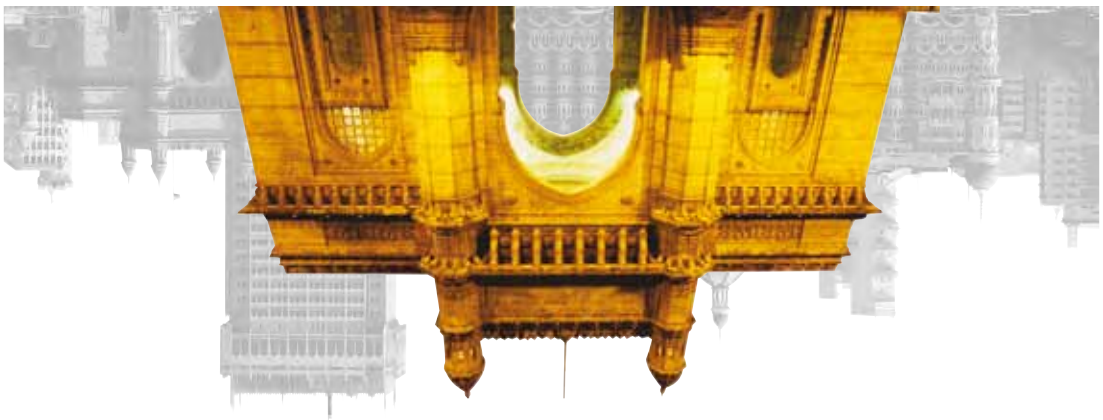




milamumbai *fusion*

SDA BOCCONI LINKS MILAN AND MUMBAI



In July SDA Bocconi, the leading Italian business school, will open a new school in Mumbai, India. **Stefano Caselli** explains how the partnership to create the school came about and how it is likely to develop in the future

SDA Bocconi started exploring the opportunity of launching a new venture outside Italy some years ago when an internal task force identified several concrete overseas options.

Those options were wide as the school has excellent international exposure in many countries around the world. However, the choice went to India and specifically Mumbai. The rationale behind the decision was to launch a new strategy in a well-known country. In other words, SDA Bocconi's entry into the Indian market is based on two strong pillars: in-depth research and strategic analysis and an existing strong network inside the country.

SDA Bocconi has been working outside Italy for many years, both recruiting candidates eligible for its MBA programme in Milan and launching executive programmes tailor made for corporations, financial intermediaries and public administrations.

India represents a further and relevant step to enlarge significantly its presence in the Asiatic region, based on the strong fundamentals of India. Expected GDP growth, a strong entrepreneurial background, impressive numbers of students demanding high-quality education, and demographic and social trends are the key drivers of India's educational attractiveness.

For many years SDA Bocconi and Università Bocconi have been building a relevant presence in the Indian market through several activities, including double-degree alliances, exchange programmes with leading schools, recruiting for all educational programmes held in Milan and opening a representative office in Mumbai.

This liaison with the Indian market is a fundamental requirement to starting the new venture, named MISB Bocconi, but the cultural links and strong similarities between Milan and Mumbai are even more fundamental to creating a successful venture.

Milan is a city that represents a blend of culture, business and finance and Mumbai is the same; furthermore, Milan is an incredible platform to leverage people towards Europe and Mumbai is an incredible platform to leverage people towards India and Asia.

In addition, some characteristics of the economic system promote these similarities between the two cities. For example, the presence and importance of family businesses, the large number of SMEs, the large retail banking system and the transition from state control to an open market.

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Within this context it is necessary to highlight that a further relevant factor to enhancing the decision and willingness to go through with the new venture has also been the presence of energetic and gifted Indian entrepreneurs who have co-operated with SDA Bocconi to create MISB and, among them, a SDA Bocconi MBA alumnus willing to give something back to the alma mater.

This co-operation with Indian partners has produced a lot of value and provided a bridge between SDA Bocconi's view of the Indian market and the culture and framework of the Indian business community and society in general.

MISB Bocconi represents the first step in establishing a long-term presence for SDA Bocconi in India. The creation together with Indian partners of a new school located in Mumbai aims to provide a solid, innovative and concrete presence respectful of the Indian culture.

- **Solid** because of the benefit of the wide and robust expertise of SDA Bocconi faculty that has been built through many years of international teaching and research.
- **Innovative** for the idea of positioning the school as a dynamic bridge between students, faculty and corporations, continuously sharing their energies, needs and experiences in the very heart of Mumbai, following the concept of an "urban campus" as SDA Bocconi has been for 40 years in the heart of Milan.
- **Concrete** because the start-up of the school is based on a single programme, the Post Graduate Program in Business (PGPB), to focus all the effort on one excellent course before progressively building a larger portfolio as the community around the school becomes larger.

- **Respectful** of the Indian culture because the project is based on the creation of a mixed faculty where SDA Bocconi professors will work together with newly recruited Indian faculty staying in Mumbai and in India. For that, a strong commitment from SDA Bocconi faculty to devote a portion of their life to stay in Mumbai for MISB is a prerequisite for an effective presence and a guarantee of quality.

The MISB adventure will start on July 2, launching the PGPB, a full-time programme delivering top-class management education. The first edition will end in spring 2014.

The programme aims to build responsible, reliable and effective business leaders. It gives participants the chance to start a successful career or to enhance their work experience by nurturing personal growth and fostering professional development.

It offers the experience, the international outlook and the multicultural environment essential for an international career in a global economy. The combination of theory and practice encourages students to have a creative and problem-solving approach; the international exposure educates them to succeed at a local and global level as well as to have a grasp of cultural intricacies.

In a nutshell, MISB will educate people to combine strong Indian roots and Indian culture with a global view.

To meet the characteristics of the Indian market, the PGPB is devoted to students exiting college and having only limited work experience, ranging between a couple of months and one to two years.

This positioning is related to the fact that students leaving colleges have a strong but theoretical knowledge – in many cases in the economic and managerial disciplines



The principle behind the venture in Mumbai will follow the concept of an "urban campus" as SDA Bocconi has been for 40 years in the heart of Milan





– and their ambition is to enter the world of business as managers or to start their own companies. The latter is strongly supported by MISB.

The PGPB programme draws heavily on the curriculum, research outputs, faculty and experience of SDA Bocconi. It is an innovative mix of lectures, international experiences and connections with industry where the key words are intensity, connection and international exposure.

PGPB is an intensive academic programme covering all the business management fundamentals in over 1,000 class hours moving from the fundamentals of management and entrepreneurship to a wide portfolio of elective courses in specific tracks and fields.

PGPB has a strong connection with the corporate world supported by a compulsory internship/summer project, the Corporate Connect sessions (which are mainly group works with companies) and the on-campus Placement Event and the Career Commencement School (CCS).

The CCS is an innovative format. In the last two months of the programme, courses are designed and delivered together with practitioners who interact continuously with students and recruit them for jobs.

For this reason, a strong network of corporate and financial institutions surrounds MISB to ensure strong relationship with the business and financial community.

Finally, PGPB offers an intensive international exposure through the Campus Abroad programme (a one-month summer programme in several different destinations in North America and Asia) and an exchange semester in Milan to link the MISB and SDA Bocconi communities. **gf**

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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