

9th April, 2025

Igniting Futures

Orientation Programme for the Class of 2026 at Jio Institute





With a harmonious blend of energy, aspiration, and profound insight, Jio Institute ushered in its newest cohort — the PGP Class of 2026 — through a thoughtfully curated Orientation Programme. Held between the 9th and the 14th of April 2025, the programme was designed not merely as an introduction, but as a foundational experience encompassing academic readiness, personal development, and community spirit within the cutting-edge ambience of the campus.

Day 1: A Warm Welcome

The programme commenced on Wednesday, 9th April, with a check-in process, where students and their families were greeted with warmth and enthusiasm by the Orientation Committee. Friendly volunteers, dressed in Institute colours, guided newcomers to their hostels, assisted with luggage, and ensured a seamless registration experience.

The atmosphere buzzed with excitement and curiosity as students toured the campus, explored its state-of-the-art facilities, and familiarized themselves with the serene yet dynamic environment that would soon become home.

As dusk settled, the community gathered at the Jio Institute cafeteria for a hearty **Welcome Dinner**. Faculty, staff, institutional leaders, and student mentors joined the new batch in a vibrant evening of conversation and connection. Speeches by key administrators emphasized the values of collaboration, inclusivity, and innovation. Laughter echoed and friendships began to take root — the perfect prologue to the transformational journey ahead.







Day 2: Getting Settled and Grounded

Thursday morning opened with a focus on programme enrolment. Students completed essential documentation — from identity verification to compliance undertakings, including anti-ragging and hostel protocols. These administrative steps were underscored by the Institute's unwavering commitment to student safety, ethics, and a respectful community culture.

Afterwards, energy levels soared during a lively **ice-breaking session**. Facilitated by student volunteers and counsellors, the session featured team-building exercises, quick games, and reflective activities that encouraged openness and mutual respect.

Many students shared how this initial camaraderie helped break the ice and alleviate first-day jitters.

Following a light refreshment break, students were introduced to their academic departments through dedicated sessions with Programme Heads and faculty. These interactions offered an overview of programme structures, academic expectations, and career opportunities, helping students chart their academic and professional aspirations.

The afternoon's highlight was a session on **Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH)**, led by **Ms. Monica Dhar**, Senior GM of Holistic Wellbeing (P&R), Reliance Industries Limited. With clarity and compassion, she emphasized the importance of mutual dignity, consent, and a zero-tolerance policy towards harassment. The session concluded with an interactive Q&A, affirming the Institute's commitment to creating a safe and empowering space for all.

Day 3: Academic Immersion Begins

Friday marked a turning point — the transition from orientation to immersion. The day began with an inspiring address by our Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Dipak Jain. **He urged students to adopt a global mindset, uphold academic integrity, and embrace leadership not as a title but as a responsibility.** His words, steeped in wisdom and empathy, set a resonant tone for what lies ahead.

Following this, students were divided into domain-specific **Foundational Boot Camps**. Those in the AI & Data Science track engaged in a rigorous **Mathematics refresher course**, focusing on linear algebra, probability, and essential logic concepts. Simultaneously, Sports Management students delved into the intricacies of **Microsoft Excel** — a crucial tool for data analysis, reporting, and operations in the sports industry. These sessions helped create a common academic baseline, ensuring every student starts with the tools for success.

Later in the day, the Academic Services department introduced students to the operational aspects of academic life. They explained the Honour Code, assessment formats, grade point calculations, and how the curriculum is designed for interdisciplinary exploration. Students were also introduced to the Digital Learning Portal and support services, including library access and peer-assisted study groups.



Day 4: Skills for the Real World

Saturday, 13th April, brought a sharp focus to the practical and professional dimensions of the Jio Institute experience — equipping students not just to learn, but to lead. The day was a curated blend of strategy, storytelling, and skill development, drawing from the lived experiences and expertise of acclaimed facilitators.





Session 1

Structured Thinking for Case Solving

Dr. Vishnu Prasad V

The day opened with an intellectually invigorating session by Dr. Vishnu Prasad V, Assistant Professor, who introduced students to the core principles of Structured Thinking. With a crisp yet accessible approach, he walked the cohort through problem-solving frameworks that are staples in consulting and strategic management, including the MECE framework (Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive), issue trees, and hypothesis-driven thinking.

Dr. Prasad emphasized that “structured thinking is less about finding the right answer and more about asking the right questions.” Through real-life business scenarios and interactive exercises, students practiced breaking down complex challenges into manageable hypotheses, helping them develop an analytical mindset that can be applied across industries.

He urged the students to view every business problem as a layered puzzle, one that could be approached with methodical curiosity rather than chaos. The session was not only foundational for those interested in consulting careers but also universally relevant for anyone navigating ambiguity in a fast-changing world.

Session 2

Business Trailblazer – Charting Competitive Pathways

Next came an energy-packed workshop titled “Business Trailblazer”, which served as an experiential gateway into the competitive and collaborative opportunities that lie ahead.

What set this session apart was its interactive narrative. Real stories from past cohorts were shared, including anecdotes of students who started unsure but rose to national recognition by pushing boundaries.

Whether it was the exhilaration of pitching to executives or the humility gained from failing fast in a mock IPO simulation, each story illuminated the value of bold participation.

Students were then challenged to map their personal growth trajectories — choosing at least one competition or platform they would commit to within the first quarter.

The session concluded with the message: “It’s not about winning every time; it’s about showing up and evolving every time.”



Session 3

Building Inclusive Cultures

Ms. Hemalakshmi Raju

The afternoon transitioned into a more reflective and emotionally resonant space with a workshop by **Ms. Hemalakshmi Raju**, Chief Learning Officer and Leader – Diversity & Inclusion at RIL. Her session, “The Culture We Create,” delved into the heart of inclusive leadership and the critical need for empathy in today’s corporate and social environments.

Through compelling storytelling — drawing from personal experiences within RIL and her interactions across global cultures — Ms. Raju helped students understand how unconscious biases form and how they can be gently unlearned. In one moving segment,

she recounted how a minor oversight in language inclusion once affected a team dynamic, highlighting how the smallest details can have the largest emotional ripple.

Interactive segments followed, including a privilege walk and empathy mapping, which brought the students face-to-face with their own assumptions and strengths. **“Inclusion isn’t just policy — it’s a practice. It’s how we show up for each other every day,”** she concluded, leaving the room stirred and introspective.





Session 4

Executive Summary Mastery - From Clarity to Impact

The final session of the day, Executive Summary Mastery, rounded off the evening with practical tools for impactful communication. The session taught students how to distil complex analyses into succinct, action-oriented summaries — a crucial skill in boardrooms, project proposals, and academic assignments alike.

Students were provided with templates and sample summaries across sectors — from sports event proposals to AI strategy briefs — and then engaged in hands-on writing exercises. Peer reviews encouraged collaborative feedback, while facilitators emphasised key elements of clarity, tone, and structured flow.

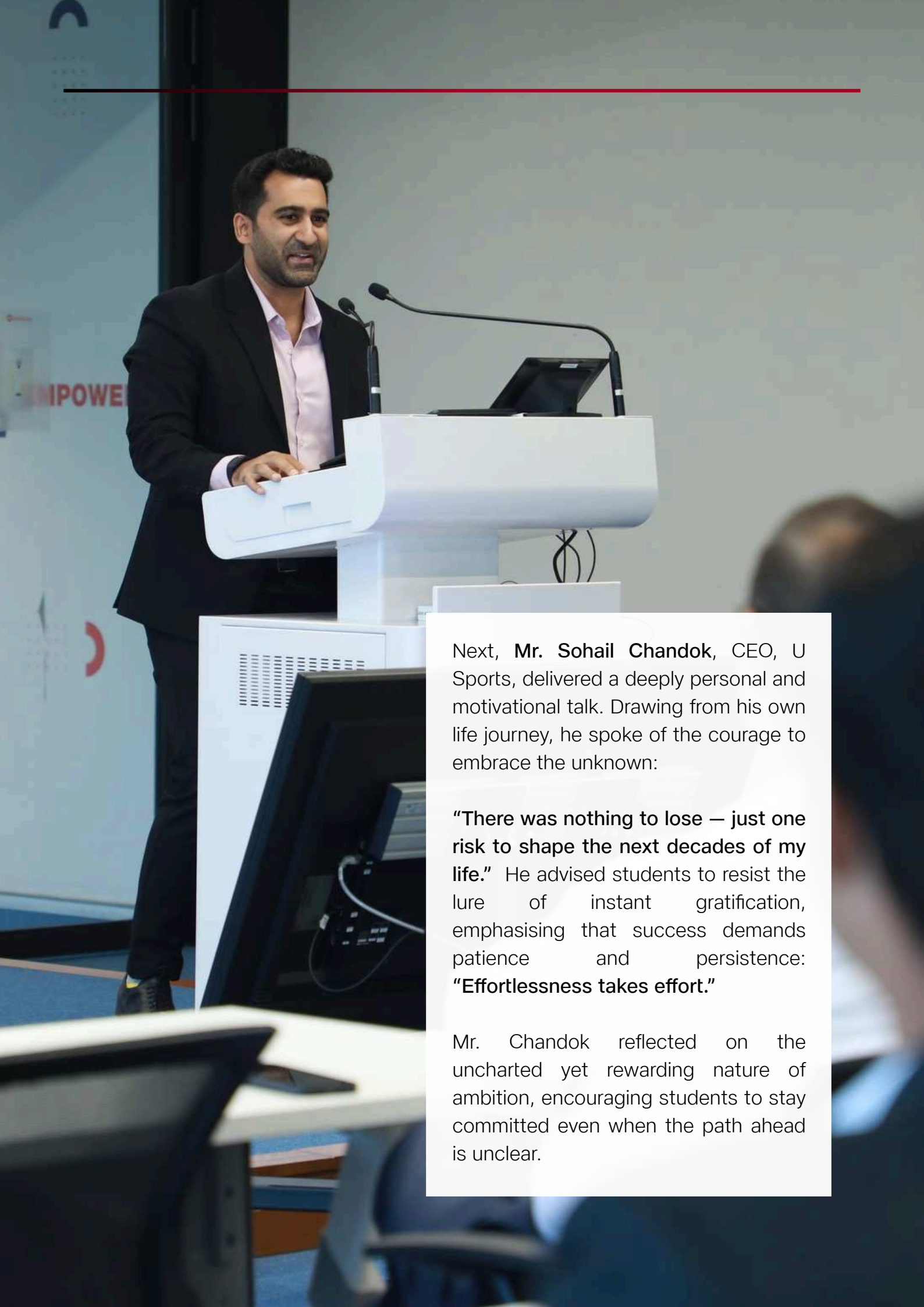
“Think of the executive summary as your handshake with the reader — it must be firm, brief, and meaningful”. The session left students not only with tools but with a new awareness of how powerful precise expression can be in influencing decisions and driving outcomes.

Day 5: The Inaugural Session

After a well-deserved Sunday break, Monday, 14th April, witnessed the grand culmination of the Orientation Programme with the Inaugural Session — a confluence of purpose, reflection, and visionary insights.

Dr. Palak Sheth, Project Director at Jio Institute, opened the session with an inspiring address, urging students to view their journey as an opportunity to grow with intent. **"We are not just building careers; we are building institutions with purpose,"** he remarked, encouraging students to innovate, contribute, and pursue excellence.





Next, **Mr. Sohail Chandok**, CEO, U Sports, delivered a deeply personal and motivational talk. Drawing from his own life journey, he spoke of the courage to embrace the unknown:

"There was nothing to lose — just one risk to shape the next decades of my life." He advised students to resist the lure of instant gratification, emphasising that success demands patience and persistence: **"Effortlessness takes effort."**

Mr. Chandok reflected on the uncharted yet rewarding nature of ambition, encouraging students to stay committed even when the path ahead is unclear.





Following this, **Ms. Rajshri Bakshi**, Senior Vice President, RIL and Creative Director in AI, delivered a riveting discourse on the intersection of creativity and data science. From AI algorithms that detect consumer preferences — like Chloe Lattice sneakers-to how Netflix tailors content to individual tastes, her talk demonstrated the power of strategic data application.

She referenced collaborations such as that between Netflix and the Four Seasons Hotel Chain, which gave rise

to the hit series *White Lotus*, tailored for an affluent, multi-generational audience.

Further, she spoke about the use of **Respeecher AI** in enhancing linguistic authenticity - notably augmenting Hungarian accents in cinematic performances-and how artificial intelligence is employed to elevate visual storytelling in the film *The Brutalist*. Her takeaway for students:

“Ask questions. Have the inquisitiveness alive in you.”





The session concluded with a forward-looking keynote from **Mr. Mukesh Jain**, Chief Technology Officer and Executive Vice President at Capgemini. He emphasised the imperative to move beyond data and embrace analytics as a decision-making tool. By citing real-world examples such as Outlook's personalised spam detection algorithms, he illustrated how technology now adapts through both explicit affirmations and subtle behavioural cues. **"Data creates both activity and inactivity,"** he explained, reinforcing the idea that machine learning evolves not only through what we engage with, but also through what we ignore.

Mr. Jain closed with a call to intellectual curiosity, urging students to cultivate an analytical mindset and never cease questioning the world around them.



A Launchpad for Lifelong Learning

As the Class of 2026 concluded their Orientation Programme, they departed not merely with schedules or course outlines, but with a renewed sense of purpose and a community to call their own. The programme served as a launchpad — a platform to dream, to explore, and to grow.

From ice-breaking games to impassioned inaugural addresses, the Orientation Programme was not just a rite of passage — it was a spirited invitation to the future. And with such an inspiring start, the Class of 2026 stands well-positioned to make their mark on the world.



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