

Dr Ipshita Mandal-Johnson

Class of 2006

Scholarship Partner: Douglas Pharmaceuticals

B. Technology (Biotechnology)

University of Auckland

PhD Chemical Engineering & Biotech

University of Cambridge

Community: Mt Roskill

Mt Roskill Grammar

My proudest career moment is yet to come, but this comes close

I mapped the socio-economic development that technology can achieve, whilst developing a strategy roadmap for the Government of India with McKinsey under the trillion-dollar digital economy report. Specifically, developments like agtech and improvement of farmers' income or building a scale-up model for universal access to broadband were some of the toughest challenges and yet most rewarding experiences.

Bringing together biotech's leaders of tomorrow

Under Global Biotech Revolution, we started GapSummit which is an event that discusses pressing challenges facing the bio-economy and brings about innovations to solve them. The debate that was had by bringing together hundreds of leaders of tomorrow from over 50 countries, all in the same room was pretty powerful. Being able to build that up and then step away, leaving it under a solid succession was a proud moment.

Enriching work experience with long term connections

My time at Douglas Pharmaceuticals was enriching. I loved the family values within the corporate nature of the business. I learnt plenty of technology, functional, and business skills that complemented my studies, I spent time in all functions of the business which really helped with scaling start-ups and corporates later in my career - you don't have to be an expert to get started. I've kept relationships I made during my time there that have stayed with me throughout my career.

2007

Attended University of Auckland from year 12 to start a degree in technology with a major in Biotechnology



2008

Attended National University of Singapore under a 360 student exchange programme for a degree in biotechnology

2011

After receiving a scholarship, attended the University of Cambridge to carry out her PhD in Biotechnology



2012

Co-founded Global Biotech Revolution which created a global platform for inter-generational debate in biotechnology

2016

Worked with a biotech start-up Nanna Therapeutics on early stage drug discovery



2017

Joined McKinsey as a strategy consultant working in India and the United States

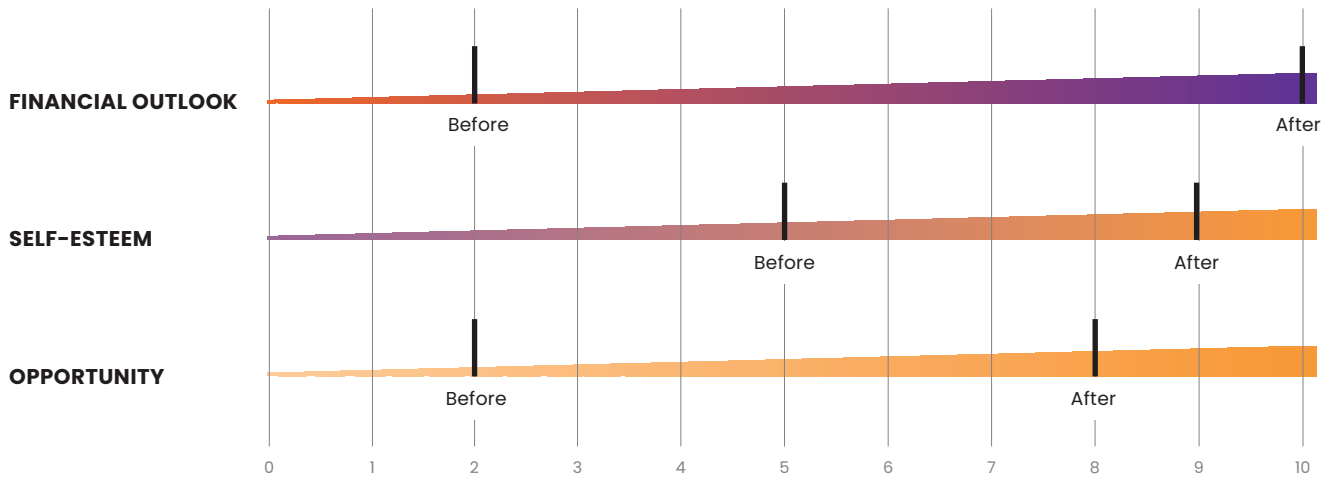
2017

Listed in the Inaugural 40 under 40: Disruptors & Innovators by the University of Auckland

2020

Founded Global Bio Fund building a seed accelerator fund in the bio sectors of healthcare, agriculture and climate change

We asked Ipshita to measure the change to her sense of wellbeing on a scale of 1 to 10. This compares how she felt before she was granted the First Foundation Scholarship to how she feels now.



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

“My desire to give back is driven by self-happiness!

There have been so many people who have helped me, it’s nice to give back by building up my knowledge to serve others.”

I speak and contribute at summits and conferences around the world. In 2020, I mentored teams who took part in the MIT COVID-19 Hackathon aimed at building solutions for the COVID-19 crisis.

Regularly published, my work can be found in publications such as The Economist and Nature.

The social capital my scholarship gave my family was huge. My Dad, a migrant from India felt the prestige that comes from the awards and recognition in NZ, and the interaction with my mentor Jo, and her family helped them further integrate into Aotearoa and its culture.

My husband and I are working on a women’s education project in a village in rural India and we hope to have taught at least 100 young women in 10 years.

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