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Dr. Divya
Singh



Here
to be
Astute

Designing the institutions
that don't yet exist.

Dr. Divya Singh has spent more than three decades proving that law, ethics and leadership are not separate disciplines. They're the same discipline, applied at different scales. Admitted as an advocate of the High Court of South Africa in 1991, she built a career that moved from courtroom to classroom to boardroom, culminating in her current role as Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer of STADIO Holdings, where she carries group-wide responsibility for academic strategy and governance across STADIO Higher Education, Milpark Education and AFDA.

For Dr. Singh, however, titles only tell part of the story. Long before governance became her portfolio, Dr. Singh was doing the work on the ground, as a volunteer at the Advice Desk for the Abused in Durban, co-authoring training manuals for police handling domestic violence cases, and

training parliamentarians across the SADC region on gender equality and human rights. That commitment to protecting the vulnerable has run in parallel with a second, equally-consistent thread: building the ethical foundations of good governance, from establishing Unisa's Ethics Office in 2012 to her current role as First Vice President of Globethics.net in Geneva.

It's in higher education that these threads meet. Dr. Singh has long argued that universities don't just teach ethics, they demonstrate it, through what she calls the "hidden curriculum": the everyday fairness, transparency and accountability students absorb simply by watching how an institution behaves. As she puts it, "Higher education does more than prepare students for the world of work, it shapes tomorrow's leaders. If we want responsible and ethical leaders tomorrow, students must experience ethical leadership today."

That conviction now extends to one of the defining questions of our time: who gets to shape artificial intelligence. Since 2021, Dr Singh's research has tracked AI's growing footprint in higher education, recruitment, assessment, algorithmic bias, privacy, always returning to the same human question underneath the technology: who has power, who benefits, and who is accountable for what gets built.

For Dr. Singh, that question is inseparable from women's leadership. She's watched too many rooms where technology is designed, funded and governed go unrepresentative, and she's clear about the stakes. As she told the 3rd Annual African Women in Leadership Conference in September 2026: "If women don't help design the future, AI

may simply automate the inequalities of the past. The next frontier of women's leadership is not simply gaining access to existing institutions, but also helping to design institutions that do not yet exist."