

Berkana Exchange invites you on a

# Learning Journey

to India



## February 2006

The Berkana Exchange invites you to participate in a Learning Journey to India that will open your eyes, mind, hearts and hands to the work of pioneering leaders.

The Berkana Exchange is a learning community and resource exchange that connects pioneering leaders throughout the globe around their shared commitment to making a difference in and beyond their communities. These leaders are developing the capacity to solve their most pressing problems—community health, ecological sustainability and economic self-reliance—by acting locally, connecting regionally and learning globally.

On this journey, we will meet and learn from extraordinary pioneering leaders who are leading learning centers that are part of the Berkana Exchange network. *Learning centers* are local initiatives committed to strengthening a community's leadership capacity and self-reliance by working with the wisdom and wealth already present in its people, traditions and environment. We call this a "learning journey" because we believe that India has something essential and important to teach us about leadership. With guidance from founders of the Berkana Exchange, as well as Abhivaykti and Shikshantar learning centers, we will explore innovative approaches to leadership that are working well, and that offer us new possibilities for making a difference in our own lives.





## Our Itinerary

**February 13-14: Mumbai (Bombay).** Our journey begins on Monday, February 13, in Mumbai, a city at once glamorous and industrial, Westernized and appallingly poor. We will use this time in the capital of Maharashtra to begin exploring the themes of our journey, such as *swaraj*, or rule over oneself, which is inspired by Gandhi's call for people to lead and create their own models of development that are holistic, sustainable, collaborative and socially just. We will also learn about India's modern history and the conditions that led it to become the world's largest secular democracy.

**February 15-17: Nashik.** A few hours from Mumbai is the city of Nashik, a pilgrimage center for Hindus who come to dip in the holy river Godavari. Nashik is also home to [Abhivyakti Media for Development](#), one of the learning centers of the Berkana Exchange. Among its many programs, Abhivyakti works with several villages on self-directed learning, exploring the choices people make about their lives and livelihoods. We will spend some time in these rural communities, learning about the collision between traditional livelihoods and modern life—and the options available to local communities as they confront rising social, cultural and ecological concerns.

**February 18-22: Udaipur.** Nicknamed "the Venice of the East," Udaipur is a notoriously romantic city, with its whitewashed buildings and marble palaces overlooking Lake Pichola. We will fly to Udaipur from Mumbai, arriving mid-morning on the 18<sup>th</sup>, to four full days working side-by-side with the team from [Shikshantar](#), the first learning center to join the Berkana Exchange. Shikshantar's commitment is to engage communities in new modes of lifelong learning, and to develop the practices necessary for leadership and self-reliance to emerge. We will immerse ourselves in the daily life of the learning center, reflect on leadership and experiment with such projects as organic gardening, medicinal plants, arts for social change, the "Walkouts Network," and more.

**February 23-24: Delhi.** Our final visit will be to Delhi, the sprawling national capital and the northernmost destination of our journey. We will fly to Delhi from Udaipur on the afternoon of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and leave early the next morning for a daytrip to the Taj Mahal, described by the poet Tagore as a "tear on the face of eternity" and undoubtedly one of the world's most astounding buildings. Our closing day will be hosted by the extraordinary younger leaders of Manzil, a learning center in New Delhi, who will also help us celebrate the end of our journey the evening of February 24. Participants can plan to travel home on February 25 or extend their stay to visit other locations that we can recommend.



## Who is hosting the trip?

Your hosts are a team of leaders from the Berkana Exchange, Abhivyakti and Shikshantar:

- *Debbie Frieze* and *Bob Stilger* are directors of the Berkana Exchange. An entrepreneur and social activist, Debbie joined Berkana in 2002 to help bring Berkana's vision into the world and grow the Institute. Since the 70s, Bob has been a social entrepreneur and has launched and directed a number of nonprofit corporations. At Berkana, Bob has supported and mentored the development of six leadership learning centers in Africa, Europe and India.
- *Anita Borkar* and *Nitin Paranjape* are cofounders of Abhivyakti, a learning center committed to the empowerment of underprivileged and marginalized people, and to the development of a just and democratic society.
- *Manish Jain* is the founder and coordinator of Shikshantar, and the Chief Editor of *Vimukt Shiksha*, a publication dedicated to developing learning systems that liberate the full potential of human beings. Previously, Manish was a principal architect of the UNESCO Learning Without Frontiers initiative.

## How much does it cost?

The price of this journey is \$2,500. That includes lodging, most meals, internal transportation (flights to Udaipur and Delhi and ground transport) and entrance fees. It does not include your international flight or trip insurance (recommended).

This price covers the Exchange's costs for bringing you on this learning journey. Two of the initiatives you will visit—Abhivyakti and Shikshantar—are part of our global network of learning centers. It is our hope that once you have seen the profound changes these leaders are creating, you will be moved to support the Berkana Exchange. We will be asking you toward the end of the journey to consider making a contribution.

## How do I know if this trip is right for me?

*Am I interested in deepening my understanding of leadership?*

*Do I believe that I have much to learn from India that applies to my own life and work?*

*Do I see myself as a global citizen, interested in supporting pioneering leadership beyond my own community?*

*Would I enjoy immersing myself for several days in the life and work of an Indian community?*

If your answer to most of these questions is yes, then this trip is right for you.

## How do I sign up?

We can accommodate 20 guests on this Learning Journey. To learn more or to sign up, please contact Jennifer Smith - [jennifer@berkana.org](mailto:jennifer@berkana.org) or call 801.484.9231.

For more information, visit us at [learningjourneys.newworkspaces.net](http://learningjourneys.newworkspaces.net) or [www.berkana.org](http://www.berkana.org).

