particularly within emerging market contexts. Dr. Zeba's scholarly work has been published in reputable journals, including the Journal of Product & Brand Management, Young Consumers, Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, and Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations. She has received several Best Paper and Case Study Awards from institutions, including the Indian Institute of Science (IISc). She has contributed book chapters and presented papers at national and international conferences.

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Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh



Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh is an Associate Professor in the Marketing & Strategy department at IBS Hyderabad. He is a published researcher with several papers in esteemed journals on topics such as consumer adoption of electric vehicles, green market segmentation, and consumer behavior.

https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=gN5_4yYAAAAJ&hl=en

Dr. Vikas Chauhan



Dr. Vikas Chauhan serves as an Assistant Professor at ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad, where he contributes to teaching, research, and mentoring. Dr. Chauhan holds a Ph.D. in Marketing and has published extensively in reputable, peer-reviewed journals, including *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, and *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*. His research primarily focuses on digital finance adoption, telematics-based insurance, perceived risk, and technology-enabled consumer behavior, offering valuable insights into emerging areas of marketing and financial services.

Dr. Chauhan has participated in faculty development programs organized by ISB Hyderabad and IIM Visakhapatnam, emphasizing marketing analytics and advanced multivariate techniques. His academic contributions have been recognized through the award of the Best Ph.D. Thesis Award.

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Dr. Rajashekar Reddy



Assistant Professor

Department of Marketing and Strategy, ICFAI Business School

Dr. Rajashekarreddy P. brings over 16 years of teaching experience to his role in management education. He holds a Ph.D. in Management from Lovely Professional University, where he focused his research on Social Media Marketing.

He specializes in teaching marketing and strategy, with a strong emphasis on connecting classroom theory to real-world business practice. Dr. Rajashekarreddy is recognized for

his engaging teaching style, dedicated mentorship, and for cultivating critical thinking and leadership skills in his students. His goal is to prepare a new generation of marketers to succeed in a fast-paced, digital business environment.

Dr. Santosh Kumar Alreddy



Dr. Santosh Kumar Alreddy is the Assistant Professor of IBS Hyderabad. He holds a Ph.D. in Retail Management from the Central University of Karnataka. He has published articles in national and international journals. Before joining IBS, he had four years of industry and four years of teaching experience. His areas of research include Payment apps, Customer loyalty, and Store attributes. During his industry career, he worked as a Sales Officer at Unisearch and Asian Paints. Proficient in handling dealer networks, opening new dealers, and launching new products. Other areas of expertise include resolving dealer complaints, marketing/promotions, and achieving sales quotas.

Dr. Abhishek Dutta



Dr. Abhishek Dutta is a Senior Assistant Professor at IBS Hyderabad, in the Marketing and Strategy area. He earned his MBA from IBS Hyderabad and subsequently completed his Ph.D. in the area of Marketing. With an extensive career spanning over 17 years, Dr. Dutta initially built his professional foundation in the banking and finance industry before transitioning to academia.

His primary research interests lie in technology adoption, technology diffusion, and electronic servicescapes. Dr. Dutta has made significant academic contributions, publishing

his work in esteemed journals such as the Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations and Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication. Moreover, he has actively disseminated his findings at numerous international conferences, where he has also chaired sessions.

Dr. Saubhagya Bhalla



Dr. Saubhagya Bhalla is an Assistant Professor in the Marketing area at ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad, Telangana, India. Dr. Saubhagya Bhalla holds a Ph.D. from the University Business School, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India. His research interests include Collaborative Consumption, Sharing Economy, Brand Management, and Sustainable Consumption. He has published papers in top Marketing journals, including Journal of Product and Brand Management, Journal of Services Marketing, Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, Service Business, Journal of Cleaner Production, Current Issues in Tourism, Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, and Journal of Promotion Management. He has presented his research at numerous national and international conferences and seminars and has been awarded three times with the best paper in the Marketing track. He can be reached at saubhagya.bhalla@ibsindia.org, saubhagya987656@gmail.com

Advisory Committee

Prof. Vikas Gautam



Dr. Vikas Gautam is Professor and Associate Dean (ACD) at ICFAI Business School Hyderabad, with expertise in marketing, consumer psychology, and customer relationship management. He holds a PhD in Marketing from ICFAI University, Dehradun, an MBA in Marketing, and is a UGC-NET (JRF) qualified individual. A distinguished academic and corporate trainer, he has over two decades of experience in teaching, research, and industry engagement. He has received several honors, including the Best Teacher Award (2023) and Best MBA Summer Internship Faculty Guide Award (2016, 2019, 2022, 2024). His teaching and research focus on CRM, Marketing Analytics, Digital Marketing, and Marketing Research. He has guided 6 PhD scholars and is currently mentoring one more. His research contributions include over 80 papers in ABDC and Scopus-indexed journals, with more than 1,295 citations, an h-index of 17, and an i-10 index of 30, reflecting a substantial scholarly impact. He has conducted numerous workshops on SEM, Business Research Methods, and Marketing Analytics for academia and industry. Proficient in SPSS, AMOS, SmartPLS, R, fs/QCA Software, and Orange, Dr. Gautam actively bridges academia and industry through impactful research, mentorship, and high-value corporate training initiatives.

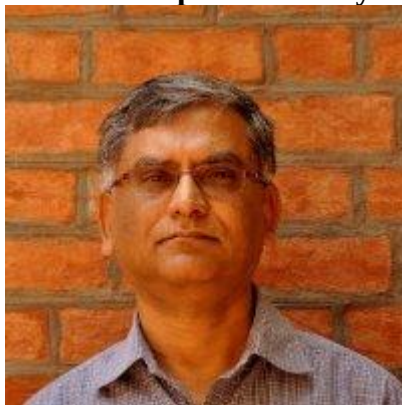
Prof. Shailendra Singh Bisht



Prof. Shailendra Singh Bisht is a Professor in the area of Marketing and Strategy and also serves as the **Coordinator of the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development and Training (CEDT)** at ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad. With rich experience in academia and consulting, he specializes in brand strategy, consumer insights, and strategic marketing. His research examines the intersection of entrepreneurship, innovation, and marketing strategy in dynamic market environments. Under his leadership, CEDT fosters entrepreneurial learning, incubation, and startup engagement among students. Prof. Bisht has presented and published widely and is recognized for integrating theory with practice to nurture strategic thinking in future business leaders.

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Prof. Pradeep Krishnatray



Pradeep Krishnatray is currently teaching in the Marketing & Strategy department of IFHE University. Earlier, he served as director of Research & Strategic Planning at Johns Hopkins University's Center for Communication Programs in New Delhi. He was the Dean of Research at MICA and the founder-editor of the Journal of Creative Communications, published by Sage (India). He completed his PhD in the USA.

Prof Sanjib Dutta



Sanjib is a mentor to many case writers across the country and is passionate about the case method of teaching and research. His research interests include social entrepreneurship, sustainable business models and digital business strategy. He is the winner of multiple national and international case writing competitions including EFMD Case Writing Competition, John Molson Case Writing Competition, CEEMAN Case Writing Competition, Emerald Case for Women Case Writing Competition, The Case Centre Awards & Competition, AIMA-ICRC Case Writing Competition and The Case Hub Case Writing Competition conducted by American University of Beirut. Case studies authored by Sanjib have been published by Ivey Publishing at Western University, Canada and WDI Publishing at the University of Michigan, USA and distributed through Harvard Business publishing. Sanjib has also published with reputed case journals such as Emerald's Emerging Markets Case Studies and The Case Journal. Sanjib currently holds the third position in the annual list of The Case Centre's bestselling case authors.

Sanjib has served on the jury in multiple case competitions in India and abroad. He is also a sought-after speaker on Case method of teaching and research. Sanjib is an Associate Editor for The Case Journal (TCJ), a Scopus-indexed Case Journal published by Emerald Publishing. He is currently working as Associate Dean at the IBS Case Research Center, Hyderabad.