

Mahindra University

Fourth Convocation | August 3, 2025, Hyderabad

Honourable Chancellor Shri Mahindra's Address

I'd like to begin by first congratulating all of you graduating students, but perhaps even more I would like you to join me in congratulating your parents and families who have supported you in your journey.

So please join your hands together in a round of applause not just for yourselves but also for your parents and families.

Mahindra University is an institution that is very close to my heart. I always look forward to this Convocation because it's the one time of year when I get to meet all you graduating students, and the best opportunity I have, to share some thoughts directly with you. So almost everything I have to say today, is for you.

You are inheriting a world that feels unstable and unpredictable. You have grown up watching financial crises, pandemics, climate emergencies, political polarization and rapid technological disruption unfold in real time. All of this has probably made you, as members of Gen Z, cautious, sceptical and less trusting of authority. At the same time, you have also grown up fluent in the use of technology and have witnessed manifold examples of its potential for both good and evil.

And Gen Z hearts, are undeniably in the right place - you are probably the only generation to demand that jobs, brands and leaders must align with ethics and purpose. Purpose is important to you.

This institution too is founded with a purpose. As you get ready step out into the world, there cannot be a better time than today, to meditate on that purpose. The purpose of Mahindra University is (and I quote) "To educate future citizens FOR and OF a better world". (pause)

At first glance it may seem be mundane. Why the need for both 'for' and 'of' you may ask. Could it be just an unnecessary literary flourish? What does it mean to be a citizen OF a better world. What does it mean to be a citizen FOR a better world? Two simple words – for and of. Between them, they cover an entire spectrum of meaning.

Let me share three explanations & interpretations of the meaning behind the usage of both 'OF' and 'FOR'. First, the two prepositions span the spectrum from Today to Tomorrow. Educating you to be citizens OF a better world, means training you to be a model citizen of the world here and now, as it exists today.

Imagine the world of today as a beautiful garden. You would, as a model citizen of it, ensure that it is watered, tended, kept spotless and looked after for all to enjoy. But as a citizen FOR a better world, you

would be doing the hard work of creating the garden of the future. You would roll up your sleeves, plan a beautiful eco-friendly design, plant the seeds, pull out the weeds, nurture the soil, so that that garden will bloom for everyone, even those who will come after you.

The ancient Greeks had it right when they said, “A society grows great when men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit”. If your education enables you to tend the garden of today and build the garden of the future, whose fruits you may never enjoy, this University will have done its job.

Second, the two prepositions also cover the spectrum between Preparation and Action. Your years here have shaped who you are; but your dreams for tomorrow will shape who you become. Your education here aims to prepare you to serve, shape, and improve the world which you inhabit, because you are citizens OF a better world.

As citizens FOR a better world, that preparation translates into action, enabling you to address global challenges, build inclusive societies, and innovate toward sustainability, equity, and justice. If we have done our job, you should have the capability to turn the ideals of today into the realities of tomorrow.

And thirdly, the difference between “of” and “for” covers the difference between Identity and Purpose. Being a citizen OF a better world gives you an identity. You belong to this world which you have inherited. It is part of who you are; you embody the best elements of today’s world — such as empathy, critical thinking, diversity, and ethical integrity. We will actively seek to enrol students who possess these attributes.

However, when you are a citizen FOR a better world, you move from inheritor to architect and builder. You apply those values you have imbibed here, to take responsibility for building the ideal society. You take ownership for building a world that is more enlightened, peaceful and just. That is purpose. It the purpose of this University to equip young to people to envision that better world and act to bring it to fruition.

As I said before, our purpose as a university, is short but profound. I shall try to stick to that spirit of brevity as well. In our rich Indian tradition, one is expected to live by one’s beliefs not just a citizen OF the world, but also FOR the world.

To quote the Upanishads

"यद् भावः तत् भवति"

Yad bhāvaḥ, tat bhavati

Which literally translates as "As you believe, so it becomes" Or, to put it another way "What you believe, you build."

What you hold within- your values, your vision, your intent, your actions - will shape what unfolds around you. Educating you to live by your values and translate them into action for the present and for the future - that's the purpose of Mahindra University. May that be your guiding light as you step out into the world.