

The John Galt School, India

inspired by

AYN RAND'S

philosophy
of
Objectivism





John Galt School India 2025 Report

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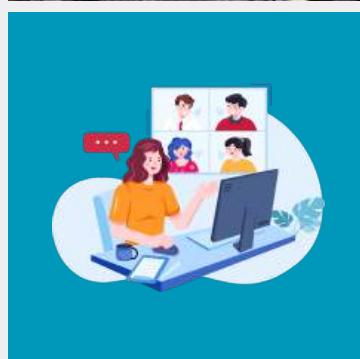
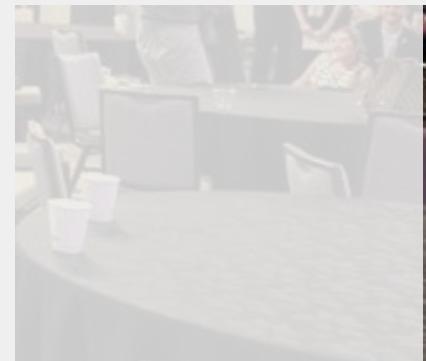
ATLAS SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL



John Galt School India is an 8-week online program to help young Indians explore freedom, reason, and individualism through Ayn Rand's Objectivism, and apply these ideas to life, leadership, and public policy

The Swatantrata Center proudly partners with The Atlas Society International to host the John Galt School (JGS). This collaboration, supported by our prestigious national and international connections, ensures an exceptional and memorable learning experience for all participants.

www.swatantrata.org | www.atlassociety.org



Prepared by
Raghavendar Askani
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About The John Galt School

John Galt School (JGS) is a global educational program rooted in Ayn Rand's Objectivism, where students explore metaphysics, ethics, politics, economics, and art. It blends lectures, debates, and workshops so participants actively apply ideas to life, challenge conventional beliefs, and sharpen critical thinking. The program fosters personal growth, clarity of purpose, and a deeper grasp of reason, individualism, and liberty.

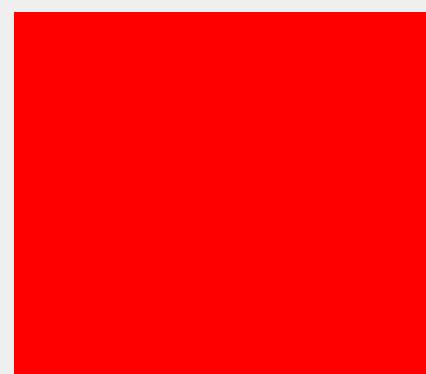
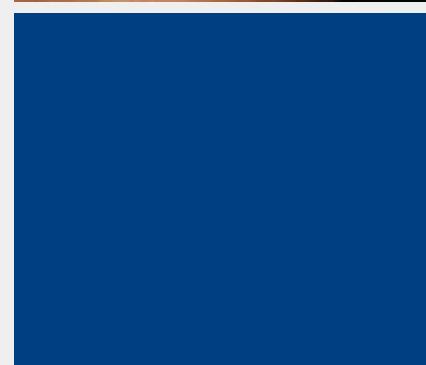
Launched in 2015 in Belgrade, John Galt School has grown from a small local initiative to 100+ editions in 50+ countries, reaching over 2,000 participants. It selects around 25 students per cohort, partners with local organizations, and creates an intensive setting where ideas lead to action, helping participants clarify goals, rethink assumptions, and pursue freer, more purposeful lives.

In India, John Galt School is an intensive 8-week online program hosted by Swatantrata Center in collaboration with The Atlas Society, inspired by Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*. It links Objectivism to Indian debates on governance, markets, and capitalism, using lectures, debates, and projects to help carefully selected young participants think independently and apply reason, individualism, and liberty as free-thinking leaders building a freer, more prosperous society.



The question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me.

--- Ayn Rand





Who We Are

The **Swatantrata Center** is an Indian classical liberal think tank focused on lifting barriers to human flourishing and defending individual freedom. It works through policy education, digital activism, and grassroots advocacy on issues like economic liberty, governance, civil liberties, and rule of law. By mentoring young leaders and partnering with diverse institutions, it promotes a peaceful, prosperous society where every individual can live with dignity and opportunity.

Swatantrata Center hosted John Galt School India 2025, an 8-week online Objectivism program with Atlas Society. Lectures and debates equipped young Indians to champion reason, individualism, and liberty in governance and markets. Graduates lead as free thinkers.



Objective reality: “existence exists,” facts over feelings



Rational self-interest



Reason as absolute





As an organizer for JGS India 2025, I had the privilege of helping shape the curriculum, facilitate lively discussions, and design meaningful assignments that brought Ayn Rand's ideas of reason, individualism, and rational self-interest to life for bright Indian students. Watching participants connect these principles to their own lives was truly inspiring. The discussion sessions and thoughtful reflections showed real clarity, and seeing their breakthroughs made every effort worthwhile. A heartfelt thank you to the brilliant lecturers and mentors for their inspiring guidance, and to the wonderful teams at The Atlas Society International (TASI) and Swatantrata Center for their seamless collaboration and vision that made John Galt School India 2025 so transformative.

Rida Yumn Ahmed

Program Associate at the Swatantrata Center
and coordinator of the John Galt School, India





Being involved in the Organizing the John Galt School was an enriching experience that enhanced my personal and professional growth. From planning to execution, I learned how coordination, time management, and teamwork ensure successful academic programs. Managing speakers, communication, and session logistics offered practical exposure to organizational dynamics. Engaging in stimulating discussions and facilitating interactions with diverse participants broadened my perspectives. The experience strengthened my leadership, communication, and problem-solving abilities while highlighting the value of collaboration and adaptability. Overall, it deepened my appreciation for structured dialogue, learning, and knowledge-sharing in an intellectually engaging environment.



Ahinsha Jain

coordinator of the John Galt School, India



Organizing the John Galt School was a truly enriching and enjoyable experience for me. I loved hosting the speakers and engaging with their insightful opinions, which made every session exciting. Interacting with participants and hearing diverse ideas and viewpoints added great value to the discussions. Overall, the experience strengthened my organizational and management skills and deepened my appreciation for meaningful dialogue and learning.

Srishti Singh

coordinator of the John Galt School, India



Impressive Reach and Engagement

Pre-Program Outreach

Prior to the program's launch, JGS generated significant interest, drawing **152 high-quality applications** from diverse demographics. This surge in submissions reflects the program's resonance with university students, young professionals, academics, and intellectually curious individuals eager to explore Objectivist principles. The application window, which closed on August 31, 2025, was marked by a rolling admissions process that emphasized merit and passion, leading to an exceptionally competitive selection.

Geographic Diversity in India

Applications spanned **19 out of 28 states in India**, demonstrating broad national penetration and inclusivity across urban, semi-urban, and rural areas. This coverage included key economic hubs, cultural centers, and emerging regions, ensuring representation from nearly two-thirds of India's states.

Urban Footprint

The JGS program reached **43 distinct Indian cities**, encompassing all major metropolitan areas and extending to smaller towns. This urban diversity highlights JGS's ability to connect with thinkers in bustling megacities as well as quieter locales, fostering a nationwide dialogue on individualism and ethics.

Global Diaspora Engagement

Beyond India's borders, JGS attracted applications from the Indian diaspora in 8 countries, showcasing its international appeal and the global relevance of Objectivist ideas. This cross-border interest from expatriates in neighboring nations and major Western economies amplified the program's prestige.





JGS 2025's record participation and massive digital footprint delivered India-scale impact, establishing the Swatantrata Center and The Atlas Society as leading Objectivist advocates.



Spots

25

JGS India maintained high levels of interaction through online sessions, workshops, and discussions. The emphasis on critical thinking, ethics, and economics kept participants engaged, while external outreach efforts expanded the program's visibility.



Social Media Impressions

10+ million



JGS fellows
from 2025

15



Our Faculty, Instructors, and Speakers lead

some of the most prestigious organizations that advancing Freedom and flourishing across the world. Few of them are here

**ATLAS SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL**



**INDIAN
SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC
POLICY**

 **Centre for
CIVIL
SOCIETY**
SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH PUBLIC POLICY



FDR
FOUNDATION FOR
DEMOCRATIC
REFORMS


**STUDENTS FOR LIBERTY
SOUTH ASIA**



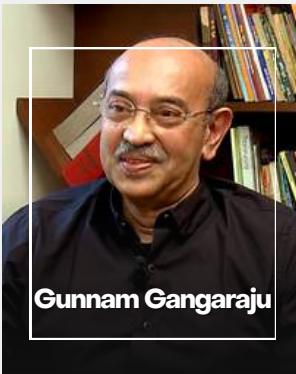
SWATANTRATA
CENTER FOR HUMAN FLOURISHING FOUNDATION



JGS India's Faculty



Stephen Hicks



Gunnam Gangaraju



Deva Katta



Dr. Jaya Prakash Narayana



Dr. Parth J. Shah

Stephen R. C. Hicks, Ph.D., is a Professor of Philosophy and Senior Scholar at the Atlas Society. Author of Explaining Postmodernism, Nietzsche and the Nazis, Entrepreneurial Living, Liberalism Pro and Con, and Eight Philosophies of Education, he has published in top journals and The Wall Street Journal. His works span 20 languages. Visiting Professor at Georgetown, Oxford, and Polish universities.

Gunnam Gangaraju is an author, Telugu film producer, screenwriter, and director, best known for creating the iconic TV sitcom Amrutham and producing National Award winner Aithe (2003). Films like Little Soldiers (1996) and Anukokunda Oka Roju (2005) earned acclaim. His novel Vihangam echoes Ayn Rand's style, championing individual freedom and rationalism through Just Yellow Studios.

Deva Katta, an Indian-American director with an MS in Mechanical Engineering from Wayne State University, crafts Telugu cult hits Vennela (2005) and the award-winning Prasthanam (2010). From General Motors to film, he draws on Ayn Rand, calling Autonagar Surya his "Howard Roark action film." His planned society quadrilogy probes legislative, executive, judicial, and common perspectives.

Dr. Jaya Prakash Narayana, ex-IAS officer, founded Lok Satta and the Foundation for Democratic Reforms. A classical liberal reformer, he champions smaller government, economic freedom, decentralization, and key laws like the Right to Information. His advocacy for individual liberty, electoral accountability, and good governance makes him a leading voice for principled change in Indian politics and society.

Dr. Parth J. Shah, founder of the Centre for Civil Society and co-founder of the Indian School of Public Policy, is a leading Indian policy advocate. Inspired by Ayn Rand's The Fountainhead and Atlas Shrugged, he promotes economic freedom, education reform, and good governance through free markets and individual empowerment. Previously taught economics at the University of Michigan; author of key policy works.



Ram Gopal Varma



Robert Tracinski



Jerry Johnson



Aaliya Akhtar

Award-winning Indian film director, screenwriter, and producer RGV pioneers new age cinema with gritty realism for the crime masterpieces Satya (1998) and Company (2002). Inspired by Ayn Rand's The Fountainhead, which he dreams of adapting, his "Ramuism" champions nonconformism, personal freedom, and individualism. His bold films and commentary explore power, ego, and psychology, defying conventions.

Robert Tracinski studied philosophy at the University of Chicago and has been a writer, lecturer, and commentator for more than 25 years. He is the editor of Symposium, a journal of political liberalism, is a columnist for Discourse magazine, and writes The Tracinski Letter. He is the author of So Who Is John Galt Anyway? A Reader's Guide to Ayn Rand's Atlas Shrugged.

Jerry Johnson, an Indian writer and speaker on diversity, culture, and identity, serves as VP of Communication & Brand at Reliance. A TFAS fellow and Atlas Summit participant, he champions free speech, LGBTQ rights, and individual liberty. Co-author of I Am Divine. So Are You, his commentary on national news promotes civil discourse and free society through communication, psychology, and philosophy.

Aaliya Akhtar, Swatantrata Center Fellow and Hyderabad lawyer (BA LLB, Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University), co-founded Not a Goddess feminist magazine and book club. Formerly Campaign Manager and Fellowship Lead at I-PAC, Senior Local Coordinator at Students For Liberty South Asia, Gender Lab Fellow, and LedBy Corporate Leaders Fellow (2021).





Inaugural Interaction

What is Real? Objectivism & Metaphysics

(Pre-Recorded Lecture)



Stephen Hicks, Ph.D.

Canadian-American philosopher, Atlas Society Senior Scholar, and the Director of the Center for Ethics and Entrepreneurship at Rockford University.



“The basic metaphysical issue that lies at the root of any system of philosophy [is] the primacy of existence or the primacy of consciousness.”

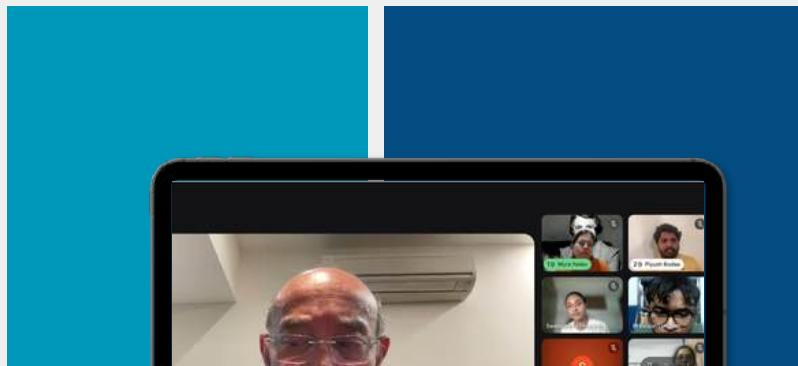
Ayn Rand, “The Metaphysical Versus the Man-Made,”
Philosophy: Who Needs It





Second lecture Interaction

Fostering Individualism in Indian Storytelling, Cinema, and Societal Reform



Gunnam Gangaraju

Author, Indian film producer, National Film Awards-winning director, and writer

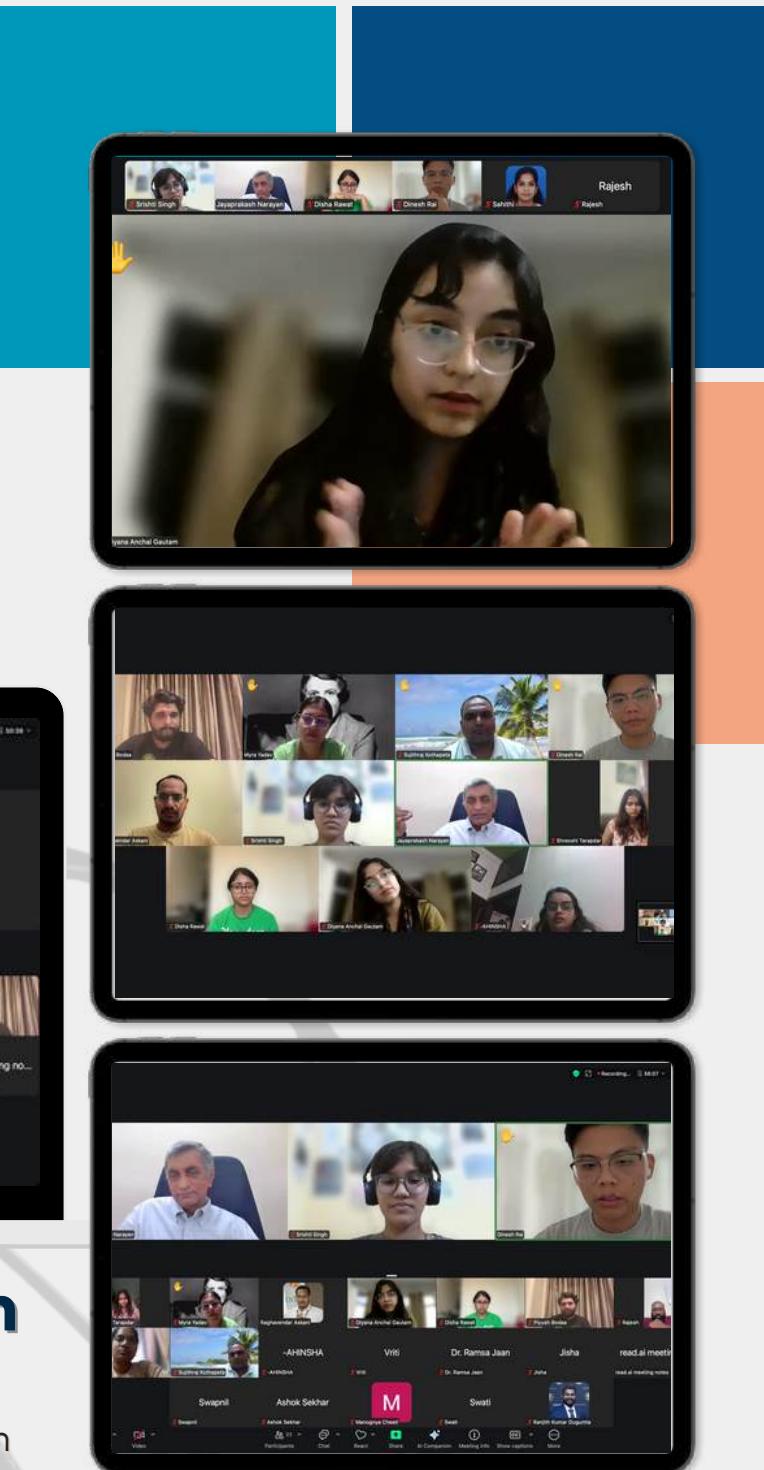
Deva Katta

Award-winning Indian-American film directors and screenwriter



Third lecture: Interaction

Objectivist Politics, Decentralization as the foundation of Limited Government and market economy



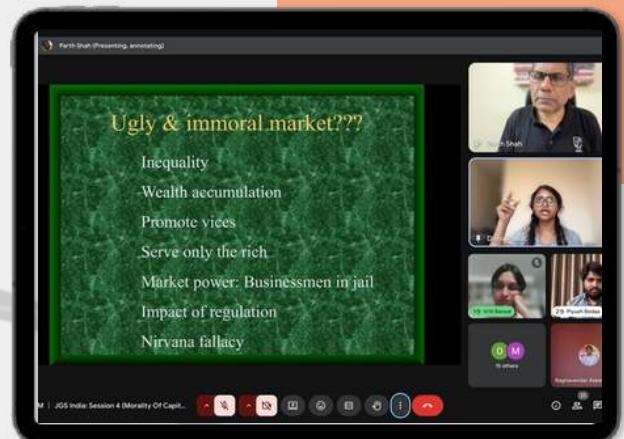
Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan

Indian liberal politician, activist, and a former Public administrator and Founder, Foundation for democratic Reforms and LokSatta



Fourth lecture: Interaction

Morality of capitalism: Moral case for free market capitalism



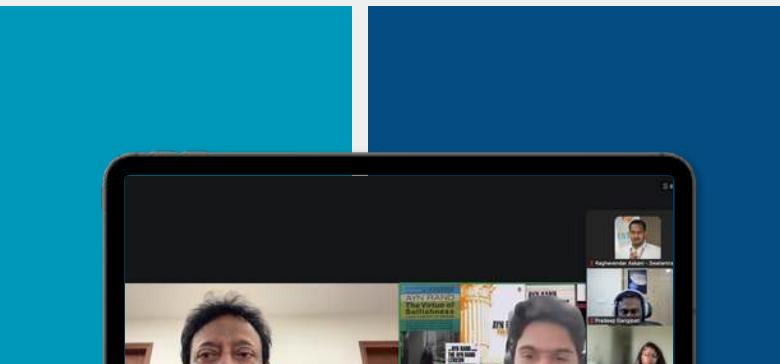
Dr. Parth J Shah

Dean of Indian School of Public Policy and
Founder-President of Centre for Civil Society, and
Council of Mentor at Atlas Network



Fifth lecture: Interaction

Art Dies When Filmmakers Beg for Approval



Ram Gopal Varma

Award-winning Indian film director, screenwriter, and producer, pioneers new age cinema with gritty realism





Sixth lecture: Interaction

Robert Tracinski— Objectivist Ethics

(Pre-Recorded Lecture)



Robert Tracinski

Senior Fellow at the Atlas Society. he is a writer, lecturer, and Objectivist commentator for over 25 years





Discussion on Objectivism

Discussion on Objectivism: A blueprint for a life well-lived.



Jerry Johnson

Indian writer and speaker on diversity, culture, and identity. VP - Communication & Brand at Reliance and A fellow of The Fund for American Studies (TFAS)





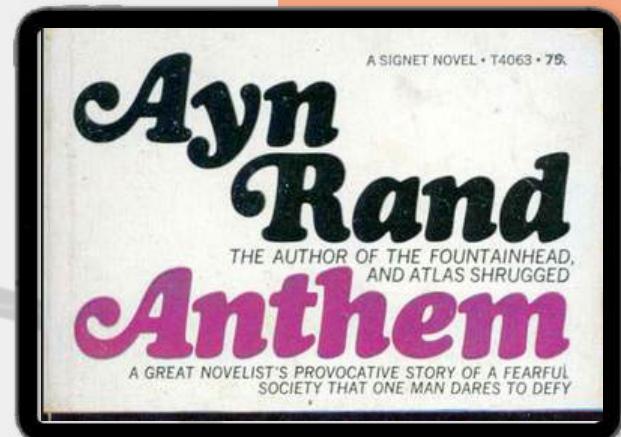
Workshop: Anthem Book Club

Workshop: Anthem Book Club



Aaliya Akhtar

Swatantrata Center Fellow and practicing lawyer and feminist. She served as Campaign Manager and Fellowship Lead at I-PAC, Senior Local Coordinator at Students For Liberty South Asia,





JGS India Fellows

Experiences and Learnings

The most valuable lesson I gained from the John Galt School India is learning to practice Objectivism in my daily life to think rationally, act deliberately, and take responsibility for my choices. The school taught me to lead with reason while honouring the freedom of individual choices, helping me make conscious decisions, set healthier boundaries, and live more intentionally. The lectures and discussions encouraged me to think independently, form well-reasoned opinions, and stand by them confidently. Applying rational principles every day has reshaped how I think and live, giving me clarity, direction, and a stronger sense of self. I'm truly grateful for this growth.



Shreoshi Tarapdar
Educator (Fellow), Teach for India
Pune, Maharashtra



My experience at John Galt School India was amazing. I gained deep knowledge about the philosophy of Objectivism championed by Ayn Rand. I immensely enjoyed the interactive sessions wherein I learnt a lot from the Guest speakers, lecturers, and my peers in the cohort. I highly recommend gaining the holistic experience at John Galt School India!

Myra Yadav

LSR College, Delhi University graduate
Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh





I attended the John Galt India program on Objectivism, which helped me move beyond abstract theory to see its practical relevance in everyday decision-making. It reshaped how I think about reason, individuality, and moral clarity in work and life. The program challenged many assumptions I held earlier and opened up new ways of interpreting objectivist dimensions. It has sparked a lasting curiosity to keep exploring Objectivism more deeply.



Vriti Bansal

Public Policy Professional
Hyderabad, Telangana



Seamless & wide experience—both in terms of the functioning of things and in terms of the knowledge we received via experienced guests who were very open to the discussions of their respective fields and objectivism. The assignments were equally creative and challenging, which created an amazing product at the end from the Objectivists' perspectives. Overall, a very engaging and useful experience.

Jisha Jain

Student at Barkatullah University
Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.





John Galt School deepened my understanding of Ayn Rand's Objectivism by presenting its principles with great clarity. The structured lectures, thoughtful discussions, and emphasis on rational inquiry helped me grasp core ideas like reason, individualism, and ethical egoism beyond the text. It transformed Objectivism from an abstract philosophy into a coherent, practical framework for thinking and living.



Srishti Singh

Student, Army Institute of Law
Chandigarh, Punjab



The John Galt School offered a clear and rigorous introduction to Objectivist principles, especially rational self interest, individual agency, and purposeful action. Faculty discussions on philosophy, ethics, economics, and institutions helped me build sharper mental models for understanding the world. The interactions with diverse cohorts further deepened my reflections, while sessions on freedom of speech reinforced the importance of intellectual independence and the moral right to think and express ideas without coercion.

Arpit Awasthi

Researcher at Mahindra University
Hyderabad, Telangana





Attending John Galt School deepened my conviction that individual rights are paramount. I could personally link the courses to development economics, highlighting how GDP overlooks personal well-being, to the philosophy of objectivity, contrasting it with fascist collectivism that suppresses uniqueness. This framework also illuminated current immigration debates for me, the global surge of right-wing politics, and environmental crises exacerbated by the absence of pollution tariffs. I now view policy through a lens that prioritizes individual choice, market-based solutions, and the moral imperative to protect both people and planet.

**Disha Rawat**

Student at the University of Erfurt
Dehradun, Uttarakhand

**Dinesh Rai**

Research Scholar – IIT Patna
Patna, Bihar

JGS has been a transformative intellectual journey. It provided a rigorous foundation in Objectivism, challenging me to view the world through the lens of reason and individualism. The sessions on ethics and economics were particularly impactful, offering a moral defense of free markets and rational self-interest that complemented my academic background. Beyond the curriculum, connecting with a community of critical thinkers has empowered me to advocate for liberty and human flourishing with renewed clarity and conviction.





I was introduced to a fresh perspective of capitalism through the John Galt School India program and got vocabulary for a few pre-imbibed practices and beliefs. The course has opened me to a new school of thought with an urge to learn more.

**Swati Dey**

Policy Consultant
Patiala, Punjab



A new way of thinking has been understood and developed. It involves seeing things as they are, without adding bias, and focusing on what is most important for a career.

Sujithraj Kothapeta

PhD scholar and chemistry teacher
Shillong, Meghalaya

It was interesting how many people with a wide variety of opinions were interested in Ayn Rand's Objectivist outlook, even if they did not fully agree with it. Various perspectives on the same issue were aired, and deeply cynical to wildly hopeful views clashed.

**Manognya Cheeti**

Lawyer, Academic Associate, ISB
Hyderabad, Telangana





My first impression of the John Galt School was the team's politeness, approachability, and genuine warmth. They treated every student with friendliness and consistently reminded us of our responsibilities, which reflected their professionalism and deep sense of commitment. I truly appreciate this supportive environment. One of my key learnings throughout this educational journey has been the introduction to Ayn Rand's philosophy of Objectivism. Among its various ideas, the concept that intrigued me the most is rational self-interest the idea that individuals flourish when they think logically, act purposefully, and pursue their own values. This perspective has significantly shaped my understanding on personal responsibility and growth.

Monrose Babelson Lyngdoh Nonglait

Student at Delhi University
Shillong, Meghalaya

Participating in the John Galt School India offered a deep immersion into classical liberal philosophy, economics & public policy. We went deep into the mechanics of freedom & what it actually costs. The core lesson was seeing individualism as a moral stance, not just a political one. We debated why free markets work, not because they are perfect but because they respect human choice.

It challenged my view on the greater good.



ANCHAL GAUTAM

Postgraduate in Computer Science
Shimla, Himachal Pradesh





The experience centered on an intensive, systematic study of Ayn Rand's core tenets: the metaphysics of objective reality, reason as the sole means of knowledge, and rational self-interest as the ethical purpose of life. Key learnings primarily involved developing a coherent, non-contradictory philosophical framework. I gained the ability to ground ethical arguments in individual rights and productivity, contrasting them sharply with collectivist premises. This study significantly sharpened my critical thinking skills, providing the conceptual arsenal necessary to effectively articulate and advocate for laissez-faire capitalism understood not merely as an economic system, but as the political expression required for human flourishing. The program successfully cemented a principled, rational commitment to individual liberty

Ashok Sekhar

Student at the University of Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Telangana

Participating in the John Galt School India offered a deep immersion into classical liberal philosophy, economics & public policy. We went deep into the mechanics of freedom & what it actually costs. The core lesson was seeing individualism as a moral stance, not just a political one. We debated why free markets work, not because they are perfect but because they respect human choice. It challenged my view on the greater good.



Ahsan Shams

Student at Jamia Millia Islamia

New Delhi



ALDINA JAHIĆ

(1993–2025)



Aldina Jahić was an inspiring professional whose initiative, intellect, and dedication to individual liberty left a lasting impact. Though we never met, her leadership in launching the John Galt School India program from Atlas Society International in Serbia showcased exceptional coordination and commitment to global freedom. We are deeply saddened by her tragic passing and extend our heartfelt condolences. We condemn all violence and honor her legacy of reason, courage, and humanism. Rest in peace, Aldina.





Thank You

Swatantrata Center for Human Flourishing Foundation (Swatantrata Center) is a Section 8 Non-profit company that was registered under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India.

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