

British Council inks pact with Mumbai First for better education, tourism

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THE BRITISH Council and not-for-profit thinktank Mumbai First on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on education, tourism, art and culture, a first such city-level partnership in the ongoing UK-India Year of Culture.

Among the initiatives is a plan to enrich teaching skills across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and to improve the quality of low-cost private English medium schools.

The British Council, which has already trained 10,000 Indian teachers under a previous collaboration, will now use those trained teachers to influence an additional 10 million teachers.

"The motto is to use these Indian teachers to train other Indian teachers. It's not about bringing teachers from England to India but about using the already existing teaching resources and skills that the British Council has developed and invested in for the past 10 years in India. It will be exciting to see how these trained teachers will become master-trainers," said

Alan Gemmell, India director of the British Council.

The partnership will also focus on making learning more digitised. Comparing this initiative with the British Council's collaboration with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) in 2012 to train teachers of municipal schools, Sheron Memis, Director, West India, British Council, said, "That initiative was limited just to the city and has been incredibly successful. What we want to do with Mumbai First is bring the Public Private Partnership to expand it to the whole metropolitan region. This initiative is about expanding, and it's broader and deeper."

The collaboration is a two-year project that is likely to be extended.

"This collaboration is in line with our vision to transform Mumbai/MMR into a world-class safe city, one of the best places to live and do business in. It will be a critical milestone in impacting the lives of people through initiatives around education, creativity and culture empowering them and making MMR a better place to live, work and play for the people," said Shishir Joshi, CEO of Mumbai First.

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