

FIRST PRINCIPLE

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My tryst with the School of Planning and Architecture New Delhi began even before I joined the formal postgraduate program in Urban Design, and subsequently during the years of the course in 1991-1993. Today I am filled with immense pride, fondness and gratitude, coupled with a sense of nostalgia as I recall those years. The institution imbued in me an unquenching thirst to explore, to learn as I worked along, and to work with ethics and integrity striving to be the best albeit with a sense of healthy competition, and the ability to work in a team with diverse professionals. The environment - so free and yet so challenging in every respect - transformed me from an awkward young graduate to the mature, confident and accomplished urban design professional that I am today

The opportunities to freely interact with the toughest of professionals in the practice coupled with the rigorous academic grooming, ignited the spark and imbued in me the courage to not only start out on my own as soon as I stepped out, but my practice FIRST PRINCIPLE (as the name suggests), constantly engages with diverse urban design and architecture project typologies ranging from master planning and townships to campuses, industrial and corporate buildings, multifamily residences and farmhouses, as well as redevelopment and retrofitting projects, each time rethinking and reinventing conventional approaches, working out the project from the beginning as if it were for the very first time, even after 30 years with surprising zest and enthusiasm. The institution opened-up a wonderful world of unlimited possibilities and opportunities that inspired a multi-dimensional approach to practice of the profession, making me stretch beyond my known capacities to encompass the practice, the pedagogy and professional roles & responsibilities.

Even after I left the school, the faculty, with whom we were on first-name basis, continue to be my mentors, and the batchmates very dear friends and supports, creating relationships that have most certainly stood the test of time and are at the core of my very existence.

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Ar. Archana Khanna



Ar. Archana Khanna is the Founding Partner of the Delhi-based award-winning practice First Principle. She is the Urban Design expert on the Heritage Conservation Committee at MoHUA, Government of India, Office Bearer and Convener, Sustainability Committee at the Indian Institute of Architects, Northern Chapter. She serves as a member of the National level Women Empowerment Committee at the Indian Institute of Architects Headquarters, Principal Member on the BIS CED 12 Committee for standardization of functional requirements in buildings, and is a GRIHA certified professional, a Technical Mentor with the GRIHA Council for the GRIHA V-2019 and member, Technical Advisory Committee for GRIHA for Interior Spaces,, while championing several other causes and commitments.