

Crosswinds



Campus Without Borders

Country Lens on
Japan

Spotlight on
University of Reading, UK

Student Spotlight on
Tilly Cheesman, JCU



K-GEO
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Campus Without Borders: Cameroon to Coimbatore

International mobility is no longer a luxury in management education, it is a necessity. When institutions collaborate across continents, they do more than exchange students. They exchange mindsets. The partnership between PKFokam Institute of Excellence, Cameroon, and Kumaraguru's KCT Business School represents this shared commitment: developing leaders who think globally, adapt courageously, and act with purpose. Currently, 13 students are experiencing their semester abroad at KCT Business School. Established by the Appropriate Development for Africa Foundation (ADAF), PK Fokam Institute of Excellence was founded with a bold vision: to serve as an African incubator for world-class leaders. The institution offers programmes in engineering, information technology, economics, management, and business administration, with a strong emphasis on practical learning, research, and entrepreneurship. With international collaborations and a commitment to leadership-focused education, the institute plays a vital role in strengthening Africa's professional and intellectual capital.

Cameroon, often called "Africa in miniature" for its geographical and cultural diversity, is a nation of resilience, ambition, and multilingual heritage. From Yaoundé to Coimbatore, this academic journey reflects more than mobility; it represents shared aspirations across continents.



Visit to Multiplex Theatre in Brookefields Mall, Coimbatore
Interaction on Technology in Multiplex Theatre



Visit to RMKV Silk Sarees Store in Brookefields Mall Coimbatore
Stores In-charge explaining the uniqueness of silk sarees

At KCT Business School, the students are engaging in classroom discussions, industry-oriented learning, collaborative projects, and cultural immersion. They are not only adapting to new academic frameworks but also building global networks and intercultural competence.

"Cameroon to Coimbatore" is a story of courage, collaboration, and connection. As these students integrate into campus life, they embody the essence of a borderless learning environment—where diversity enriches dialogue, global exposure builds confidence, and education becomes a truly shared international experience.

When MBA students from the PKFokam Institute of Excellence in Cameroon arrived at KCT Business School, their first impression was the scale — the vast green campus, impressive infrastructure, and meticulous cleanliness. Yet beyond the physical environment, what stood out most was the culture of inclusion. From classroom engagement to peer interactions, they experienced a community that was intentional about making them feel welcome.

Academically, the shift was significant. Compared to a more exam-centered structure back home, KCT's model felt dynamic and industry-driven. Case studies, collaborative projects, guest lectures, conferences, and company visits transformed learning into applied practice. One student shared how presenting a Cameroonian business perspective during an International Management discussion led to a blended solution shaped by diverse viewpoints — a defining moment of belonging. Another recalled being asked to lead a Financial Modelling team, reinforcing his confidence and leadership capacity.

Adjustment came with challenges — adapting to accents, new teaching rhythms, and spicier cuisine. Over time, resilience became part of the growth process. Tamil phrases like Vanakkam and Nandri entered their daily vocabulary, while participation in India's 77th National Day celebrations deepened their cultural understanding.

Across their reflections, transformation was clear. The experience strengthened entrepreneurial thinking, global awareness, adaptability, and inclusive leadership. For these students, "Campus Beyond Borders" is not a slogan but a lived reality — education that transcends geography, fosters cross-cultural collaboration, and prepares emerging leaders to think globally and act with purpose.

Feature Article

India the Next Global Education Destination

India is undergoing one of the most significant transformations in its higher education history. Long known as the world’s largest source of internationally mobile students, the country is now strategically repositioning itself to become a major global destination for international learners. This shift is driven by economic imperatives, regulatory reforms, demographic strength, and the emergence of globally competitive regional academic ecosystems.

India – a Global Economic Powerhouse

India is entering a defining phase in its economic trajectory, transitioning from a high growth emerging market to a structurally influential global economic power. Its leadership in digital public infrastructure, growing manufacturing base, and integration into global supply chains position it as a critical node in the reconfiguration of the global economy.

India is undergoing one of the most significant transformations in its higher education history. India had the second largest number of students enrolled in tertiary education with more than 44.6 million student enrolments, only behind China.

Long known as the world’s largest source of internationally mobile students, the country is now strategically repositioning itself to become a major global destination for international learners. The reason for this move lies a stark imbalance – for every one international student who chooses India, 28 Indian students head overseas.

Currently 46,878 foreign nationals/students from 170 nations across the world are enrolled in various courses in India. The current top 5 country sources are Nepal, Afghanistan, USA, Bangladesh and UAE.

With 9 million students expected to pursue education outside their home countries, India is increasingly positioned to capitalize on this shift and make India a compelling destination. With its English-speaking academic ecosystem India’s ambition is not merely to increase international student numbers, but to reposition itself within the global knowledge economy. International students are increasingly viewed as contributors to innovation, research, economic growth, and diplomatic engagement. For global partners seeking long term engagement in one of the world’s most important emerging markets, Tamil Nadu represents a strategic entry point.

Metric	Current Value	Strategic Target (2047)
Inbound Students	~50,000	11 lakh (1.1 million)
Outbound Students	1.33 million	Balanced brain circulation
Annual Forex Outflow	₹6.2 lakh crore (~\$70 billion)	Stabilized trade deficit
Inbound: Outbound Ratio	1: 28	1: 5



- Expected GDP growth in FY 2027 **6.4%–7.4%**
- Projected as **3rd largest economy** with **\$7.3 trillion GDP in 2030**
- **world’s 3rd -largest startup** ecosystem, with over 2 lakh start-ups
- **1.4 billion** people, nearly 1/5 th of global population.
- Over **50% of population is below 25**
- 806 million internet users, with 55.3% online penetration
- 1396 Universities, 53258 colleges, 16600 Institutes, 264 R&D Institutes

Tamil Nadu a Strategic Entry Point

In India, Tamilnadu offers one of the most compelling and scalable platforms for global university partnerships and a hub for international student engagement as the second largest state economy in the country. The state is an industrial powerhouse is leading the country in the number of manufacturing factories. Renowned as the “Detroit of India,” Tamil Nadu hosts over 1,500 Multinational companies across automotive, IT and manufacturing sectors.

- 4% of India’s land area , 6% of the country’s population, **9.4 %** contribution to India’s GDP
- State recorded real Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth of 11.19% in 2024–25.
- Achieve \$1 Trillion economy by 2030
- Contributes 12.11% to India’s manufacturing GDP

2,600 colleges
50 + universities
3 million students

GER 47%
20% of India’s graduates
35.7+ million students enrolled in HEI

This industry and education strength creates a powerful academic advantage. International students increasingly seek education environments where learning extends beyond classrooms into real world economic ecosystems. Tamil Nadu provides exposure to global manufacturing supply chains, technology deployment at scale, and rapidly evolving innovation sectors.

Coimbatore: Industrial and Education Engine of TN

- Per capita Income of \$4000+ USD
- GSDP growth of 11.19% and contributes 29 % to state GDP
- Over 40% of India's Yarn Production
- Over 55 % of India's garment exports in textile corridor
- Over 60 % of India's textile machinery manufacturers
- Called pump city of Asia – supplies 40% of India's needs
- 50000+ SMEs, 500+ IT /ITES, 60+ GCCs
- Gross exports of Gems & Jewellery US\$ 3.23 billion
- Literacy rate of 89.9%
- 7 Universities, 460+ colleges, 2047+ schools
- Located between economic centers Chennai, Bengaluru, Kochi

Coimbatore which is strategically located in the western zone of Tamil Nadu. The western zone's per capita income stands at 118% of the state average, slightly higher than the northern zone's 115%.

Coimbatore District, known as Manchester of India with key sectors in textile, Auto components, machinery, precision engineering and jewelry. This is where the narrative becomes particularly strong when viewed through the lens of its most industrialized regions. For international partners, this enables joint programs that integrate academic learning with industry immersion, internships, applied research, and experiential education for their students. Regions like Coimbatore can give extraordinary exposure and experiences to inbound students – the Live-Lab Environment.

Coimbatore is already emerging as a major destination for foreign students, particularly from African nations, the Middle East, and neighboring countries like Bhutan, due to its reputation as a safe, affordable, and academically rigorous educational hub in South India. Its pleasant year-round climate, clean and well-planned urban environment, and welcoming community create a student-friendly ecosystem that supports both academic focus and quality of life.

Strategic Opportunity Partnership, Presence, and Pipeline

India offers international universities a uniquely strategic destination where students can engage directly with one of the world's fastest growing major economies while experiencing the India's cultural depth and diversity, enabling students to gain global industry and cultural intelligence. This combination of economic relevance, industry integration, innovation exposure, academic accessibility, and cultural immersion positions India as one of the most strategically important learning environments for globally oriented universities.



Will global Universities build presence or miss the opportunity?!

Indian institutions should take a strategic approach to attract international students by offering globally relevant curricula, integrated industry ecosystems, and deep learning experiences. Universities that act decisively will strengthen their global brand, attract high quality partnerships, and unlock new revenue and innovation streams. Coimbatore's opportunity lies in positioning itself not as an alternative, but as a strategic destination offering globally relevant, industry integrated, and accessible education. Will HEI host global students or just export their students?

In this shifting global landscape, India is strategically positioning itself to become one of the world's leading destinations for international students

Sources & Data References:

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- Ministry of External Affairs / Bureau of Immigration: Data on student mobility trends.

Student Spotlight

Culture, Community & Change: The Indian Immersion Experience is a two-day cross-cultural program uniting Social Work trainees and faculty from James Cook University (JCU), Australia, and Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (KCLAS), India. Funded by Australia's prestigious New Colombo Plan, it combines cultural exploration, academic dialogue, and community engagement in India's tribal regions, fostering global learning and collaborative social work practice. As part of this program, Tilly Cheeseman, our spotlight international student from JCU visited KCLAS, along with her faculty and peers. Tilly reflects on a transformational experience that inspired her to revisit India. This Women's History Month, her story underscores the power of international exchange in shaping confident, globally engaged women leaders.



Tilly Cheeseman
James Cook University, Australia

After spending six weeks in India, I can tell you that I didn't even discover 1% of it. I understand that I will never be able to uncover all the treasures of a country rich in history and culture. While in India, I visited Kerala, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was an incredible opportunity for the other JCU students and me. I think I speak for all of us when I say it is the most beautiful college I have ever seen. From the moment we arrived, Preethi and her students showed such care and generosity, and I felt genuinely looked after the entire time. Whether touring the campus or sitting in on a lecture, we felt truly welcome.



JCU Students and Faculty,
KCLAS Principal, Students and Faculty of School of Social Welfare

We also visited the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Museum, which was incredibly insightful. While there, we spent time at a learning centre offering skill development courses. The teachers were so kind, sharing their knowledge and even lunch with me, reflecting the warmth of the people in Tamil Nadu. We also visited a tribal village supported by an organisation working to lift the community out of exploitation. I found it especially inspiring that the tribal leader is a woman.

Not only do I feel personally changed by India, but I also feel that my deeper understanding of the complexities of its history and its people will support me in my professional practice as a future Social Worker. After my time in India, I continued my travels, and to whomever I came across, I found myself telling them about the beauty of the Indian people and their home. I hope to return soon and often.



A session by KCLAS faculty for
JCU students and faculty

We shared amazing food with students both on and off campus in Coimbatore, which made the experience even more meaningful. At Kumaraguru, our learning extended far beyond the classroom. Working alongside the MSW students in discussions and community engagements helped me see how culture and context shape social work practice in ways I had never fully appreciated before. It encouraged me to reflect more deeply on my own assumptions and the kind of practitioner I hope to become.



Tilly and her peers in conversation

University of Reading: Global Pathways, Shared Purpose

In today's interconnected academic landscape, meaningful partnerships go beyond symbolic agreements—they create platforms for shared discovery, mobility, and intellectual growth. Kumaraguru Institutions is pleased to partner with the University of Reading, United Kingdom, bringing together a shared commitment to research excellence, global engagement, and student success. Facilitated through the Kumaraguru Global Engagement Office (K-GEO), this partnership represents a strategic step toward deeper international integration across teaching, research, and cultural exchange. The signing of the MoU was especially significant as it took place during the International Summit on Young Leaders for a Climate Smart Future, co-presented by both institutions.



Kumaraguru Institutions and University of Reading Partnership Signing Ceremony



Delegates from the University of Reading, UK and Kumaraguru Institution Members

The University of Reading has earned an international reputation for its strength in research and teaching across disciplines including climate science, agriculture, environmental studies, business, food science, humanities, and social sciences. With a strong emphasis on research that addresses global priorities—from sustainability and food security to economic resilience—the university blends academic depth with societal relevance. Its vibrant campus culture and diverse student community create an environment where ideas are examined critically and innovation thrives.

The partnership between Kumaraguru Institutions and the University of Reading reflects a shared vision of advancing knowledge through collaboration. At its core, this association fosters opportunities for joint research initiatives, publications, and academic colloquia. Faculty members from both institutions engage in intellectual exchange, contributing to interdisciplinary scholarship and generating research that speaks to global audiences. Such collaborations not only elevate academic output but also deepen institutional relationships built on trust and shared purpose.

Equally significant is the focus on staff and postgraduate research student exchanges. By encouraging mobility for professional and personal development, the partnership enables scholars to immerse themselves in new research environments, co-supervise projects, and expand their global networks.

These exchanges strengthen academic capacity while broadening perspectives on teaching, mentorship, and research design. For students, the collaboration creates structured pathways to global education, facilitating the admission of qualified candidates into undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at both institutions. The development of taught student exchange links further enables learners to experience diverse classrooms, engage with varied pedagogical approaches, and earn transferable credits.

The partnership also supports co-developed programmes aligned with emerging global priorities. Through the exchange of academic materials, publications, and curriculum resources, both institutions enhance the quality and relevance of their offerings while encouraging innovation in programme design. Cultural and intellectual enrichment remains central, with guest lectures, workshops, seminars, and opportunities to participate in International Summer Schools and short courses.

As Kumaraguru's global network expands, this collaboration reflects a shared commitment to deeper academic engagement, sustained research partnerships, and preparing globally competent graduates for an interconnected world.

Global Engagements

International Summit on Young Leaders for a Climate Smart Future



Panel Session 1 – Building Sustainable Communities
 Moderator: Jon Foster-Pedley, Dean and Director, Henley Business School, Africa
 Panellists:
 Ms. Siva Bharathi Annamalai – Senior Sustainability Strategist, School of Sustainability IIT Madras
 Mr. Rajesh Kumar – Founder & CEO, Nannilam Eco Village
 Ms. Initha Kumar – Conservationist, Neer Nilaiagal Padhukappu Arakattalai

As part of the International Summit on Young Leaders for a Climate Smart Future, Kumaraguru Institutions, in collaboration with the University of Reading, UK, hosted three focused panel discussions centered on sustainability, climate-responsive education, and climate-smart agriculture. These sessions brought together academicians, sustainability practitioners, policymakers, farmers, and young leaders to deliberate on practical, scalable pathways toward climate resilience.



Panel Session 2 – Climate Smart Campuses
 Moderator: Dr Pramod, Senior Principal Scientist, SACON
 Panellists:
 Prof. Emmanuel Essah – Head of School (Built Environment), University of Reading, UK,
 Dr. Palanisamy – Deputy Director & Professor Electrical Engineering and Projects in Charge, VIT Vellore
 Mr. Veera – Sholai School, Kodaikandl



Panel Session 3 – Climate Smart Campuses
 Moderator: Ravinkumar Sivalingam, Co-Founder, Betr labs
 Panellists:
 Prof. Simon Mortimer – Head of School (Agriculture, Policy & Development), University of Reading, UK
 Mr. Shihab Kunhammed – Farmer & Director, Green Ara
 Mr. Kumaraguru Manickavasagam – Farmer and Founder, Sigma Farmers Market

The discussions examined sustainability across communities, campuses, and agricultural systems, highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and real-world implementation. Key themes included community-driven sustainability initiatives, climate-conscious campus design, and innovation-led approaches to climate-smart agriculture. Panellists shared perspectives grounded in research, policy, and field experience, creating a dynamic platform for informed dialogue and exchange.



A notable highlight was the active participation of school students and faculty, reinforcing the summit's emphasis on early climate literacy. Students and staff from National Model School, Prakriya International School, Aalam School, K'sir School, Coimbatore Public School, Suguna RIP V School, Global Pathway School, and GD School participated in the sessions. In total, 201 students and 17 staff members—218 participants—engaged in these discussions.

The panel series fostered meaningful cross-sector knowledge exchange, strengthened institutional collaboration, and inspired young participants to take ownership of climate action. By integrating research insights with grassroots perspectives, the sessions advanced a shared vision for climate-resilient communities, campuses, and agricultural ecosystems.

Technological University of the Shannon, Ireland – Exploring Possibilities



Discussion on student exchange, COIL initiatives, and academic partnerships



Mr. Goulallien Gangte, Student Recruitment Advisor, in interaction and collaborative discussions with Kumaraguru faculty.

Kumaraguru Institutions hosted Mr. Goulallien Gangte, Student Recruitment Advisor from the Technological University of Shannon, for a focused discussion on advancing student-centric international partnerships. The interaction explored shared academic values and institutional strengths, identifying opportunities to build meaningful and mutually beneficial global engagement.

Key areas of discussion included prospective collaborations in sports sciences and social work, the implementation of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiatives, student mobility pathways, and faculty exchange programmes. The dialogue underscored the importance of holistic student development through academic mobility, cross-cultural immersion, and collaborative learning models that extend beyond traditional classroom boundaries.

The meeting laid a strong foundation for future collaboration, with a shared commitment to expanding global learning opportunities and fostering sustained academic partnerships between the two institutions.

Beyond the Brochure – Real Academic Life Abroad

Students' Global Insight Session by Dr. Eliza Barstow, Oregon State University, US

The Kumaraguru Global Engagement Office organised Student Global Insights Session #021, an international masterclass led by Dr. Eliza Barstow, Senior Instructor of History and Religious Studies at Oregon State University, USA. The session offered students a grounded perspective on academic life abroad, covering classroom dynamics, research expectations, cultural adaptation, and the personal growth that comes with studying in a global university environment. In addition to the masterclass, a partnership meeting was held with institutional representatives to explore avenues for future academic collaboration.



Dr. Eliza Barstow and the K-GEO team are taking a tour of Kumaraguru Campus..

Dr. Barstow also engaged with Psychology students from Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Science (KCLAS), addressing their queries and guiding them on higher education pathways and academic preparedness.

During her campus visit, she toured Ahimsa Vanam, the KCT Garage, and the Resource Recovery Park, appreciating Kumaraguru's strong commitment to sustainability and experiential learning. The visit and session together strengthened academic engagement and provided students with valuable international exposure and insight.



Dr. Eliza Barstow in conversation BSc Psychology students from Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Science (KCLAS)

Global Master's Accelerator Program (G-MAP) Level 102 – Prime



Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Science (KCLAS), Class of 2027 students attended G-MAP Level 102-Prime Sessions

The Global Masters Accelerator Program, conducted by K-GEO for the KCLAS 2024 Batch, was an intensive three-day bootcamp held from February 11 to 13, 2026. Designed as a completely hands-on program, it focused on giving students clarity, direction, and a structured roadmap for their global master's aspirations.

The program blended energy, collaboration, and focused learning. Outdoor sessions added an engaging dimension to the experience, energizing students and encouraging active participation. Through interactive group challenges and collaborative exercises, participants strengthened communication skills and built a strong sense of team spirit. These moments created an atmosphere of mutual encouragement that enhanced the overall learning environment.

A major highlight of the bootcamp was the use of customized AI prompts. Students were trained to frame precise and personalized prompts to generate the most relevant and high-quality responses.

They also learned how to strategically use AI tools for university research, profile building, program comparison, and application planning. Rather than simply collecting information, participants evaluated outputs to achieve more accurate and meaningful results.



Students solving a puzzle during a workshop



Session by KCLAS Alumni from UK

The academic session was dynamic and practical. Students engaged in university exploration activities, in depth discussions on global programs, profile evaluation workshops, and mock admission room simulation. These simulated sessions offered a realistic insight into admissions process and helped students identify both strengths and areas for improvements. Faculty members and admission counselors provided constructive feedback, making the experience highly personalized and outcome oriented.

By the end of the three days, students had developed greater clarity about their academic goals and created concrete action plans. More importantly, they gained confidence, improved teamwork skills, and learned how to leverage technology intelligently. The accelerator program was not just informative but truly transformational, equipping students with the mindset and tools needed for global success.

Japan

Country Lens



Capital	Tokyo
Currency	Japanese Yen (Yen)
Population	123,103,488 (2025 est.)
Major cities	Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, Sapporo, Kobe, Fukuoka, Kawasaki, Saitama
Industry	Automobile, Electronics, Machinery, Robotics, Healthcare, Biotechnology, Information technology, Tourism and Hospitality
GDP	4.03 Trillion USD (2024)
Higher Education Institutions	More than 300+ graduate degree-granting institutions. A few Popular institutions – Seoul National University, KAIST, University of Seoul, Sejong University
Academic cycles	Main Intake – April, Alternate Intake – October
Popular Programs	Health – Public Health/Health Sciences, Engineering, Humanities, Business and Economics
Post-study options	After successful completion of program, if the students receive a job offer related to their field of study, with the employer's support can apply for change of status and continued to be in Japan from 1 to 5 years, depending on the field.
Visa policies	You will be issued a resident card if your program is longer than 3 months.

Perspectives

Higher Education News around the Globe

Illinois Tech, Chicago now in Mumbai



Illinois Tech to open India's first US-run degree-granting campus in Mumbai

Illinois Tech (US) is set to open its first campus in Mumbai and will become the first US-based university authorised by the UGC to establish a degree-granting campus in India.

India Today / Feb 11

<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/illinois-tech-to-open-indias-first-us-run-degree-granting-campus-in-mumbai-2866479-2026-02-11>

- The Illinois Institute of Technology (Illinois Tech) is opening its first degree-granting campus in India — the first by a U.S. university to receive such approval.
- The new campus will be located at the Godrej Business District in Mumbai.
- The first cohort of students is scheduled to begin classes in Fall 2026.
- It's the first U.S. university in the country to obtain approval from India's higher education regulator to offer full degrees.
- The campus will provide undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in areas such as computer science, artificial intelligence, data science, and business.
- Degrees and curriculum will mirror those at Illinois Tech's main Chicago campus, adapted to India's industrial and economic context.
- The move reflects Illinois Tech's ongoing engagement with India and aims to link education closely with industry needs.

Japan surpassed its foreign enrolment target of 400,000 in 2025

- Target achieved early: Japan surpassed its long-term international student enrolment target of 400,000 in 2025 — eight years ahead of the original 2033 goal.
- Enrollment figures: As of June 2025, the number of international students in Japan reached 435,200, marking an 8.2% increase compared with 2024.
- Record first-time students: Growth was driven by a record number of new international enrolments.
- Policy focus: Japan is working to balance Japanese-taught and English-taught programmes to attract more global talent.
- Demographic context: The country's rapidly ageing population is a key factor behind efforts to attract foreign students and skilled workers.
- Skilled workforce: Around one-third of Japan's foreign workforce (about 866,000) is classified as highly skilled, with numbers growing significantly in the past decade.
- Integration and policy adjustments: Japan has introduced language supports and longer permanent residency timelines in response to integration challenges and public concerns about migration.



Japan surpassed its foreign enrolment target of 400,000 in 2025

Japan's Immigration Services Agency has announced that the number of international students in the country as of June 2025 rose to 435,200, up +8.2% over 2024. The jump was driven by a record increase in first-time students...

ICEF Monitor / Feb 19

<https://monitor.icef.com/2026/02/japan-surpassed-its-foreign-enrolment-target-of-400000-in-2025/>

CROSSWINDS

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