

INTERNSHIP PORTFOLIO

Columbia Global Centers | Mumbai

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Overview

This portfolio documents everything completed during my internship at Columbia Global Centers Mumbai — an engagement spanning more than two years, from Grade 9 through Grade 11. The projects covered public health research, academic programme development, symposium planning and execution, fellowship impact analysis, and the curation of a large-scale secondary data repository for Columbia faculty. The projects are presented below with the full context, methodology used, deliverables achieved, and outcomes reached for each.

Projects

- **Project 1:** Hip Hop Public Health — India Strategy Rollout and Research
- **Project 2:** Fulbright India — Questionnaire Design, Methodology, and Implementation
- **Project 3:** Yusuf Hamied Fellowship — Comprehensive Grant Impact Analysis
- **Project 4:** Nutrition Symposium — Thematic Analysis of Key Themes and Focus Areas
- **Project 5:** Nutrition Symposium — End-to-End Event and Symposium Planning
- **Project 6:** Colon Cancer Awareness Project — Video Concept Research and Report
- **Project 7:** Secondary Data Repository — Reorganising and Curating the Research Directory
- **Project 8:** Symposium Planning and Detailed Organisational Support

Project 1: Hip Hop Public Health — India Strategy Rollout and Research

Type	Research and landscape analysis
Partner	Columbia University Center for Community Health (Dr. Olajide Williams)
Output	Artist recommendations report, animation studio assessment, cultural adaptation brief, creative education literature review, concept notes

What I Did

- **Worked closely with Dr. Olajide Williams:** supported CGC Mumbai's effort to explore an India adaptation of his Hip Hop Public Health programme, which uses music, animation, and storytelling to improve health literacy among underserved youth
- **Researched and evaluated Indian artists:** assessed Divine, Emiway Bantai, Raja Kumari, Seedhe Maut, Hanumankind, and regional artists across language coverage, youth reach, credibility, and educational potential; produced a structured recommendations report
- **Assessed Indian animation studios:** evaluated studios on prior educational content, production quality, capacity, and cost viability; gave particular attention to BIT Jaipur as a potential academic-industry partnership
- **Produced a cultural adaptation brief:** mapped how HHPH would need to be modified for India across regional languages, school systems, urban vs rural delivery, and cultural attitudes toward health communication
- **Conducted a literature review:** synthesised evidence on music-based education, behaviour change communication, and youth health engagement from UNICEF, WHO, and NGO programme data
- **Drafted concept notes:** covered wellness, nutrition, health communication, educational engagement, and behaviour change — for internal CGC Mumbai use

Project 2: Fulbright India — Questionnaire Design, Methodology, and Implementation

Type	Programme design and questionnaire development
Objective	Improve Fulbright India applicant identification and application quality
Output	Pre-application questionnaire; process improvement recommendations

What I Did

- **Identified a structural gap:** many applicants were submitting without adequate preparation or genuine fit with the programme's expectations; designed an intervention to address this before the application stage
- **Designed a pre-application questionnaire:** built around the core Fulbright dimensions — academic merit, research purpose, cultural exchange, and professional trajectory; every question required a substantive written answer, not a checklist response
- **Structured for progressive depth:** earlier questions established context; later questions required candidates to integrate ideas across domains and demonstrate interdisciplinary thinking
- **Produced process improvement recommendations:** covering question wording, structural sequencing, length calibration, and follow-up prompts to push candidates beyond formulaic answers
- **Recommendations adopted:** CGC Mumbai incorporated the questionnaire and process changes into their Fulbright support workflow

Project 3: Yusuf Hamied Fellowship — Comprehensive Grant Impact Analysis

Type	Research, data collation, impact assessment
Scope	All Yusuf Hamied Fellows, 2018–2023
Output	Comprehensive impact analysis report, revised through multiple rounds of feedback

What I Did

- **Researched every fellow individually:** covered academic profile, career stage, and research focus for each fellow across the 2018–2023 cohort
- **Compiled research outputs:** tracked peer-reviewed articles, books and chapters, conference papers, and working papers for each fellow
- **Measured research impact:** gathered citation counts, H-index data, awards, competitive grants received, and subsequent fellowships or visiting positions
- **Documented collaborations and policy influence:** mapped cross-border partnerships, interdisciplinary work, government advisory roles, and capacity building activities
- **Produced cross-cohort analysis:** identified aggregate bibliometric patterns, thematic clustering across the cohort, geographic spread across Indian institutions, and career trajectory trends
- **Revised through multiple feedback rounds:** added missing publications, incorporated Schilling publications, expanded the grants section, and strengthened qualitative analysis to move from description toward causal claims about fellowship impact

Project 4: Nutrition Symposium — Thematic Analysis of Key Themes and Focus Areas

Type	Transcript analysis and thematic synthesis
Source	Transcript from a prior CGC Mumbai nutrition convening
Output	Thematic analysis report with findings, quotes, and recommendations feeding into symposium planning

What I Did

- **Read and coded the full transcript:** applied structured thematic coding to identify patterns across speakers — major themes, areas of consensus, tensions, opportunities, and structural challenges raised
- **Produced a thematic analysis report:** covered main findings with supporting evidence, key verbatim quotes, and actionable recommendations grounded in what participants said
- **Connected findings to symposium planning:** identified which themes should be foregrounded in the moderator guide and agenda for the upcoming nutrition roundtable

Project 5: Nutrition Symposium — End-to-End Event and Symposium Planning

Type	Event design, speaker research, moderator guide, agenda development
Partners	Columbia University Center for Community Health; SNEHA (Mumbai)
Format	Expert roundtable — senior nutrition researchers, practitioners, and government officials
Output	Concept note, speaker briefs, moderator guide, agenda, speaker tracker, government representation brief

What I Did

- **Strengthened the concept note:** deepened the framing of India's nutrition challenge, sharpened event objectives, made post-event outputs concrete and evaluable, and integrated published nutrition data
- **Researched every speaker:** produced short biographies for event materials and detailed profiles for moderator use; speakers included Dr. Purnima Menon, Dr. Shweta Khandelwal, Dr. Jayeeta Chowdhury, Dr. Jagmeet Madan, and Dr. Anura Kurpad, alongside civil society organisations including Tata Trusts, ARMMAN, Dasra, Mobile Creches, Aangan Trust, Pratham, and SNEHA, and government representatives from ICDS, BMC, the Maharashtra Department of Education, UNICEF India, and the Secretary, Government of Maharashtra
- **Produced speaker briefs:** each brief covered suggested speaking topic, rationale for the topic, and moderator notes flagging discussion style, sensitivities, and connections between speakers; the most fully developed was for Dr. Shweta Khandelwal
- **Designed the roundtable structure:** welcome and context-setting opening, three thematic discussion rounds with designated speaker sequences, structured closing reflections per speaker, and managed networking
- **Developed the moderator guide:** general group questions for each round, speaker-specific questions tied to each person's published work, and at least two personalised questions per speaker each with a written rationale explaining what it was designed to surface
- **Produced a minute-by-minute agenda:** time allocations for every item, exact moderator transition language, per-speaker time budgets, logistical notes, and a draft closing statement
- **Maintained speaker tracker and government brief:** tracked confirmation status and sector gaps; produced a targeted brief on government stakeholders covering mandates, relevant officials, and protocol considerations

Project 6: Colon Cancer Awareness Project — Video Concept Research and Report

Type	Health communication research; content ideation
Audience	General public; youth-focused
Output	Video concept frameworks and evidence-based messaging guide

What I Did

- **Researched the health communication landscape:** reviewed what formats, messengers, and framings are most effective for cancer awareness; looked at successful public awareness campaigns in India and globally; studied how to communicate health risk without triggering avoidance
- **Developed video concept frameworks:** produced concept briefs for: colon cancer screening and early detection framed for Indian audiences unfamiliar with colonoscopy; preventive health habits positioned as everyday practice; myth-busting on cancer causation and treatment; survivor narratives to reduce stigma; and doctor-as-explainer formats to build trust
- **Delivered an evidence-based messaging guide:** gave the medical professional a structured, research-grounded content plan for a series of public health videos

Project 7: Secondary Data Repository — Reorganising and Curating the Research Directory

Type	Research curation, dataset verification, document production
Collaborator	Puja (CGC Mumbai)
Scope	77 datasets across 10 research pillars
Output	The Columbia India Data Directory — prepared for upload to CGC Mumbai's website
Versions	V1 (rebuild) → V2 (fact-check) → V3 (expansion and revision)

What I Did

- **Rebuilt the document from scratch:** the original AI-generated file had generic descriptions, wrong access types, duplicate entries, missing domains, and several factually incorrect figures; I rebuilt it entirely
- **Wrote analytically specific 'why useful' descriptions:** for each dataset, described the research designs it enables — panel data, diff-in-diff, causal inference, natural experiments — rather than just listing what the data contains
- **Fact-checked every claim:** identified four material errors: NFHS-5 household coverage was understated sixfold (636,000+, not 100,000+); LASI Wave 2 had not been released; PROWESS now covers 100,000+ companies not 45,000; DIKSHA is free, not registered; Daksh covers 23 of 25 High Courts not all 25; SECC's caste component is largely unreleased
- **Expanded from 4 pillars to 10:** added Macro and Official Statistics, Governance and Politics, Digital Public Infrastructure, Economic Shocks, and Aggregators
- **Incorporated feedback from Puja:** reordered pillars, added a formal Access Key table defining all five access types, removed CGC facilitation lines throughout, removed footers, and proofread all 77 entries
- **Made source-level decisions:** excluded Indiastat as a paywalled aggregator repackaging primary sources already in the directory; reinstated Tracxn as the only structured source for private startup funding data not captured by DPIIT

Final Structure

- **Parts I–X:** Macro and Official Statistics · Health · K-12 Education · Climate and Sustainability · Governance and Politics · Digital Public Infrastructure · Business and Innovation · Economic Shocks · Aggregators · High-Value Restricted Data

Project 8: Symposium Planning and Detailed Organisational Support

Type	Administrative, communications, and coordination support
Scope	Ongoing throughout the internship

What I Did

- **Drafted professional correspondence:** formal emails to speakers, partners, and government officials; speaker invitation letters calibrated to seniority; follow-up emails after confirmations and meeting outcomes
- **Produced internal documentation:** meeting summaries, briefing notes, research summaries for internal distribution, and project writeups on CGC Mumbai initiatives for funders and institutional stakeholders
- **Managed event coordination:** speaker confirmation tracking and gap analysis, run-of-show logistics, moderator materials preparation and revision, post-event documentation and follow-up
- **Supported multiple concurrent projects:** across all workstreams — providing consistent administrative backbone for the Centre's programming

Skills Demonstrated

Research and Analysis

- Academic literature synthesis across public health, nutrition, education, and development economics
- Impact assessment and bibliometric analysis
- Thematic coding and transcript analysis
- Secondary dataset verification, fact-checking, and curation
- Stakeholder and policy landscape mapping

Writing and Communication

- Policy writing and concept note development
- Speaker brief and executive briefing production
- Science and health communication for non-specialist audiences
- Professional correspondence across institutional contexts
- Research-grade report writing

Event Design and Facilitation

- Roundtable architecture and discussion structure design
- Moderator guide development with speaker-specific and evidence-based questions
- Minute-by-minute agenda and run-of-show production
- Government and institutional stakeholder engagement

Compiled by Akaash Das — Columbia Global Centers | Mumbai