spicyIP

SUMMER SCHOOL

20TH – 28TH JUNE, 2026

Rethinking IP: Foundations, Faults and Futures

ABOUT US

Founded in 2005 by late Prof. Shamnad Basheer, one of India's foremost IP academics, SpicyIP continues on as one of India's leading online repositories on IP & innovation law and policy. Through their independent observations and analysis, bloggers on SpicyIP have been committed to fostering accountability and transparency within the Indian IP ecosystem. Now in its 21st year, SpicyIP has a proven track record of promoting richer IP discourse in the country and has been enriching the public domain by providing open access expert analysis on Indian IP developments. The blog has been cited by different high courts in their judgements and various SpicyIP posts have been included in the curriculum of leading law schools across the globe. Very significantly, SpicyIP has an engaged readership that keeps us on our toes!

Building on over two decades of blogging, SpicyIP has expanded into other online formats through SpicyIP TV, featuring interviews, discussions, and live interactive sessions. With the Summer School Programme that started in 2025, SpicyIP's foray into the offline world is now focusing on harnessing this experience towards cultivating critical pluralism in approaching Intellectual Property (IP) law and policy, particularly as they relate to innovation and progress.

ABOUT THE SUMMER SCHOOL

"Intellectual Property" laws and policies operate beyond conventional legal domains, functioning as a critical governance mechanism over the creation, development and dissemination of knowledge based resources. Thus, rather than treating IP as an isolated legal domain, the Summer School situates it as a dynamic governance mechanism that shapes and is shaped by political economy, public welfare, and knowledge ecosystems.

This year's edition of the residential summer school programme takes cognizance of the changing times we're in and pushes students to rethink common understandings of IP by simultaneously engaging with how IP is currently embedded in our world (Foundations), where its current tensions exist (Faults), and developing the analytical capacity to reason through what is coming next (Futures). Our aim is to develop a generation of thinkers who can interrogate dominant IP paradigms, engage with the complex intersections between law, policy, and lived realities, and reimagine innovation as a truly inclusive and transformative force.

SUMMER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

💡 Pedagogy

Inspired by Prof. Shamnad Basheer's critique of linear and fragmented legal education, the SpicyIP Summer School aims to adopt his T-FLIP methodology — an integrative, immersive learning approach grounded in real-world complexity. This method reimagines education as a dynamic narrative rather than a linear syllabus, rejecting siloed 'black letter law' instruction in favour of analytical immersion which places participants at the points where IP doctrine meets economic reality, public welfare, and the politics of knowledge.

T-FLIP Pedagogy:
- **T**heme-Based Inquiry
- **F**lipped Dynamics
- **I**nterdisciplinary Synthesis
- **P**olycentric Exploration

Through this methodology, the learning mirrors the complexity of real-world IP governance. Participants dissect themes of inquiry through multi-layered hypothetical problems – synthesizing law, ethics, business and the political economy at large. With a commitment to 'first-principles' thinking over 'faith-based' approaches, the programme asks participants to question received wisdom with an orientation towards 'why' rather than 'what'. Thus, it aims to simultaneously prepare students for non-linear problem-solving, while also demystifying IP's societal interfaces.

💡 Themes

The 9-day program is framed as an analytical immersion placing participants at the points where IP doctrine meets economic reality, public welfare, and the politics of knowledge, built around a re-occurring theme "Rethinking IP: Foundations, Faults, and Futures".

The programme begins with the "The Pharma Stack", where participants learn to situate, question, re-orient and question how IP operates, where it fails, and what comes next. As a thematic area of vital importance, the Pharma Stack serves as an apt training ground for developing the analytical reflexes of students, which will then be applied to four further domains:
- Public Domain, Commons & Open Source
- Platform Intermediaries & Power
- Entertainment
- Standards, Innovation & Openness

💡 Learning Outcomes

By the end of the programme, the participants can expect to have a rigorous grip on how to:
- Map how and why IP systems operate they way they do.
- Develop a set of analytical reflexes - questioning assumptions, tracing incentive structures, identifying whose interests a rule serves- that apply across any knowledge-intensive field.
- Engage with the practical dimensions of IP work: civil procedure, advocacy, contracts, client management, and the realities of a legal practice.
- Develop the practical and analytical capacity to reason through 'what comes next'.
- Produce public-facing knowledge outputs.
- Participate in discussions on leading contemporary IP issues with industry experts.
- Engage with a network of leading IP professionals beyond the programme.

SUMMER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

AN END TO END CASE STUDY: THE PHARMA STACK

THEME OVERVIEW

- The "Pharma Stack" is a comprehensive study of the pharmaceutical innovation lifecycle, a vehicle through which all three dimensions- Foundations, Faults, and Futures are explored simultaneously.
- The case study is not an end in itself, but a training ground for situating "IP" understandings and concerns within thematic realities.
- Why Pharma? It is the domain where IP's mechanisms, tensions, and stakes are most legible. Every stage from molecular discovery through clinical trials, patent strategy, regulatory approval, generic competition, and access is shaped by IP constructs. It is also the domain where the gap between IP's stated purposes and its real-world effects is most visible.

FOUNDATIONS

Participants learn how different forms of IP (not just patents) actually function in the pharmaceutical industry, not as textbook abstractions or conceptual silos but as strategic instruments deployed by specific actors with specific interests.

FAULTS

Participants will encounter the pressure points: access-to-medicine tensions (beyond mere compulsory licensing), business strategies including value-transference / ever-greening, and the political economy of TRIPS flexibilities.

FUTURES

Participants are asked to think about forward looking questions, including problems that are already unfolding and changing dynamics around how IP functions: How will AI affect drug discovery and the patent system's assumptions about inventorship? What happens to access frameworks as biologics replace small-molecule drugs? How are data exclusivity regimes reshaping competition in ways that patents alone cannot explain?

SUMMER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

APPLICATION: FOUR DOMAINS OF INQUIRY

THEME OVERVIEW

Learnings from the "Pharma Stack" will be applied to four domains where IP frameworks are under active pressure. In each domain, participants are asked the same three questions: What are the foundations? Where are the faults? What futures are emerging?

The aim is not to survey these areas but to use them as sites for rigorous, first-principles analysis, to show that the same mode of thinking that illuminated pharma IP can illuminate any thematic area where knowledge, creativity, and power intersect. Each domain is accompanied by complex, multi-layered hypothetical problems that participants work through collaboratively, applying the reasoning skills built in the first half.

FOUR DOMAINS

Public Domain, Commons, and the Open-Source World: The dominant IP discourse treats the public domain as residual, after rights expire. This module challenges that assumption, asking participants to consider the public domain, open-source movements, and commons-based production as affirmative, productive systems with their own logic, governance structures, and vulnerabilities.

Intermediaries, Power, and Competition: Intermediaries (platforms and otherwise) have become the dominant infrastructure of the knowledge economy. This module examines the IP dimensions of intermediary power: how they use intellectual property (their own and others') to shape markets, control creative ecosystems, and define and distribute 'value'.

Entertainment: Music, Film, and Creator Rights: Music and film provide relatable, concrete contexts for examining IP's most contested boundaries. This module focuses on the specific mechanics and power dynamics of how creative work is owned, licensed, monetised, and now increasingly generated or manipulated by AI.

Standards, Innovation, and Openness: Technical standards underpin interoperability across industries. This module examines the tension between patent-holders who invest in developing proprietary standards and open-source innovators who build tools enabling the interoperability that standards promise but often do not deliver.

SUMMER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

HANDS-ON LEARNING

- **Hands-on Patent Search and Drafting Workshop:** This will progress from basics of prior art search through to identifying problematic claims and patent transparency issues. Participants get to work to see firsthand where foundations become tangible, and where the faults become visible in the gap between what patents claim and what they deliver.

- **Unpacking Legal Arguments:** Participants gain firsthand insight into the craft of legal reasoning, learning to identify what makes an argument compelling, where it holds, and where it fractures.

- **Cross-cutting practice session on "Civil Procedure, Client Counselling & Litigator Life":** Participants get to work with hands-on hypotheticals and practical exercises focusing on procedural foundations to the human and strategic dimensions of practice, grounding thematic content in professional reality.

- **Cross-cutting practice session on "Media and Entertainment:Transactions and Negotiation":** Participants get to work with hands-on hypotheticals and practical exercises to gain exposure to transactional IP practice.

For further information, reach out to:

academy@spicyip.com

Coordinators: Dr Zakir Thomas, Swaraj Paul Barooah, Ambika Aggarwal
Curriculum Advisor: Murali Neelakantan
Organising Team: Praharsh Gour, Sonisha Srinivasan, Deepali B. Nayak, Anjali Tripathi, Yogesh Byadwal, Vishno Sudheendra, Ananya Srivastava, Tanishka Goswami, Shivam Kaushik

The SpicyIP Summer School will be capped at 25 students.

While open to anyone interested, please note this is a course that requires active participation in fundamentally questioning, and being open to reconstituting, common understandings of IP and its applications from classrooms to courtrooms. Students in our inaugural batch ranged from BA LLB 2nd year to Assistant Professor and PhD graduate. We expect the median student to be in their final year of law school.

A contribution of INR 30,000 per student will cover the costs of accommodation and meals for all 9 days, and will give you access to all sessions, group activities, and usage of the campus.

5 of the 25 slots will be earmarked for IDIA Scholars, and another 5 slots will be earmarked for students on a need-basis, with priority given to those from Government Law Colleges or from under-resourced Law Schools - regardless of any contribution, subject to sufficient applications from eligible candidates.

This is a residential program and the students will bear travel expenses to and from the venue (located in Whitefield, Bengaluru).

Students will be selected on the basis of their Statement of Purpose, as well as their performance in a Short Exercise in the application form.

APPLY NOW!

Scan the QR code
or
click here to apply:

HTTPS://BIT.LY/SPICYIP-SS26

SpicyIP Summer School 2026