

VINAYAK SHARMA

CONTACT INFORMATION

Location: Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

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Current Location: Jaipur, India (Open to Relocation)

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Senior professional with 14+ years of experience across traditional textiles, craft-led enterprises and regenerative cotton ecosystems. A systems thinker with deep on-ground exposure to India's unorganised artisan sector, specialising in value-upgradation, process modernisation and capability building. Experienced in bridging grassroots realities with CSR, institutional and market-facing frameworks to enable sustainable livelihoods and long-term impact.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Strategic Leadership & Management

- Strategic Business & Growth Planning
- CSR Program Design & Implementation
- Sustainable Textile & Cotton Supply Chains
- Cross-Functional Team Leadership (20+ professionals)
- Budget Management
- Stakeholder Collaboration & Partnership Development

Operational Excellence

- Traditional Textile & Product Innovation
- Product Portfolio Management
- Process Optimization & Quality Control
- Data-Driven Inventory & Demand Forecasting
- Vendor & Supply Chain Management

Digital & Creative Skills

- Brand Development & Digital Commerce
- Social Media Marketing & Strategy
- Website Design & Development (Shopify, Figma)
- Photography & Content Creation
- AI Tools (ChatGPT, Perplexity)

Technical Skills

- Operations Management
- Product Management
- Budgeting & Product Costing
- B2B/B2C Sales & Negotiation

- Fundraising & Partnership Development
- Community Engagement & Artisan Empowerment

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Freelance Consultant | Social Impact, Textiles & Enterprise Building, Jaipur | June 2025 – Present

Partnering with early-stage founders, social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations to build purpose-led, scalable ventures across textiles, apparel, education and community livelihoods. Focused on 0-to-1 venture building, systems design, operational frameworks and sustainable growth models.

Gygl & Grow (Kidswear Startup)

- Supported 0-to-1 business creation including market research, mission-vision definition, USP articulation, brand strategy and go-to-market planning.
- Provided strategic and operational inputs supporting brand positioning, product planning and production ecosystem setup as part of a broader founding team effort.
- Contributed to positioning as India's first paediatrician and dermatologist approved, OEKO-TEX® certified, customisable kidswear brand with product passports for end-to-end transparency.
- Supported end-to-end product development and production process frameworks to improve operational efficiency and quality consistency.

Kolhapur Based Fabric Manufacturer

- Currently advising on diversification into apparel, including product planning, systems setup and capability building.

Chhoti Si Asha (Chandigarh Based NGO)

- Consulting to design youth training programmes, build product and sales data systems and expand offline sales through physical retail channels.

Focused on livelihood generation, process optimisation, transparency and long-term sustainability across all engagements.

Operations Lead | RPG Foundation (artisan:re), Mumbai | Sep 2023 – May 2025

Bridging Corporate CSR with India's Unorganised Textile and Farming Clusters

Strategic Leadership & Growth:

- Crafted scalable business strategies expanding textiles and handloom initiatives across Maharashtra, Telangana and Gujarat.
- Managed ₹5+ Cr annual budgets and strategic planning for CSR spending of ₹12+ Cr for the programme.

Operational Excellence & Portfolio:

- Directed 280+ SKU portfolio across mill-spun/hand-spun yarns, powerloom, handloom, heritage textiles (Tangaliya, Patola, Kutchi) and home furnishings.
- Developed comprehensive costing strategies for cotton commodities and cotton-based products.
- Negotiated buyer agreements, managed costs and oversaw production ensuring timely delivery and customer satisfaction.

Team Leadership & Social Impact:

- Led 20+ cross-functional team including 12 direct reportees.
- Trained 150+ women artisans in weaving, spinning, natural dyeing, tailoring and embroidery, empowering farming communities.
- Supported expansion of cotton farmer network from 500 to 1500, promoting regenerative farming and sustainability practices.

Stakeholder Engagement & Innovation:

- Designed and delivered compelling pitch decks for stakeholders to drive collaborations, fundraising and sales initiatives.
- Built strategic government, private sector and industry partnerships for R&D, market development and training programs.
- Co-developed innovation cum community hub, coordinating efforts of architects, designers and leadership for sustainable transformation.

Process & Supply Chain Optimization:

- Procured, deployed and optimized textile machinery infrastructure, improving cost efficiency and sustainability metrics.
- Introduced data-backed supply chain traceability software systems to boost transparency, inventory management and consumer accountability.

Co-Founder & Director | Cotton Rack, Jaipur | Nov 2013 – Aug 2023

India's First Institutionally Funded Khadi Brand

Business Innovation & Product Development:

- Built transformative brand converting highly unorganised craft sector into structured, scalable business model.
- Introduced innovative products: hand-spun cotton and wool, peace silk, and breakthrough "Cashmere Cotton" textile.
- Collaborated strategically with NGOs and artisan groups across Rajasthan, West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir and Bihar.

Brand Strategy & Market Expansion:

- Developed comprehensive brand language and storytelling across digital platforms, packaging, exhibitions and lookbooks.
- Successfully expanded sales footprint across India, USA, South Korea, Japan, Italy and Netherlands.
- Built sophisticated online store on Shopify with innovative body shape calculator for personalized recommendations.

Operational Excellence & Growth:

- Implemented on-demand production model, cutting costs and optimizing raw material stock management.
- Increased product launch frequency, improving trend adaptability and reducing dead stock from 35% to 5%.
- Used advanced city-wise sales data analytics to optimize inventory, boosting sell-through rates and average ticket sizes.
- Sustained steady growth during COVID-19 with innovative pricing and marketing strategies.

Team & Production Management:

- Coordinated and managed teams of up to 30 weavers with 6 permanent employees.
- Established comprehensive accounting systems and prepared detailed financial statements, cash flows, and balance sheets.
- Secured strategic seed funding from StartupUp Oasis and private investor Mr. Sunny Narang (2019).

Assistant Professor | Indian Institute of Crafts & Design (IICD), Jaipur | Jun 2021 – Apr 2023**Academic Program Development:**

- Designed and launched India's first Craft Communication Design degree program.
- Successfully launched post-graduate program (October 2021) and undergraduate program (September 2022).
- Introduced innovative case-based business education replacing traditional theory-heavy curricula.

Teaching & Curriculum Excellence:

- Taught diverse subjects: Adobe Illustrator, Corel Draw, Photography, Filmmaking, Social Media Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Fashion, Design Management, Trend Studies, Merchandising, Wayfinding, Journalism & Mass Communication.
- Mentored top-performing graduates to nurture entrepreneurial and industry-ready talent.

Institutional Leadership:

- Managed comprehensive IICD website and institutional social media presence.
- Led Student Activities Cohort (SAC) representing 350+ students across multiple programs.
- Strategized targeted marketing efforts during admissions season, coordinating with coaching centers and advertising agencies.
- Boosted admissions and engagement through targeted content and marketing campaigns across digital channels.

Assistant Manager | ColorPlus (Raymond), Chennai | Jun 2011 – Oct 2013

- Launched breakthrough "Orange Line" targeting young professionals, contributing 11% of seasonal revenue.
- Led Shirt category design (70% of business portfolio), delivering exceptional 32% YoY sales growth.
- Provided strategic insights in winter jackets department for design, fabric selection, and product development.
- Demonstrated versatility across multiple product categories within menswear segment.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Formal Education:

- **MBA (Online)** – Manipal University, Jaipur | 2025-Present
- **B.Des. Fashion Design** – NIFT, Delhi | 2007–2011

Professional Certifications:

- **Lean Six Sigma Green Belt** – KPMG India | 2024
- **Strategic Planning Foundations** – LinkedIn Learning | 2024
- **AI For Everyone** – Coursera | 2025
- **Comparing AI Research Tools: ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and Perplexity** – LinkedIn Learning | 2025

TECHNICAL PROFICIENCIES

- **Design & Creative Tools:** Adobe Creative Suite (Illustrator, Photoshop), CorelDRAW, Figma
- **Digital Platforms:** Shopify, MS Office Suite, Tableau, Social Media Management
- **AI & Modern Tools:** ChatGPT, Perplexity, DALL-E, Midjourney
- **Textile Techniques:** Handloom, Powerloom, Natural Dyeing, Spinning, Jamdani, Handspun Cotton
- **Business Skills:** Financial Management, Supply Chain Optimization, Inventory Control, Project Management

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- **Lexus Design Awards India Finalist (2021)** – Cashmere Cotton Innovation
- **Industry Disruptor by UN Women (2020)** – Recognized for Sustainable Fashion Leadership
- **Top 20 Designers Under 35 (2016)** – Alliance Française de Delhi

- **Shark Tank India Season 1 (2021)** – Successfully completed 3 rounds of interviews

KEY PROJECTS & CONSULTING

Design Consultant | Multiple Projects | 2022 - Present

- Currently consulting on three craft-based projects including one government-related initiative
- Signed strategic MOUs with Weavers Service Centre, Jaipur for comprehensive weaver training programs
- Partnership with Urmul Seemant Samiti for innovative yarn and textile development using indigenous wool

Via India, Netherlands | Textile Innovation Consultant | 2021

- Commissioned for groundbreaking exploration of indigenous wool for first overseas brand collaboration
- Successfully worked on softening carpet-grade wool for apparel applications with researchers and scientists

The Adivasi Academy & Bhasha Tribal Academy, Gujarat | Brand Consultant | 2022

- Volunteered expertise to create comprehensive social media calendar and brand guide

GUEST FACULTY & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Institutions (Since 2011):

- NIFT Delhi & NIFT Jodhpur
- LPU Jalandhar
- Vivekanand Global University, Jaipur
- KSID Kerala
- IICD Jaipur

Notable Speaking Engagements:

- "How to Build a Khadi Brand" - India International Centre, New Delhi (2018)
- "Khadi: From Policy to Practice" - AIACA Round Table, India Habitat Centre (2019)
- "Sustainability, from Gandhi to Present" - Rajasthan Heritage Week (2018)
- "Body Shape - Perception vs. Reality" - IICD Varta Panel (2020)
- "Practising Khadi" - Sharda University Panel (2020)

SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVES

Om Puri Foundation Collaboration | 2020

- Provided critical financial assistance to 500 marginalized artisans and weavers across India during pandemic

Mahatma Gandhi 150th Anniversary | 2019

- Created significant art installation at Jawahar Kala Kendra for state commemoration event
- Event graced by Chief Guest: Mr. Ashok Gehlot (then Chief Minister of Rajasthan)

MEDIA COVERAGE & RECOGNITION

- **National Television** – Featured on Patrika News Channel for upcoming businesses segment (2018)
- **Viestories YouTube Channel** – Featured story on Cotton Rack's entrepreneurial journey (2021)
- **Industry Publications** – Regular contributor and featured expert in textile and fashion publications

LANGUAGES

- **English:** Proficient (Read, Write, Speak)
- **Hindi:** Proficient (Read, Write, Speak)
- **Punjabi:** Beginner (Speak)

PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of Birth: June 16, 1987

Marital Status: Married

Current Address: Jaipur, India

Permanent Address: 914, B-4, Vrinda Garden, Jagatpura, Jaipur – 302017

Notice Period: Available to join in 15 days or less

*Complete work portfolio and project details available at: **www.vinayak.work***

References Available Upon Request