

1 festival

15 types of events 8 editions

100,000+ online viewers worldwide 33 festival days

6 lakh+ footfalls 8 years 1 lakh+ registrations

2 cities 9 languages

650+ events 1350+ speakers/performers on stage

12 Different Activities



Cerebral Routes Foundation

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AN INTRODUCTION

Gujarat literature festival



All languages • All forms of literature • Everybody's invited!

Gujarat's First, Largest and Most Popular Literature Festival

Books • TV & Films • Theatre • Journalism • Blogs • Social Media and More



## GENESIS

- Class-X or SSC exams are the most crucial school exams in India. It is shocking that the highest number of students who failed SSC exams during the current decade in Gujarat, flunked in Gujarati – their mother tongue.
- What holds true for Gujarat, holds true for many other states in the country and their languages.
- The idea is to inspire young people to write, tell their stories, document history from multiple perspectives.
- Finding Gujarati translators, writers, journalists and copy editors with excellent writing, editing and proof-reading skills is proving more difficult and is going to be a daunting task in future, as most schools are turning English medium.
- If there is more money in English writing, new and upcoming writers will prefer that. They will also prefer film writing in Hindi. Which means if there is no intervention, then Gujarati literature and language will continue to be poorer in terms of literary creativity. Hence readers of Gujarati will further impoverish, intellectually.
- The Festival will serve the purpose of a university that goes to people and facilitates learning in a fun way.

## THOUGHT

- We need to protect and conserve our linguistic, literary and cultural identities, more so in a globalized world.
- Free thought and expression are the pillars of a resilient society and a vibrant democracy. GLF has been conceptualized not just as a three-day entertainment event, but a movement to re-ignite the youth's interest in reading, writing and in cerebral pursuits.
- Pursuit of literary activities ought to be aspirational and financially rewarding.
- Creating readers will lead to opportunities for more writers. GLF therefore works towards inspiring more passionate readers.
- GLF is re-introducing reading and writing as cultural pursuits in our society, which is now known only for entrepreneurial and wealth creation pursuits.
- GLF aims to create an ecosystem favourable for creation of universally appealing literary heritage, which represents as well as defines its milieu.

## PURPOSE

- Popularising and providing a stage to all - upcoming and established figures.
- Creating the most exciting and fun literary event of the year.
- Building the capacity of many struggling writers by enabling them to self-support.
- Creating a platform to know and experience the latest literary trends, across the world.
- To become an umbrella event for the diaspora by inclusiveness, quality and range of its programming. Also, to hold multiple literary events across the world.
- Promoting use of regional languages in reading and writing, as it is essential for creating better communicators.

## WHAT IT IS

**EVENT:** It is a five-day literary festival that takes place during winter months in Ahmedabad. Many of the events are held under the open sky.

A language, genre and ideology neutral platform, which has no biases and prejudices and welcomes all with open arms.

**DIVERSE:** Facilitating a newer and much needed mix. The diversity of language, literary types and cultures, exposes not just readers but other creators too, to newer and varied forms of expressions and results in interesting debates and experiments in creativity.

**MULTILINGUAL:** Most lit-fests in India and in the Anglophonic world are exclusive by nature – they are all about English book writers and their latest works. We have re-invented the way readers in Gujarat connect to literature by experimenting with programming in languages like Gujarati, English, Hindi, Urdu, Rajasthani, Malayalam, Bengali and Sindhi.

**INCLUSIVE:** Entry to the festival is totally free and open to all without any bars. Attendees spend up to 8 hours on an average at the GLF venue attending multiple sessions. This also ensures focused visibility for the sponsors. Not limited to book writers alone but poets, playwrights, screenwriters, social media and blog writers, literary creators in oral traditions and many more participate.

**GLOBAL:** In being an inclusive event, we have crossed international borders by hosting foreign authors and global literary works.

**GAME CHANGER:** We made it more meaningful by contributing to literary processes, rather than being limited to a mere celebration of them. We hold workshops for writing, training and more.

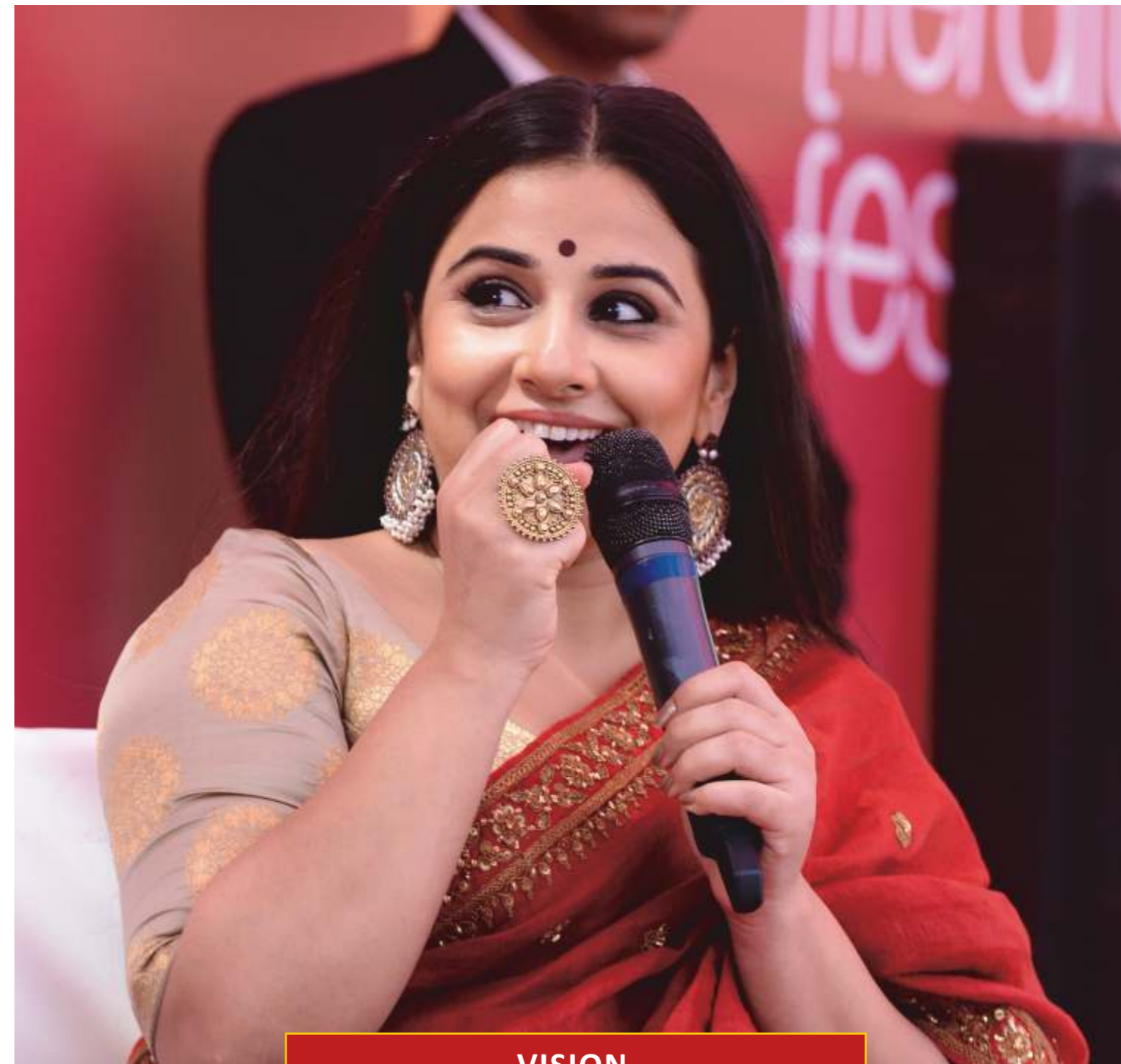
**YOUTHFUL:** Our objective is to draw young audiences. It's ambience, programming and presentation, everything dovetails this objective. We target youngsters drawn away from reading and writing.

**INNOVATIVE:** We decided to present literature in a manner that is cool, more fun, glamorous and appealing to the youth. Every edition of the festival sees newer innovations.

**REWARDING:** Writing can be a lucrative career option only if it is financially rewarding. For starters, GLF has designed itself to be a commercially gainful event. We pay all our speakers. Dignity for creative people is at the heart of the festival.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Apex body of Indian film writers - Screenwriters Association of India (SWA), has partnered with GLF. This is their first partnership with any lit-fest and gives us an advantage of exclusive participation of latest Bollywood and other film writers.

**FORMAT:** It has a mixed format - discussions, debates, conversations, talks and more, on things literary, by authors and subject experts. It has nearly one-third of the event time dedicated to audience interaction.



## VISION

- Make Gujarat the hub of cultural activities every year, wherein about 10 world-class festivals of different genres take place under the aegis of GLF. This can include an arts festival, a dance festival, a theatre festival, film festival and many more.
- Expand GLF's footprint across Gujarat and outside as well. To hold events in Mumbai, Kolkatta, Delhi & other cities. Globally, we wish to organize events in the US (LA, Bay Area, New Jersey, Chicago, Charlotte). Cities in other countries include Toronto, London, Dubai, Dar-es-Salam, Mombasa and Kampala.
- Incubate at least three bestselling books every year, one film script and one TV serial or web series script.
- Introduce 10 fellowships for authors and support publishing of 10 books in a year.



## LITERATURE FESTIVALS

- For perspective: the United Kingdom is a country with a population of over 7 crores (70 millions) - a little more than that of Gujarat – but has over 300 major literature festivals held every year. Compare: GLF was the first one in Gujarat.
- In India, literature or literary festivals are a relatively new concept. They are spread over a few days at a specific venue in a city and are mostly centered around authors and their works.
- Usually, lit-fests focus on latest books and other forms of writings. The objective of such events is to popularise books and promote their sales, by discussing newly published books with authors themselves and other subject experts.
- According to industry estimates, the size of Indian book publishing industry is Rs 35,000 crore. This is more than the size of the Bollywood film industry and the newspaper industry put together! Of this, 70% is educational publishing. Of the balance 30% of published books- over 45% in value terms are books in Indian regional languages. Interestingly, Hindi is 35% of this pie. By numbers, it outstrips English books.
- Entry to most of the lit fests is usually free in India, following registrations. However, access to some events within the festival is not free.
- However, the scope of 'literature' is much wider than just books. GLF is perhaps the only lit-fest that is exploring the whole gamut of literary creativity, irrespective of medium and language.

## IMPACT

- GLF has created awareness about the need to bring focus on Gujarati writing.
- Gujarat was a unique state that did not have any provision to make it necessary for a child to study Gujarati during entire schooling! GLF pursued this issue with the state government to make learning of Gujarati language mandatory at primary school level. This was accepted by the state in 2018 and teaching and learning of Gujarati language is now compulsory in schools of all boards, across Gujarat.
- GLF has inspired at least a dozen literary events across the state and scores of college and university level events.
- A young generation of Gujarati writers have benefitted directly. Dozens of newly published writers owe their inspiration and networking to participation in GLF events.
- The example that GLF set, made it possible for young authors to get paid for public speaking and for participating in literary events.

## GETTING BIGGER

- Reportedly, India hosts about 70-75 literature festivals of varying sizes, formats and types across the country. This excludes student body organized events.
- Most of these happen in November-March, because of favourable weather conditions. Some of them are organized by literary bodies like Parishads and Akademis. Majority of them levitate towards being scholarly and literary events – preaching the converted – rather than popular, targeting the youth.
- While metropolitan cities have multiple literary fests, some tier-2 cities are now also graduating to more than one festival.
- A majority of these festivals are focused on English books and their writers. Except for the city, the speakers, ambience and the overall character of the festivals is nearly identical.
- Majority of them do not focus on literary forms consumed more by the people - like Plays, TV serials, Web Series, Film scripts, Digital and Social Media formats.
- Almost, none of them focus on regional literature.
- With an inclusion of all mediums of creative expression and multiple languages, GLF's scope of cerebral content and audience inclusion across different spectrums is unparalleled.

## Festivals within the Festival

### Indian Screenwriters' Festival

Languages - English and Hindi

- A first of its kind and the only festival for film - TV - Web Series writers and their audiences. Biggest names in Indian screen writing participate here. Held in an exclusive partnership with apex body of screen writers - **Screenwriters Association of India (SWA)**
- ISF was a runaway success in Vadodara in 2019.
- Movies, web-series and TV are the most popular way to create contemporary literature, which is consumed by watching, rather than reading. It is the first event to bring the creators from this field in front of their audiences.
- It includes master classes, workshops, discussions, conversations, talks, intense debates, screenings and expert and celebrity interactions on the craft of writing for the screen using audio and visual medium.
- No other lit-fest enjoys such a partnership with SWA or participation by screen writers.
- It has 20 to 25 dedicated events, mainly in English and Hindi.
- Some of those related to Gujarati films will be in Gujarati.
- Participation of 25 to 30 top most celebrated screenwriters likely.



### Gujarati Sahitya Mahotsav

Language - Gujarati

- The first, the largest and the most popular literary festival to celebrate Gujarati literature.
- Dedicated sessions on Gujarati literature by literary stalwarts and young writers.
- Includes workshops, discussions, intense debates, performances and more.
- Topics of sessions range from classical literature to new age experiments by young writers.

### InkTank and ScreenTank

Languages - Gujarati, English and Hindi

- The first ever public meeting point for authors and publishers.
- Authors exchange ideas and pitch for a book, article or research project.
- If you have a plot/story for a web-series, film or TV series, this is the place to find a taker.



### Competitions, quiz and participatory events

Languages - Gujarati and English

- LitWit and other literary quizzes are held in two languages.
- Story-telling competitions for different categories.
- Literary writing competitions.
- Mobile Short film making competition.
- And more!

These specially curated events are massively popular and see hundreds of participants each season. The participant profile includes all age and social groups, from children to elders.



### Fountainhead

Languages - English, Hindi & others

- Dedicated to most popular non-Gujarati languages – English, Hindi, Urdu, Sindhi, Bengali, Malayalam etc.
- Discussions, debates, conversations in one of these languages or in two languages, allowing broader participation.
- Topmost fiction and non-fiction writers from India and abroad participate.

## Tabariya

Languages - Gujarati, English and Hindi

- Tabariya is a Gujarati word used to address children lovingly. This is a festival dedicated to young readers.
- Multiple languages and types of literary and non-literary activities.
- Discussions, conversations, theatre, competitions, readings, workshops, learning and more.
- Partnerships with schools for participation by school students.
- An exclusive space for young adults and children.



## Art @ GLF

- An art event that embeds art in the festival using painting, sculpture and photo exhibitions and specially commissioned installations.
- Guarantees a massive base of visitors, unlikely in specially held or exclusive art events. It is planned in a manner to ensure that every visitor notices the art on display.
- This makes it practically the largest public art show in Gujarat.



## GLF <35

- A select gathering of writers under the age of 35 years.
- The gathering of these creative minds is facilitated by GLF.
- It is an elite networking platform for young writers to, learn, synergise and collaborate.
- Participation to this event is by invitation only.
- These writers are potential stars of the future. GLF actively grooms them with guidance, workshops, personal counseling and mentoring.



## Learning @ GLF

### Workshops, Masterclasses and Trainings

- Focused workshops organised every year to ensure that festival contributes also by training the future writers.
- Duration varies from 3 hours to full-day and even upto three-day workshops.
- The purpose of these events is to introduce people to nuanced areas of literary activities, writing of different forms (fiction, non-fiction, film) theatre, art and even public speaking.
- Workshops have received tremendous response. They are attended by students, young professionals, mid-career professionals and even senior citizens who still have the spirit of pursuing their dreams.



### Talking Heads

- GLF hosts experts from different areas of interest and they are happy to share their knowledge with participants through workshops, trainings, talks and more.
- These talks by subject experts are followed by candid question answers from the audience.
- The purpose of these Talks is to enhance the knowledge of people.





## Curated Food Festival

- Food is the most important element of any culture.
- GLF to host a very well curated traditional Gujarati food festival.
- This will be linked to literature and stories of the state.
- Participants for the food stalls will be on invitation only.
- Entry to the Food Festival will be with a nominal cover charge to ensure order.

## Networking

- The Gala dinner and / or GLF Awards Night gives a unique opportunity to interact with the who's who of the town, biggest names in literature and film writing and others interested in things creative.
- In 2018, chief minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani and the wife of Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, Amruta Fadnavis were the chief guests of the event.
- For a delegate or a sponsor networking opportunities galore for more than 12 hours on all days.
- Speakers mostly have lunches and dinners on the festival venue. Sponsors have the opportunity to host special lunches, high tea for interaction between specific writers and their special invitees.
- Being the largest platform for transaction of ideas between creative minds, GLF provides great opportunities to find creativity partners if you want to write a book, make a film, conduct research or meet fellow readers!

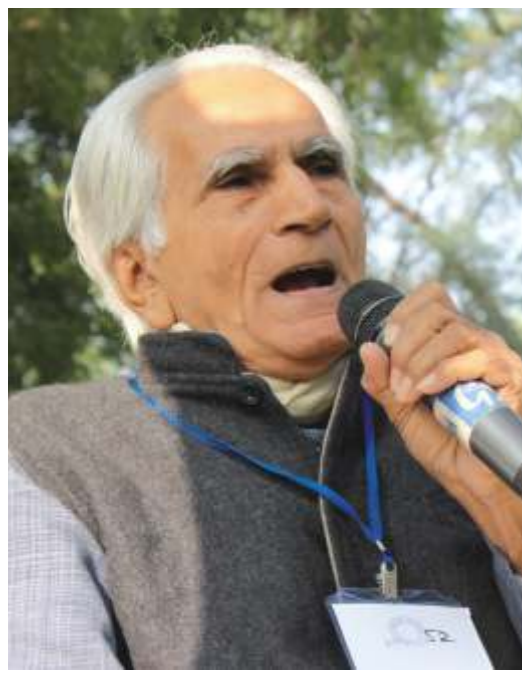


## GLF Awards

**First-ever award for Gujarati publishers, editors, proof-readers, and nuanced literary activities. Following are the categories of awards given so far.**

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Young Writer of the Year   | 9. Best Digital writing of the year |
| 2. Young Poet of the Year   | 10. Lifetime Work / Achievement     |
| 3. Young Web Series Writer  | 11. Best Poof-reading               |
| 4. Best Translator<br>(From Gujarati to English or other languages) | 12. Best Designed Book              |
| 5. Best Translator<br>(From other languages to Gujarati)            | 13. Unique Publisher                |
| 6. Best Film Story of the Year                                      | 14. New Publisher                   |
| 7. Best Play-wright of the Year                                     | 15. Most Selling book of the year   |
| 8. Jury's choice  | 16. Most Innovative Publication     |
|   | 17. Newer categories                |





### First Edition

#### Ahmedabad: Jan 3 to 5, 2014

- The first edition of the three-day festival focuses on Gujarati literature. Over 150 writers interact with over 7,000 youngsters and enthusiasts on and off the stage.
- Playwright Saumya Joshi enralls crowds with his poetry recitation.
- A 'court-martial' of novelist and columnist Kajal Oza Vaidya and discussions with Bollywood writer and director Anand Gandhi leave audiences spell-bound.
- The team of GLF 2014 coins the concept and term 'Rock Dayro' and introduce a fusion of traditional Gujarati form 'Dayro' with pop music. Artist Arvind Vegda performs this format on various national and international stages.
- Half-a-dozen books are released during the three days of the festival.

### Second Edition

#### Ahmedabad: Jan 30 to Feb 01, 2015

- Second year brought more diversity in content and languages. Sessions in Hindi, English, Urdu and Bengali are introduced.
- Famous film script writer Abhijat Joshi debates 'Gandhigiri' with Rajmohan Gandhi.
- Literary legend Niranjan Bhagat comes on a public stage for the first time in recent years, for a debate.
- Nationally acclaimed author Tarak Mehta attends the festival.
- Authors Jay Vasavada, Kajal Oza Vaidya and Madhu Rye hold workshops to packed rooms in the festival.





### Third Edition

**Ahmedabad: Jan 8 to 10, 2016**

- The festival introduces a theme: Film is new literature.
- GLF touches new heights. 175 Authors and Writers; Bollywood script-writers, lyricists, dramatists; 70+ discussions and debates, eight workshops; all of these in five different languages = another blockbuster edition of GLF.
- Workshops for young writers by acclaimed Bollywood film writers and directors Anjum Rajabali, Sriram Raghavan, Varun Grover and Pan Nalin.
- Over 40,000 visitors attend the Festival in three days.
- Exhibition 'Kanu's Gandhi', a collection of exclusive photographs of Gandhiji and a Photo exhibition of Gujarat's veteran authors fuses arts with literature.
- Multiple book releases: GLF is emerging as an event of choice for authors to release their books before the right audiences.



### Fourth Edition

**Ahmedabad: Dec 14 to 18, 2016**

- With the theme of humour, GLF comes out as a more mature and larger event.
- Spread over five days, nearly 200 authors, scriptwriters, historians, academicians interact with local audiences and tourists in over 90 different events.
- Best-selling national and international authors like Ashwin Sanghi, Namita Gokhale, Neelima Dalmia Adhar, Divya Prakash Dubey and Zac O' Yeah speak at the festival.
- Partners with apex body of film writers - Screen Writers' Association (SWA) of India - to bring the best of Bollywood writers to GLF.
- Evening Cultural Events: Stellar debut of Gujarati band Inner Notes with Akha Bhagat na 'Chhappa'.
- Performance by celebrated Bollywood song-writer Irshad Kamil's band 'Waahz'.
- First of its kind Hindustani classical musical event at the Sabarmati Ashram performed by veteran singer Vidya Rao.
- Chief Minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani visits the Festival for an inspiring speech.



## Fifth Edition

### Ahmedabad: January 3 to 7, 2018

- Historic moment! Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani reiterates unconditional support to GLF and promises to look into the issue of making Gujarati language compulsory in Gujarat's schools.
- Education minister Bhupendra Chudasama appoints a committee to execute GLF's demands. The Gujarat Assembly in March 2018 unanimously passes a motion to make learning and teaching of Gujarati language compulsory in all schools.
- Two new striking concepts - GLF Awards and Ink Tank are introduced.
- GLF Awards: A unique set of awards to honour the leading lights of Gujarat's literary scene - writers, editors, proof-readers, translators, designers and even publishers.
- GLF InkTank: A platform to connect young minds with story ideas to publishers, who are always on a lookout for fresh writers.
- Awards are given away in a high-profile event attended by Gujarat CM and Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis' wife Amruta Fadnavis.
- Introduction of Tabariya: Literature Festival for children and young adults.
- Tabariya is an instant success with participation from multiple schools.
- Seven art shows embedded in the venue, including a sculpture exhibition and multiple unique installations.
- In partnership with Screenwriters Association, veteran film writers Ketan Mehta and Rakesh Omprakash Mehra attend GLF.
- Bestselling author Devdutt Pattanaik attends the festival as a speaker.

## Sixth Edition

### Vadodara: February 2 to 4, 2018

- First edition of GLF in Vadodara is a smashing debut.
- Tabariya gets a rousing welcome by city's schools and parents with hearty participation in story-telling competitions.
- Bollywood star Vidya Balan attends the festival for a cerebral candid chat with Anjum Rajabali.
- 'India Today' founder and media baron Aroon Purie opens up about the challenges of managing a media empire.
- Folk performance: A contemporary rendering of Dayro by Dr Ranjit Vank, brings alive stories of love and valour from Saurashtra.
- The first edition includes language sessions in Gujarati, English, Hindi, Urdu and Marathi.
- Performance by young folk artist Aditya Gadhvi rocks the audience.



### Seventh Edition

#### Vadodara: January 18 to 20, 2019

- Marks the debut of 'Indian Screenwriters' Festival' - the first festival dedicated to all kinds of writing for films, TV and web-series. (In association with SWA).
- Actor Swara Bhaskar indulges in a no-holds-barred conversation.
- The festival is held at 'Museum Square' - a unique venue that is a century old abandoned industrial warehouse turned into an art museum, gallery and an art residency.
- The festival also sees the continuation of Tabariya in a newer format, with more focus on Indian literature and performances.
- Diverse performances include a contemporary rendering of Sufi trance, an English play Mohan's Masala on Mahatma Gandhi's legacy and Rock Dayro by Arvind Vegada and group.
- ISF is received by a packed house. Sessions from morning to evening about film-making and writing for various genres.
- Workshops on writing for films and Web Series.
- Striking conversations with superhit Bollywood writers and directors Sriram Raghavan and Abhishek Chaubey to name a few.

### Eighth Edition

#### Ahmedabad: December 18 - 22, 2019

- GLF expanded manifold to a much bigger venue on the lush green Gujarat University campus in December 2019.
- The festival added two more feathers to its already hearty hat. Two genres - Business and Art were included as BusinessTalks and ArtFest respectively.
- The first Kanti Bhatt Journalism Award Ceremony was hosted at GLF. The awards named after the veteran and celebrated journalist were received with warmth by the entire journalism fraternity.
- Indian Screenwriters Festival gets more appreciation from audiences with a diverse range of speakers - from veteran film director Vishal Bharadwaj to young pop lyricist Hussain Haideri and Vijayendra Prasad of Baahubali fame.
- GLF hosted an intense 5-day screenwriting workshop with Whistling Woods International and Screenwriters Association during the festival.
- Tabariya - the Children's LitFest gets multiple storytelling performances by bestselling authors.
- BizTalks debuts with star cerebral speakers from the business world and insightful conversations about contemporary issues like the corporate scams of India and the Flipkart story.
- Humour gets a leg-up in a conversation with stand-up comedian Abhishek Upamanyu.
- Evening performances get even more exciting with a special performance of popular Gujarati author Kaajal Oza Vaidya's play Ekla Chaalo Re and musical performances by popular youth band Meghdhanush and the India premier of Gandhi Dhun - a contemporary rendering of songs associated with Gandhij.
- Community participation increases with a string of book releases all through the day. the youth who have been inspired to write because of have chosen to present their work to the world from GLF's platform.



## The Story of GLF

In February 2013 a group of friends decided to create a literature festival for popularising Gujarati language and literature. They wanted to once again make it 'cool' amongst the youngsters to speak, read and write in Gujarati.

The impressions of Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) had also inspired many debates. But the subsequent thoughts took a little different shape. 'Let's not blindly do what others do. Let's do something that also promotes Gujarati language and literature'. Besides, the language witnessing a decline in quality of literary works coming out, was a serious concern.

Gujaratis have easily embraced English and Hindi languages. But it is happening at the cost of their own language - Gujarati. The language, though continues to be widely spoken, is losing its sheen as a representative of a culture that should inspire youngsters. Many see this as an early spell of doom for the language like its happening to many other regional languages. But these friends felt that popularilising it a again is a matter of presenting it in a more contemporary manner.

For several years, they witnessed with great concern and frustration, the deteriorating levels of Gujarati being spoken and written by young Gujaratis, Including themselves. Even journalists, whose bread and butter is writing, were witnessing a fall in the language skills in their own profession.

But as they saw that majority of students who failed in SSC in Gujarat did so because they had failed in their mother tongue ! Gujarati language, they felt it was evident that the time had come to address this issue actively.

There was unanimity among these friends that popularizing Gujarati language needed newer approach. Lest we wanted the culture and identity to be lost in the melting pot of globalization. They took it upon themselves to design an enjoyable event and not a preachy one. They decided to execute it as well. It was agreed that the festival will never exclude anyone on any grounds – it has to be the most inclusive event. It has to emerge as a platform where everything Gujarati finds its space.

It was ambitious to say the least. None of them were litterateurs themselves, most were journalists, entrepreneurs and literary enthusiasts. And no one had the experience of planning an event of this scale, but wanted to create the best experience for participants in their limited means. But when ignited minds, convinced about a cause and purpose come together, they create history. And thus GLF was born.

After months of planning in 2013, the first GLF was born as Gujarati Literature Festival in January 2014. To let people know that GLF has space for other languages too, the following year it was given a more inclusive title – Gujarat Literature Festival. With no change in commitment to Gujarati and sufficient space for all languages, it connected immediately with all.

It was driven with the overriding idea of making Gujarati language and literature, 'cool' for the youth. To motivate them to read, write, translate - basically tell their stories and hear those of the others. We also felt that unlike other literature festivals which were strictly focused on book writers, or those which were wedded to promoting the literature of a certain medium, GLF was born as a medium and genre-neutral festival.

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GLF expanded the popular definition of literature from printed text in books to include all forms of literary storytelling and more.

It was conceptualised with the idea of ensuring that the literary pursuits give financial dignity to writers, poets and to make it a profitable proposition. To achieve this end, it was decided that every single Gujarati writer or creator who goes on stage ought to be financially remunerated. And this was at a time when these enthusiastic bunch had no clue how to raise money. But they knew that they were raising the bar and it is not going to be easy even for them in future as it was about raising expectations and norms.

The task of raising money has proved to be the steepest. But as they say, when you are determined, the universe conspires to make it happen. With little to spare, first GLF happened out of nearly empty pockets and personal contributions.

The three-day event - morning to evening - hosted over 120 authors, veterans and young writers, film writers, poets, playwrights, journalists, columnists, bloggers, Dayro artists, singers et al.

It was a runaway success. Our goal that youngsters should attend the event, was achieved. Over 50% of attendees were under 30 years of age. Entry to the festival was kept free after registration on GLF website and on the spot. Some of the events were webcast live on the Internet and they generated a viewership of over 7,500 in US, UK and Australia to name a few places.

The festival has expanded and evolved every year to include technological advancements and keeping up with global trends and the youth's requirement of knowledge and education. The number of attendees of the event has grown manifold every year. But, GLF is not just an event. It is a movement. It is the faith of lakhs of our followers from across the globe, in the cause of the movement, that we wear with great pride on our sleeve and humbly accept the responsibility of it.

And so the founders prefer to stay away from the lime-light, except when essential. It helps them to ensure that the festival doesn't deviate from its focus. The idea of this festival was never to 'make profits' as a commercial event, but generate sufficient surplus to stay independent and make a difference.

## Gratitude and Acknowledgement

GLF will always be grateful to dozens of people and organisations who backed it generously in cash, kind and support. Sponsors who wholeheartedly supported us deserve a special mention. They are **Piyush Desai, Parimal Nathwani, Pranav Amin, Brajesh Bajpai, Urmila Kanoria, Bhagyesh Jha, Vishnu Pandya, Chiranjiv Patel, Priyanshi Patel, Abhay Mangaldas** amongst many others, many who want to remain unnamed.

## Team

**W**e are a bunch of literary enthusiasts. Our love for literary activities brought us together to use our diverse abilities to build a lasting literary movement, which is presented as an event. We organise this festival because we love reading and appreciate other forms of literature. We enjoy the journey of crafting this platform for young authors and readers to flourish.

The spirit of GLF is in its making. The event is a journey, not a destination. GLF is incomplete without its Creative and Advisory Team that makes this journey memorable for us and adds immense value to the festival. They are **RJ Aarti, Abhishek Jain, Aditi Desai, Anjum Rajabali, RJ Devaki & Niharika Shah**. However, the real soul of the festival is the hundreds of young volunteers who selflessly participate year after year. This is where the magic happens.

## FOUNDERS AND DIRECTORS



**SHYAM PAREKH** Festival Director  
Former Editor and Journalism Educator

This former resident editor of DNA Ahmedabad for over a decade, has been a life-long student of literature and acclaimed journalist with an experience spanning over 25 years. Apart from being the founding editor of his paper, he played a significant role in the launch of several newspapers and their editions. Shyam was nurturing a secret dream of building a literature festival in Gujarat for years, which materialised in 2013, when GLF was planned.



**JUMANA SHAH** Festival Co-director and Programming Director  
Former Editor and Journalism Educator

Jumana is a career journalist. She is a former editor who has worked with print, TV and digital mediums in DNA, Times of India and India Today. She has written profusely about politics and environment-wildlife. Her body of work includes political analysis, a column reflecting on social issues in DNA and elections reportage since 2005. A Martial Arts exponent, fond of travelling and an adventure sports junkie, she is a certified scuba diver, and a keyboard evangelist for saving marine environment.



**SAMKIT SHAH** Festival Producer  
Serial Entrepreneur

Samkit is a first generation entrepreneur who draws from his personal depths of eternal curiosity to bring a refreshing outlook to GLF. He earns his bread and butter by manufacturing highly customised engineering products for the European markets and oversees a translation business in dozens of global languages. When urban life gets difficult, he goes on stage as a stand up comedian for some retribution. An ardent traveller and effervescent optimist, Samkit is the Festival Producer of GLF who achieved the impossible – made the two ends meet to put up one after the other edition of the Festival.



**RAJENDRA PATEL** Mentor  
Poet, writer and literary activist

He is founder of 'Pustak Parab', world's largest free book distribution network and a promoter of 'Vanche Gujarat' movement, which got the government to promote literature and reading. Rajendrabhai is associated with several literary institutions in the state and is an acclaimed prolific writer. Soft spoken, Rajendrabhai runs a Gandhian-model pharmacy business and has guided the GLF as its Chief Mentor.