

PROJECTS AT IICD, JAIPUR

Issue No. 01 – September 07, 2026

CRAFTS, MOVEMENT AND WELL-BEING:

IICD JAIPUR HOSTS JAIPUR ARTS & HEALTH FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

On 3rd September 2026, IICD, Jaipur, collaborated with the Jaipur Arts & Health Festival (JAHF) to create a reflective and engaging space exploring the intersection of crafts, design, mental health and well-being.

JAHF has been running as a month-long, city-wide initiative across Jaipur seeking to move conversations around art beyond aesthetics and entertainment, towards its possibilities as a tool for well-being, self-expression, mental health and community connection. The collaboration brought this larger conversation into the IICD campus through an immersive movement workshop and an interdisciplinary panel discussion.

The programme began with the Movement Therapy Workshop – “Connection, Trust & Grounding”, facilitated by Surbhi Jain Sankhla, Dance Movement Therapy Practitioner and Co-Founder of JAHF. Around 40 students from the Foundation Batch participated in the session, which offered them an opportunity to move beyond the routine of classes, assignments and submissions and engage with their bodies, emotions and one another. Through movement, energy circles and group activities, students were encouraged to



loosen up, reconnect with themselves and explore how emotions could be experienced and expressed without necessarily having to articulate or explain them.

The workshop also included a creative group activity where students created charts around emotions; what they were feeling and what those feelings felt like. The session was widely enjoyed by the students, creating a space that was described as both beautiful and fun, while also allowing them to pause and reconnect with themselves.

This was followed by the panel discussion, “Passion, Profession & Well-being: Making a Life through Craft,” attended by students, faculty, staff and senior management of IICD. The discussion brought together perspectives from craft, design and mental health. The panelists were,



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Dr. Radhana Raheja, Assistant Professor at IICD; **Malobika Pal**, Assistant Professor, IICD; **Palak Mehta**, Art Psychotherapist and Founder of Sambhaavnayein Wellbeing Space; and **Mrigtrishna Rathore**, Counsellor at IICD and Founder of Khejdi – A Community Mental Health Initiative, with **Nandita**, Projects Manager, IICD, as moderator. The conversation focused on navigating mental health, expectations, uncertainty, professional aspirations and collective well-being within creative education and practice.



Mrigtrishna emphasised the importance of communicating and sharing what one is experiencing, particularly while navigating the pressures of college, peer expectations and the gap between what students imagine college life to be and what they actually experience.

Palak Mehta introduced the idea of using art as a form of expression without always needing to dissect or assign meaning to it. She encouraged participants to simply “colour the emotion you’re feeling today”, highlighting the possibility of using creative practice to express and acknowledge emotions.

Dr. Radhana Raheja reflected on the importance of taking healthy breaks and developing trust in one’s faculties and institution, particularly during periods of uncertainty and change.

The discussion also explored how a creative practice can become a personal anchor while navigating professional life. Speaking about collective mental well-being, Prof. Malobika Pal drew attention to traditional craft communities, recalling how artisan women working together on textiles such as Katha would naturally talk about their everyday lives while engaging in embroidery.

The process of creating together, she observed, could become a space for expression, connection and a sense of safety within a like-minded community. The panel discussion was followed by an engaging Q&A session, where students raised thoughtful questions on coping with mental health, time management and career decision-making, further enriching the discourse.

IICD Director, Prof. (Dr.) Toolika Gupta encouraged students to resist constant comparison and instead identify what genuinely resonates with them.

Together, the workshop and discussion created a reflective space that offered participants an opportunity to disconnect from routine and reconnect with the self. The programme was widely appreciated and enjoyed by students, faculty and staff, and opened up meaningful conversations around how making, movement, creativity and community can become everyday spaces for care, connection and well-being.



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HIGHLIGHTS

“Make your own life meaningful by doing what you like the most.”

— Prof. (Dr.) Toolika Gupta,
Director, IICD Jaipur



“Colour the emotion you’re feeling today.”

— Palak Mehta



“Communicate and share what you are experiencing.”

— Mrigtrishna Rathore



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