



SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, PUNE

Care | Courage | Competence | Collaboration
Constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University)

Symbiosis Centre for Advanced Legal Studies and Research
(SCALSAR)
in collaboration with
Symbiosis Culture, Language, Law & Justice Centre
(SCLLJC)

CALL FOR PAPERS

WORKSHOP ON
Law, Literature, Language, and Culture:
A Digital Ethnography Approach

Date: 26th February, 2026

SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)

(Established under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956) | Re-accredited by NAAC with 'A++' grade | Awarded Category- I by UGC

ABOUT **SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY).**

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is a multi-disciplinary university offering its students and faculty a vibrant learning ecosystem designed around its multi-cultural and innovative ethos. Established in 1971 by Prof. Dr. S. B. Mujumdar, Symbiosis is a ‘home away from home’ for International Students. The Institution is based on the principles of Vedic thought of “World as One Family.” The University’s name fittingly captures the quintessence of the relationship with International students; a mutually beneficial bond between India and the International student community. Campuses of Symbiosis University, spread across 4 states and 6 cities in India and Dubai, are resplendent with the activities and students from more than 85 countries. All campuses epitomise the Symbiosis Vision of “Promoting International Understanding through Quality Education” and are a beehive of International students from all across the globe, being privy to Indian culture and hospitality.

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) offers programmes across eight faculties viz. Law, Management, Computer Studies, Medical and Health Sciences, Media and Communication, Humanities and Social Sciences, Engineering and Architecture and Design. SIU has 46 constituents, 13 research centers, 10 support departments for Skills and Continuing Education. The University has been awarded Category-I status by UGC and an ‘A++’ grade by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). It has been ranked 31st in India by National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2024, and 10th by the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievement (ARIIA) 2021. The University has also been ranked 31st in QS World Ranking 2025 and 13th in Management Category and 7th in Law category under NIRF 2025. Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is committed towards generation of knowledge innovations and its contribution towards the development of the Nation.

ABOUT **SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, PUNE**

Symbiosis Law School, Pune (SLS, Pune), established in 1977 under the aegis of the Symbiosis Society, is a premier institution for legal education in India. Guided by the vision of Prof. Dr. S. B. Mujumdar, SLS, Pune strives to create world-class legal professionals, committed academicians, law reformers, justice dispensers, and socially engaged legal practitioners. It is steered by the dynamic leadership of Prof. Dr. Shashikala Gurpur, Fulbright Scholar, Honorary Professor (University of Galway, Ireland), Jean Monnet Chair Professor, co-funded by the Erasmus+ program of the European Union.

Symbiosis Law School, Pune ranked 7th in 2025, National Institution Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking by the Ministry of Education, Government of India in Law Category. Ranking 1 amongst top 10 private law colleges and ranked 6 amongst top 10 law colleges in the India Today MDRA Ranking 2025, SLSP has been awarded All India Rank 1 in the category of Top Supreme Law Schools by the GHRDC Law Schools Survey 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025. SLSP offers 5-year integrated B.A. LL.B. (Hons.), B.B.A. LL.B. (Hons.) and B.Com. L.L.B. (Hons.) Programmes; a 3-year LL.B. and a one-year LL.M. Programme with 12 specialisations, including TMT Law, Climate Change Law & Policy, A.I. & Law, and Transnational Justice and Dispute Resolution.

SLS, Pune has a strong record of internationalization through global collaborations, international project grants, semester-abroad programmes, and international summer schools. It is a recipient of the Jean Monnet Chair and Jean Monnet Module and has established SCALSAR as a hub for advanced legal research and interdisciplinary scholarship.

ABOUT

SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH (SCALSAR)

Symbiosis Centre for Advanced Legal Studies and Research (SCALSAR) was informally organized in 2007 and formalized in February 2013 by the Board of Management, SIU. It is the centerstage for research, quality publications, government interface, for hosting scholars in residence and act as think tank while undertaking interdisciplinary legal studies, research, projects, training teachers and designing training modules. It has 3 research clusters: Science, Technology, Innovation Law, Law and Justice Reform and International Comparative Law. Every year SCALSAR organizes an International Research conference, popularly known as SYMROLIC, representing Rule of Law with Indian and Global perspectives, aligning it with the SIU's vision of an interdisciplinary conference and connecting to different fields such as Innovation, Science, Technology, Human Behaviour, Global Policy and Governance.

Under its affiliation, SCALSAR accommodates and facilitates centres like the Centre for ADR and Legal Skills, Centre for International Comparative Child Rights and Centre for Climate Change, Policy and Law, established in the years 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively. It also maintains a synergy with SIU centres of excellence like the Symbiosis Centre for Urban Studies (SCUS), Symbiosis Centre for Waste Resource Management (SCWRM) and Symbiosis Centre for Research on International Higher Education (SCRIHE), amongst others. It has received various prestigious EU Project Grants such as EURASIA+, 21 Century Teach Skills, Climate Change Policy and Law, and the SPARC Project. The Centre for Climate Change Lab and the 21 Century Teach Skills Lab were recently established under the respective projects.

SLS, Pune is also the recipient of the Jean Monnet Module on the “Legal Environment of Doing Business in EU”. Faculties and students have participated in exchange programs under the DAAD project. The key performance areas for SCALSAR continue to be publication in interdisciplinary and transnational areas, consultation with Governments and policymakers, and building legal andragogy in various domains of law. Each year, SCALSAR facilitates various quality publications that feature and get indexed affiliated under SCOPUS and WOS listings.

ABOUT

SYMBIOSIS CULTURE, LANGUAGE, LAW & JUSTICE

CENTRE (SCLLJC)

Introduction

The Symbiosis Culture, Language, Law & Justice Centre (SCLLJ) is envisaged as a timely and necessary academic and research intervention within the Indian legal landscape. Modelled on the theory-praxis-action approach of the Symbiosis Centre for Advanced Legal Studies and Academic Research (SCALSAR), the Centre functions as an interdisciplinary platform committed to examining the dynamic relationship between law, culture, language, and justice.

SCLLJ is premised on the understanding that law does not operate in a vacuum; rather, it derives its meaning, legitimacy, and effectiveness from the cultural, linguistic, and social contexts within which it is embedded. In the absence of such reference points, law risks becoming alienated from lived realities, thereby undermining its normative force and social acceptance.

Why SCLLJ?

The Symbiosis Culture, Language, Law & Justice Centre (SCLLJ) was established in response to the growing recognition that the rule of law in India requires culturally grounded reference points to achieve legitimacy and social resonance. Conceived as a need-of-the-time intervention, the Centre seeks to examine how culture, language, and collective modes of reasoning shape people's engagement with law and justice. By aligning the rhythm of culture with the imperatives of the rule of law, SCLLJ aims to deepen legal understanding, dispute resolution, and justice governance in contemporary India. In Western legal traditions, particularly within settler-colonial contexts such as the United States of America and Australia, the rule of law evolved through sustained engagement with cultural frameworks, community norms, and indigenous modes of justice. By contrast, the Indian legal system largely emerged through a top-down colonial imposition of formal legal structures, often detached from indigenous cultural rhythms and epistemologies.

This historical disjunction continues to inform contemporary challenges relating to legal legitimacy, compliance, and access to justice. SCLLC seeks to address this gap by foregrounding the relationship between culture and the rule of law, and by tracing the cultural reference points through which law may be internalised, interpreted, and negotiated.

Objectives

India expresses its cultural life through languages, literatures, cinema, religious texts, oral traditions, and collective memory—repositories that provide familiar idioms for understanding notions of right, wrong, justice, and authority. Despite this, law has rarely engaged these cultural reservoirs as active resources for governance, dispute resolution, or the cultivation of legal consciousness. The Centre therefore poses a foundational inquiry: where are the cultural reference points for law in India, and how can they be meaningfully integrated into legal thought and practice?

The Centre's work spans research, pedagogy, and capacity-building, with a focus on:

- Exploring law–language–culture linkages;
- developing socio-culturally informed legal curricula;
- analysing cultural influences, cognitive biases, and heuristics in legal decision-making and conflict resolution;
- undertaking national and international research on dispute analysis, including conflict and post-conflict settings and questions of tangible and intangible cultural heritage; and
- enriching legal frameworks through ordinary folk concepts and cultural practices to advance peace and development.

The Centre is particularly attentive to debates concerning the perceived limits of the rule of law in Asian societies. Rather than treating these critiques as abstract theorisation, SCLLC situates the rule of law within its social, cultural, linguistic, and psychological contexts. It recognises that engagements with law are shaped not only by statutes and precedents, but also by belief systems, identity formations, language politics, religious narratives, and culturally embedded modes of reasoning.

While Indian judicial discourse has occasionally drawn upon cultural sources—such as references to religious texts like the Bhagavad Gita or the recognition of customs in constitutional adjudication—such engagements largely remain confined within the parameters of black-letter law. SCLLJ moves beyond this status quo by focusing on how people think about law and justice.

Adopting a historical and socio-cultural approach, the Centre examines how cognitive biases, heuristics, and culturally derived dispositions influence legal decision-making, conflict behaviour, and patterns of compliance or resistance. A key thrust of the Centre lies in reimagining dispute resolution. In a context where courts are burdened with systemic backlogs, SCLLJ explores how cultural tools can be consciously harnessed in mediation and alternative dispute resolution across domains—corporate disputes, family law, employment conflicts, and community-level disagreements. It examines what cultural elements surface during mediation processes, why culture has often been underutilised or has failed in dispute settlement, and how culturally informed interventions can lead to more durable and meaningful resolutions.

The Centre further extends its inquiry to international and comparative contexts, engaging with global frameworks that integrate culture and heritage into conflict resolution, post-conflict justice, and governance. This includes sustained engagement with questions of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, language rights, minority protections, and identity-based claims within international law and policy regimes.

SCLLJ responds to a significant curricular and research gap within legal education. Despite culture being central to individual meaning-making, community belonging, and national identity, its intersections with law and justice have rarely been examined in a systematic and sustained manner. Through interdisciplinary research, curriculum development, capacity-building initiatives, and scholarly engagement, the Centre seeks to position culture as a critical analytic lens for understanding justice governance.

Events and Activities

One of the key events was the introduction of a special track in the 13th Annual International Research Conference on Rule of Law in Context: Just World Order, Digital Life, AI and Emerging Technologies (SYMROLIC 2025) held on 25th and 26th of April 2025. The themes in the track revolved around Linguistic Rights and Minority Language Preservation, Language and Algorithmic Bias, Decolonisation of Language and Knowledge Systems, Language and Educational Equity, Linguistic Barriers and Access to Justice, Language and Gender Norms, Language and Rule of Law.

One of the key verticals functioning under the Centre is the Literature, Culture, and Justice Cell (LCJ Cell), formally known as Law Hawks, a student-led forum, that has historically anchored many of the Centre's literary and creative engagements. Through this and other Centre-facilitated initiatives, a range of activities have been undertaken. The Cell organises creative and rhetorical events including Word Games, The Speaking Tree, and Slam Poetry. It also conducts the annual Nani A. Palkhivala Memorial Intra-College Elocution Competition, followed by the co-hosting of the Nani A. Palkhivala Memorial Inter-Collegiate Elocution Competition in association with the Nani A. Palkhivala Memorial Trust, Mumbai, with distinguished members of the legal fraternity serving as judges.

Through its academic, pedagogic, and community-oriented engagements, the Symbiosis Culture, Language, Law & Justice Centre aspires to make a distinctive contribution to legal research, justice movements, and governance in India. Grounded in local realities and in dialogue with global developments, SCLLJ seeks to rehumanise law by aligning the rhythms of culture with the imperatives of the rule of law, in pursuit of peace, development, and meaningful access to justice.

Upcoming Workshop

Translating its broader intellectual mandate into focused scholarly engagement, the SCLLJ Centre curates thematic interventions that foreground law's cultural and narrative life. The present workshop on Law, Literature, Language, and Culture: A Digital Ethnography Approach builds on the Centre's interest in legal consciousness and representation by directing attention to ethnographic, literary, and mediated sites where legal meanings are produced and contested. In doing so, it creates a conceptual bridge between the Centre's work on culture and justice and emerging approaches that examine law within everyday, digital, and narrative practices.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP AND CALL FOR PAPERS

Law is not only a formal system of rules and institutions but also a cultural and narrative practice shaped by language, literature, memory, and everyday experiences of power. Legal meanings are produced and contested through stories, testimonies, literary forms, oral traditions, and cultural representations that extend beyond courts and statutes. Yet, in India and across the Global South, the voices and narrative practices of indigenous and other marginalized communities remain significantly underrepresented within dominant legal and cultural frameworks.

This workshop, convened under the aegis of the Symbiosis Culture, Language, Law & Justice Centre (SCLLJC) in collaboration with SCALSAR, invites interdisciplinary engagements with law as a cultural, linguistic, and literary phenomenon. It seeks to create a space for critical inquiry into how justice, legality, and rights are imagined, articulated, and negotiated through narrative forms, languages, and cultural practices across both offline and mediated contexts. Recent scholarship in digital ethnography has emphasized that the digital is not a discrete or exceptional domain but is deeply embedded in everyday social life, reshaping how memory, voice, visibility, and authority circulate—a position articulated most clearly in Christine Hine’s work on embedded and connective ethnography and Sarah Pink’s theorization of digital practices as entangled with embodied, sensory, and everyday worlds.

Digital and networked media increasingly function as supplementary field sites where legal consciousness is formed, contested, and narrated—through social media testimonies, online archives, vernacular digital storytelling, activist documentation, and community-led platforms. Such mediated spaces do not merely transmit legal meanings but actively participate in their production, circulation, and interpretation.

Against this backdrop, the workshop foregrounds substantive analyses of law's cultural life, while remaining attentive to ethnographic, literary, and interpretive approaches that account for embodied, relational, and situated practices of meaning-making. Contributions may draw upon ethnographic sensibilities—including digital or mediated engagements—without reducing the inquiry to methodological debates alone.

The workshop aims to bring together scholars, researchers, and practitioners working at the intersections of law, literature, language, and culture to examine questions of legal consciousness, representation, access to justice, and narrative authority, particularly in relation to historically marginalized communities.

Themes and Areas of Interest

Submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Law as narrative, socio-cultural practice, and lived experience
- Literature, folklore, and oral traditions as sites of legal meaning production
- Language, translation, and linguistic hierarchies in legal institutions
- Indigenous and vernacular literatures and their engagement with law and justice
- Legal consciousness, memory, testimony, and community narratives
- Representation of law and justice in popular culture and media
- Access to justice, marginality, and non-elite rights-claiming practices
- Ethics of interpreting and representing marginalized voices in legal scholarship
- Mediated and digital spaces as supplementary sites of legal expression, memory, and contestation

Interdisciplinary and critical approaches drawing from law, sociology, literature, cultural studies, anthropology, linguistics, and related fields are particularly encouraged.

Submission Guidelines

- **Extended Abstract Length:** 1,000–1,200 words
- **Full Paper:** 5,000 words *OR* **Working Papers:** 3,500 words*
- **Content:** Abstracts should clearly outline the research question, theoretical framework, methodology or approach, and the relevance of the paper to the workshop themes.
- **Mode:** Hybrid
- **Submission Deadline:** 18 February 2026
- **Notification of Acceptance:** 20 February 2026
- **Registration Deadline:** 22 February 2026

Selected participants will be invited to present their papers at the workshop on 26 February 2026. The workshop format will prioritise discussion and feedback.

*Full-length paper presentations are encouraged. However, submission in the form of working papers may also be presented.

Eligibility

The CFP invites submissions from academicians, faculty members, independent and doctoral researchers, and students in law, humanities, and the social sciences, along with those engaged with Dalit, tribal, queer, and linguistic minority communities in relation to questions of law, culture, and justice.

- Maximum of three collaborators per submission
- Only one presenter per paper

Publication Opportunities

Papers will be considered for publication in Scopus-indexed journals, subject to a post-review decision.

Registration Details

Registration Fees:

- Academicians / Faculty: ₹1,180
- Independent / Doctoral Scholars and Students: ₹590

The registration fees are inclusive of GST. The registration fee is waived for Symbiosis faculty and students.

Selected participants will be required to complete registration only after their papers have been accepted. Awards will be conferred for the 'Best Paper' and 'Best Presentation' at the workshop.

Submission Form

[Click here to submit.](#)

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