KPMG

India alumni newsletter

December 2018

KPMG.com/in

Season's Greetings and a Happy New Year!

Dear Readers,

As 2018 comes to a close, we would like to thank you, our alumni, for your support and goodwill which mean a lot to us. We are proud of you and watch your career progress with pride and joy -- and I am sure you are pleased to see your old firm continue to grow and succeed.

As you know, we are in the 25th year of KPMG in India. We reflected, in this connection, on who we are, what sets us apart. The term we came up with was josh – energy, enthusiasm, passion. You helped create the DNA of #KPMGjOSH* and this is a moment to thank you for your contributions.

We at KPMG are excited by the opportunities ahead of us. Our people are continuously growing in capability in line with the demands of today's market. And we continue to attract top notch talent to the firm including alums who return (we have a special place in our heart for them).

My best moments – and there have been many – last year were those when a CEO, CFO, corporate director or other senior executive said, you KPMG people, you stand out for your quality. One of them, a senior director who serves on several boards told me that the difference between KPMG and the competition was that of night and day. While his words are kind and reflect the good opinion of many of our clients, we greatly respect our competition and will not rest on our laurels. We know our competition cannot but be strong not least because their leadership is significantly made up of our alums!

I look forward to connecting with more of you in 2019.

Season's greetings and best wishes for a joshful** New Year to you and your families.

Arun M. Kumar
Chairman and CEO
KPMG in India

* #KPMGjOSH – noun: the passion, enthusiasm and energy of KPMG India that delivers high quality service to clients

**Joshful – adjective: exuding the quality of KPMGjosh

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Christmas around the world

Mexico

A truly whacky and sweet Christmas

Many Christmas parties in Mexico include guests being invited to whack star-shaped piñata till it breaks and spills open with sweet treats! Our parties will never be the same after reading this!

Germany

A countdown to candies and Christmas

The Germans do countdowns differently for Christmas. Instead of just counting, like the rest of us, children in Germany receive calendars with 24 squares stuffed with candies. As children count down to the Christmas day, they feast on one candy a day right up till Christmas eve! Now that's a tradition we would want to adopt!

Italy

A very relatable Christmas tree

We have all been there. It's Christmas and we didn't have the time to get the tree. Italians have us covered. In Italy, the Christmas tree, isn't a tree at all! They use a ladder structure and decorate it like a tree. The top of the stricture is adorned with traditional ornaments, middle with ribbons, stars and the bottom of the ladder is laden with sweet treats.

Belgium

Compete for a gift

A popular Christmas party game in Belgium involves playing musical gifts. As part of the game, a Christmas song is played and a wrapped gift is passed around. Whoever has the gift when the music stops, gets to keep it!

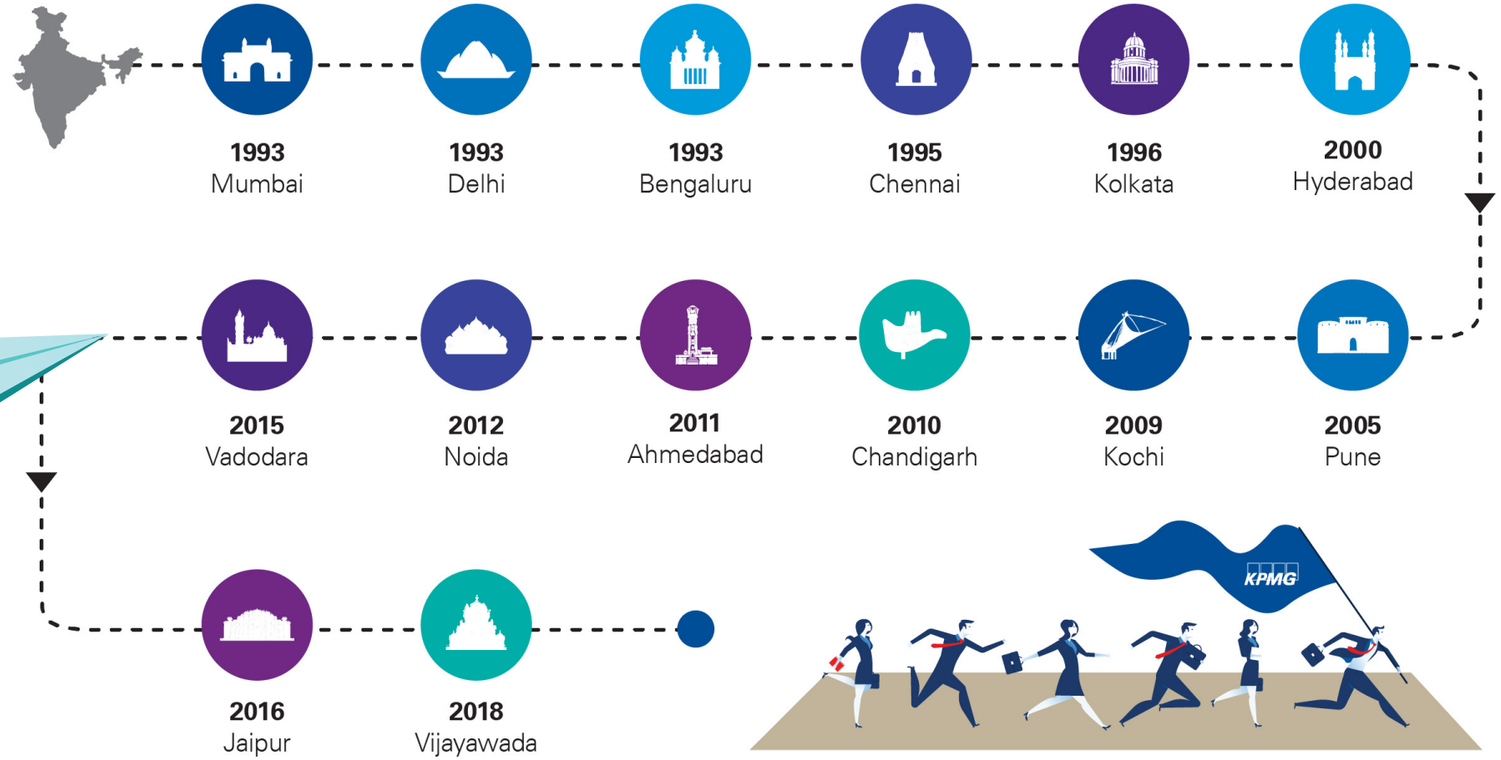
New Zealand

A very different Santa

Santa is very different in NZ. They wear 'jandals' (New Zealand sandals) or an 'All Blacks' rugby shirt instead of the traditional red overall. Going by the attire, kids in NZ leave pineapple chunks and beer for Santa instead of milk and cookies. Don't be surprised if you see a beer-guzzling, dressed-in-black, Santa bringing you gifts in NZ!

Source: Reader's Digest, Article: 15 Christmas Traditions to Steal From Around the World

The journey so far



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Alumni speak

Subashini Rajagopalan

Marketing Communication, Brand Management professional

Subashini was with KPMG in India for over six years and was part of the Markets team in Mumbai. During her tenure, from 2011 to 2017, she worked on various marketing collateral to ensure they were in line with the KPMG marketing compliance policy. She has over 15 years of extensive experience across specialised areas of marketing communication.

A note from Subashini on her experience at KPMG: Coming from a media background and into KPMG, the first few weeks were quite overwhelming. I had to go shopping for formal clothes! The performance rating system, the induction, the many training sessions, were all mind boggling at the start. But having understood the significance of all processes set, the logic for documenting and the systems put in place; I started to appreciate, respect and enjoy it all. In fact, the irony is that I got the opportunity to lead the Marketing Compliance team.

I was with KPMG for over seven years. That says a lot about the place and the people I worked with, considering work life with any organisation prior to that was under two years. The people are approachable and helpful. They are smart and understanding. The organisation offers a lot of opportunities for an individual to grow personally and professionally. I have been fortunate to have very empathetic, sharp, respectful, wonderful performance managers providing their guidance, advice and insights throughout my career at KPMG. Team mates I worked with were kind, energetic, enthusiastic, smart, and fun amongst other good things.

KPMG was truly an extended family for me, and I have undoubtedly had some fantastic times during my stint. I have made a few relationships for life, and I will always cherish my KPMG memories. I will be an advocate for the firm and its people.

Aman Abbas

CEO, Commwiser

Aman joined KPMG in India in July 2011 and headed the Corporate Communications for the firm for close to three years. He was based out of the Gurugram office and was responsible for the firm's overall communications strategy, alignment of service lines and sectors from a communications standpoint and implementation of communication plan. Currently, he is the CEO at Commwiser, which is a specialist firm focusing on professional services and technology space.

A few words from Aman on his journey at KPMG: Many congratulations to KPMG on completing 25 years in India. In spite of being the youngest professional services firm, it has already created a formidable reputation that clients can bank upon. During my stint with the firm, I got the opportunity to work with some of the brightest minds in the country. Being the head of Corporate Communications, I got the chance to work with people across functions in India and globally. This was not without its challenges, but it also gave me immense learning that helped me grow as an individual and a professional.

KPMG in India's leadership was very supportive of all the new initiatives that the Markets team introduced. I was fortunate to have started social media strategies and outreach for the firm. The analytics of our efforts was very advanced which helped marketing campaigns become sharper and stronger.

My best wishes go out to KPMG in India, a place I have spent some of the best years of my working life.

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Know our leader - *Bhavik Damodar*

Bhavik is the Chief Operating Officer for Advisory and also leads Transaction Services' efforts in the Infrastructure Sector. He has been involved in many marquee deals in the infrastructure space across the power, transport, water and waste, construction, oil and gas and infra allied equipment sectors. Bhavik is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India.

Bhavik Damodar
Partner, Deal Advisory
COO – Advisory
KPMG in India

Describe your first day at KPMG.
I was overwhelmed by the size of the firm. I was given a huge KPMG manual to read not knowing that next day I will be plotted on my first assignment.

What are your best takeaways from your lifelong journey at the firm?
KPMG provides great opportunities to work across roles and keeps you engaged through various initiatives. The firm not only appreciates good work but also values loyalty.

What have been your favourite milestones for/at the firm?
Like everyone who joins the firm, I too aspired to be a Partner with the firm. Reaching this milestone has been a very precious moment.

KPMG's biggest impact on you and your biggest impact on KPMG.
My biggest contribution has been not just the good work I do for the clients but also seeing individuals whom I have worked with and mentored become Partners. It gives me great satisfaction and pride to be able to guide people in their careers. My experience at KPMG has transformed me from a shy student to someone who can comfortably deal with clients and other colleagues, both in India and globally.

How did being at KPMG open you towards your passions and interests?
As you progress, interests change but KPMG has always given me the flexibility to pursue my interests outside the firm.

If you could go back in time, what would you tell your 25-year-old self?
I would have told myself on the importance of an international secondment, the exposure and a wider perspective that it offers.

If you could trade lives with anyone for a day who would it be and why?
Probably a CEO of a big conglomerate dealing with business concerns and multicultural issues. It would be good to know how the view from the top is.

If you were not working with KPMG, what would you be doing?
Coming from a family of lawyers, I would probably have been one. But I chose to be the different professional in the family.

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Employee notes

The year 2018 has been incredible for us at KPMG in India. From humble beginnings in 1993, we have come a long way to claim our spot in the professional services industry, while also constantly winning the trust of our clients.

As we walk past the memory lanes of the year gone by, we wanted to share with you the experiences and heartfelt messages from some of our 'Rocks' at the firm.

20 years

Vaibhav Desai

Executive Director, Advisory

20 years in KPMG

'Who does that? I did!'

Everyone keeps asking me what has kept me going for 20 years at KPMG in India. I say, it is the people and the rich experience the firm provides that drive me.

KPMG is the only company that I have known and I have cherished each day of working here. I have worked with the financial due diligence practice and then moved to the integration and separation practice. I don't know what would be next as there are so many opportunities to explore within the firm.

I remember my first day at the firm. Despite being a bit confused and nervous to start with, I looked forward to making my career here. The first party at Samudra Mahal, Worli was more of a grand welcome to KPMG in India for me. This made me believe this is the right place to be. There were many firsts and the list is long and unending till date.

How can I miss out on teammates? They made my life interesting and enjoyable at the firm and I thank each one of them. Two decades with the firm and I am still going strong. Today, I proudly look forward to more milestones over the next few decades.

+20 years

Shashi Bahl

Assistant Manager, Administration

I realised that the power of the moment is not in the moment itself. It actually is in us. Every single one of us has the power to make and shape our own moments.

My journey with the firm has been great. I have enjoyed every moment - celebrating birthdays, festivals and team activities with my colleagues.

One such memory was of our offsite to Goa in 2008. We got to meet new people from across locations, interact with the seniors and get to know people apart from their work.

I have spent more than 20 years with the firm, and now my colleagues have become friends and are more like a family.

I have savoured all the moments spent here as I believe these are treasures which one earns over the years.

22 years

Bernardine D'Penha

Executive Secretary

I have had the privilege of working with KPMG in India for over 22 years. Back then, I worked out of the Bandra-Kurla-Complex office, which was a small set up where we shared computers and desks and a couple of partners shared cabins. However, all that did not really matter as we enjoyed working as a family.

When I first joined the firm, I was very nervous and shy. I remember the time when I was new in the system and was asked to fill in for the secretary who was on leave. I reluctantly went into the boss' cabin to collect some papers from his desk, it was a busy day for him and he was going through a number of important documents. Lo and behold, I dropped his cup of tea, which was in the midst of all his papers and was mortified at what would happen. Now, I think of it and have a good laugh. Time and experience have made me very confident and outspoken, thanks to the confidence of my colleagues in me.

I am very blessed and thankful to the firm for giving me an opportunity to work with

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the Leadership Team, the Assurance and Risk leaders, which was challenging and fulfilling. My journey with KPMG in India has been an extraordinary one, filled with great memories and a never-ending learning period. Working with the best team of committed professionals brought out the best in me.

At KPMG in India, we believe that all work and no play makes you a dull one. The offsites were the best experiences in this regard that any firm could have for their staff. We all looked forward to them and we had a blast. The firm also hosted a staff party every year with a different theme.

Over the years, I was delighted to see newly appointed staff accountants rising to become Partners and the firm grow.

I would like to thank everyone who has walked this memorable journey and congratulate KPMG in India on achieving this milestone. I hope and wish for the firm's continued success to reach greater heights in the next 25 years as well.

It has been fantastic working here. I am going to miss this awesome place when I retire in March 2020. If given a chance to start all over again, I would definitely pick this firm over others, as KPMG in India is 'simply the best'.

23 years

Homiyar Banker

Senior Manager, Markets

I have been an instrumental part within three practices in the firm over the past 23 years. I recollect the time when we just started the Sales and Markets function to spearhead our go-to-market strategy.

Something incredible happens when teamwork happens the way it's supposed to happen. Things change when everyone on the team is equally invested in the overall purpose and goal. You find yourself working faster, finding mistakes more easily and innovating better. Ultimately, you reach a point where you are certain each person on your team has your back – and both your job satisfaction and performance skyrocket. That is what happened whilst setting up Sales and Markets.

Driven by collaboration, our Markets team now represents a strength unlike any other professional services firm in the industry, propelled by the best in talent. That is the power of teamwork!

23 years

Deepa Kunder

Assistant Manager, Finance

It has been a 23 fantastic years with the firm now. I am very proud to be associated with an esteemed organisation like KPMG in India. I express my gratitude to the firm and all my colleagues for the opportunities and experiences they have given me over these two decades. This is a great place to work any day! I wish KPMG all the best for the future.

Thank you!

25 years

Manoj P

Manager, Technology

It is an honour for me to be a consistent part of KPMG in India for 25 years. It has been an incredible journey, and trust me, it does not feel that long. Time really flies when you are having a good time and that sums up my KPMG experience.

It is a reflective moment for me. I am thankful to the firm for keeping me inspired and providing me with opportunities for self-development, not just at work but also at a personal level. I have great friends; we work together, run together, play together and achieve together. I say run together, as most people here know the runner in me, and I emphasise it to prove that work-life balance is totally achievable. KPMG in India has provided me with that flexibility.

I am reminded of a quote from Confucius: "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." This is how I feel 25 years into the job I love.

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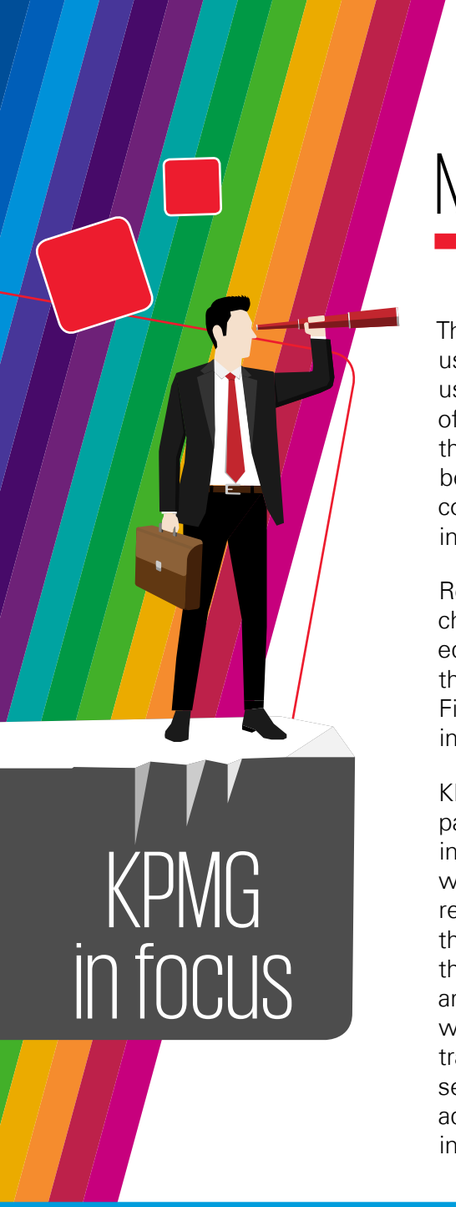

KPMG in focus

NASSCOM India Fintech Day, 2018

The fintech revolution continues to usher in exciting and innovative tools using next generation technology. One of the key developments has been the active and extensive collaboration between incumbent banks and fintech companies to embed new approaches into mainstream services.

Recognising the accelerating pace of change, NASSCOM conducted its third edition of India Fintech Day with the theme 'Blockchain in Reimagining the Fintech Industry' on 27 September 2018 in Mumbai.

KPMG in India was the knowledge partner for the event. The report 'Fintech in India - Powering a Digital economy' was released by our partners and renowned industry stalwarts during the event. The report offers a view of three emerging themes – open banking, artificial intelligence and blockchain, which have the potential to bring a transformation of financial services sector in India. While these themes add substantial value if implemented in silos, a concurrent adoption of the triad of themes presents a compelling case to build the next generation open frameworks. The report also explores the current landscape of technological adoption in the financial services industry and serves as a guide for such organisations in India to accelerate their journey in the open digital era.

45th National Management Convention

AIMA organised their annual flagship event, National Management Convention, on 26-27 September 2018 in New Delhi. The theme of the convention was 'Leadership in the age of Disruption; India @2030: Creating a USD 10 Trillion Economy'. The convention was attended by many eminent speakers such as MJ Akbar, former Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India; T V Mohandas Pai, Senior Vice President, AIMA; Harshavardhan Neotia, Senior Vice President, AIMA and Chairman, Ambuja Neotia Group, among others.

KPMG in India, in association with AIMA, released a report 'Management Capability Development Index India 2018' at the event. A vast range of topics were covered, including 'Creating a New Global Order Based on Compassion, Trust and Peace: What should we do?'; 'The Future of Retail: Will Online Retail Dominate or Will it be Offline-Online?' to name a few. Akhil Bansal, Deputy CEO, KPMG in India, shared his views on how the Indian industry is keeping up with the fourth industrial revolution.

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Global Cyber Day 2018

Cyber Day is a programme which KPMG runs globally in the month of October, which includes conducting sessions on cyber awareness for students across schools. KPMG in India's Cyber Security team kicked off Cyber Day 2018 on 12 October across north and west India and covered south India on 26 October.

As part of Cyber Day, volunteers from the India firm create awareness about the importance of cybersecurity and internet safety in today's digital environment for students aged 7-16 years.

Various teams at the firm have rallied behind the concept, enabling us to effectively contribute to the community. The 2018 edition witnessed participation from more than 100 schools, and the volunteers covered more than 51,000 students.

The overall feedback from schools has been extremely positive and there are requests pouring in to widen the scope of this initiative and enhance the coverage to teachers and parents. As a firm, KPMG in India is committed to this initiative and create adequate awareness for being cyber safe.

Workshop on GST

Workshop on 'GST: Recent Trends and Challenges' & Interactive Session with Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC)

The workshop was hosted by KPMG in India in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) in New Delhi on 2 November 2018. The event saw presence of key business leaders, CFOs, tax heads, senior public figures and leading representatives from across the industry.

Under the overarching theme of 'GST: Recent Trends and Challenges' the event addressed key issues such as the recent changes in GST, readying for GST audit and filing of annual returns, recent rulings and their impact, practical aspects of anti-profiteering, inverted duty structure, valuation and input tax credit.

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India Mobile Congress 2018

KPMG in India was the knowledge partner for South Asia's largest telecom event – India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2018 – during 25-27 October 2018 in New Delhi. The event was organised by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI).

IMC 2018, with its theme 'New Digital Horizons Connect, Create, Innovate', aimed at building upon innovative ideas, forging lasting industry relationships, showcasing leading-edge digital technology and product trends, sectoral insights and impactful solutions from across the world for our region. The platform saw stellar participation with the event being inaugurated by Manoj Sinha, Minister of State for Communications, Government of India and had the presence of industry titans, including Mukesh Ambani, Sunil Bharti Mittal, Kumar Mangalam Birla and Vivek Badrinath, among others. The event had over 190 global speakers, 300+ exhibitors, 5,000 CXOs and over one million visitors.

As the knowledge partner, KPMG in India was deeply involved in supporting in finalisation of IMC 2018 themes and topics for keynote sessions and panel discussions, identifying key speakers and panelists. We had 15 of our partners participate as speakers/ moderators, including Arun M. Kumar, Chairman and CEO, KPMG in India; and KPMG's Global Head of Telecom and Media, Alex Holt.

We also released a thought leadership document on the telecom industry, which was well received during the event.

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Publications

Our thought leadership publications

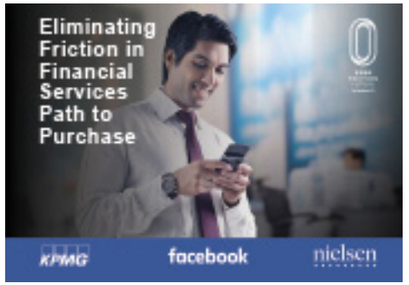
New Digital Horizons: Connect. Create. Innovate

Fintech in India – Powering a digital economy

The impact of impact investment

Convergence towards inclusive digital growth

Indian real estate and construction: Consolidating for growth



Eliminating friction in financial services path to purchase

Management Capability Development Index India 2018 Report

You may browse through many more reports and download them from our **website**.

If you are interested in hard copies of the reports or would like to be included in the firm's external initiatives, you can write to **in-fmkpmgalumni@kpmg.com**

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Accolades

At KPMG in India, we strive to achieve the best, fulfill aspirations and fuel passions and this is what makes us the 'Clear Choice'. With our constant and never-ending endeavour towards growth, we are proud of our achievements, and have been conferred with a number of awards and accolades over the last 25 years. Below is a glimpse of a few in the recent past.

'Best Transfer Pricing Firm of 2017 in India' by International Tax Review two years in a row

Leading indirect tax advisers in the world in 2018 International Tax Review for three consecutive years

Featured in **LinkedIn's Top 10 Companies list (2018)** third year in a row

Outstanding Solution Provider in Procurement 2018 by the Institute of Supply Chain

The only firm working on all marquee initiatives of the government (Make in India, Smart Cities, Startup India, Skill India, Swacch Bharat, Digital India)

Mega Corporate Film Festival Award 2017 for driving change initiatives, policy change, mission and values, communicating vision

Great Indian Workplace Award 2018 in the 'Mega Enterprises' category

Best Advisor in Real Estate Tax as per 2017 Euromoney Real Estate Awards Survey

Women in Tax Leaders Guide in 2018 International Tax Review for the third consecutive time

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Join KPMG in India's alumni network

Our alumni website

Registrations continue to pour in for our alumni website - a forum for ex-KPMG employees to connect with each other and the firm!

Visit the Website

Our flourishing alumni network not only helps you in establishing contact with your former colleagues, friends and KPMG in India, but also keeps you abreast of our alumni programmes, news and events, as well as latest services and offerings.

By registering with the network on our **Alumni portal**, you can also actively participate and contribute to our **Citizenship programme** and other initiatives of the firm, wherever you are based.

We hope your continuous relationship with the firm will serve as a cherished source of inspiration in all your future endeavours.