

PRESS RELEASE

New visually impaired students to attend Fragrance training at COFVI

October, 2015

Ten new students will begin a 12 month course at The College of Fragrance for the Visually Impaired (COFVI) on the 10th of September in Mumbai.

Having successfully placed graduates from two previous courses in the Fragrance industry within India; COFVI, together with its partner the VG Vaze College in Mumbai, is ready to start the tuition of ten more students who are eager to find employment.

This new and expanded year long course will educate students on the basic skills required to work within the Fragrance and associated industries. The programme will include training on the identification of key perfumery raw materials and the evaluation of finished fragrances.

Students will be introduced to the language of Perfumery adopted in the industry and understand how to best describe and identify the various classifications of Fragrance types.

The candidates will also receive tuition in general office administration using tools such as Job Access with Speech software (JAWS) a screen reader, developed for computer users whose vision loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse. JAWS provides speech and Braille output for common computer applications.



From left to right: CEO Alcos International and Director of COFVI - Renuka Thergaonkar, General Manager CPL India - Sheetal Desai and CEO of CPL Aromas - Chris Pickthall with students at COFVI.

COFVI was founded in 2012 following research conducted by CPL Aromas and the Blind Persons Association (Mumbai) that clearly showed significantly heightened levels of odour perception in the visually impaired. The research was published in the industry journal *Perfumer & Flavorist* in February 2012. Based on these findings the Department of Cosmetics and Perfumery, V.G. Vaze College in Mumbai agreed to design a course for the visually impaired that would give them the basic skills and training to work in the fragrance industry.

Since then two courses have been completed by visually impaired students who have gone on to find full time jobs in the Indian Fragrance and associated industries with companies such as SH Kelkar, Anthea Aromatics, Eternis Fine Chemicals Ltd, Aero Pharma Pvt Ltd and CPL Aromas. The heightened level of odour perception that has been scientifically proven to exist amongst the visually impaired would point towards positions such as Quality Control technician, Evaluator and Creative Perfumer being ideal placements for these candidates who have already passed industry standard smelling tests before their enrolment at the college.

COFVI hopes that this initiative will inspire Fragrance Houses throughout the world to consider training and employing the visually impaired-whose skill and dedication is not in doubt. This programme has already changed the lives of many visually impaired individuals who had previously struggled to make a living but now enjoy the benefits of a potential career in the Fragrance industry.

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COFVI is funded by fragrance industry partners.