

NRI-Natter

FAQs

FAQs about NRI-Natter (the initiative) and the larger context

What is NRI-Natter?

NRI-Natter is an enabling website for our fortnightly/monthly video calls (via apps such as Skype and Zoom), which provide a global online platform for incisive conversations among Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and other related groups of people.

This website is like a funnel – or, the first step toward participation in the periodical live video seminars online.

What are the objectives of this group?

We wish to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) Encourage NRIs to use our discussion forum to interact with fellow NRIs, PIOs (Persons of Indian Origin living outside India – the Indian Diaspora) and Resident Indians (RIs – compatriots living in India) and identify, understand and gain insights into the world's persistent or most pressing problems, and generate valuable, actionable ideas for solving such problems.
- 2) Envision and develop ways and means of sharing the values of a great civilization and culture with the people of this planet.
- 3) Raise the level of discourse among NRIs, the Indian Diaspora as well as RIs so that we could all become better informed, more conscious, more connected. First, we will talk the walk. Then, we'll figure how to walk the talk.

Who are the people behind this initiative – who are the organizers?

Allow us to first emphasize who we are not. We are decidedly non-elitist – that is, we are NOT celebrities, “prominent” figures, icons, influencers and such types.

We are a group of working-class / middle-class NRIs, PIOs and RIs based in different geographies. We see ourselves as ordinary, conscientious, civic-conscious, right-thinking citizens with an activist mindset and fire in the belly.

In terms of our professional background, we are from different industries and fields: I.T., HR, media, communications, astrophysics, material sciences, management, entrepreneurial ventures, services, finance, banking, yoga, MBA program, and so on.

Our emphasis is on issues, not individuals/faces. Our accent is on substance, not style alone. We underline content, not category or classification.

We are service-minded, and have received formal education (we are not illiterates). We would like to connect with like-minded NRIs and explore ways of contributing something meaningful, creative and substantial toward solving long-standing problems rather than just being armchair critics.

What differentiates NRI-Natter?

NRI-Natter is intended to evolve into a global network of NRI professionals, executives, traders, businesspeople and entrepreneurs. Call us the working class or the middle class.

To reiterate, we are decidedly non-elitist – that is, there are no celebrities, “prominent” figures, icons, influencers and such types here.

We are service-minded, educated, conscientious. You could even say we are activist-minded, in the sense that we have fire in the belly – to contribute something meaningful, creative and substantial toward solving long-standing problems rather than just being armchair critics.

We have views, insights, ideas. And we are not afraid of articulating or discussing them to test their feasibility.

We think we understand some, if not all, of the world’s long-standing, unresolved, persistent problems. We see what’s coming our way next in this age of globalization, digitalization, automation, artificial intelligence and big data.

We are aware of the urban-rural disconnect. We are aware of the agriculture-industrialization dichotomy. We foresee implications for societies, families and individuals.

We believe there is a big role for brainy, spirited, civilization-enriched NRIs to play in saving and changing the world. That’s right – we do believe NRIs can help bring about a positive change to make the world a better place.

We believe working-class / middle-class NRIs can do much more than just hold a job that pays more, live a good life abroad, be passive armchair critics of this and that, or

be condescending toward resident Indians.

We wish to bring Mammon-resistant, spiritual-minded NRIs together so they could first brainstorm. And, depending on what such discussions produce, we shall explore how we, being based worldwide, could cooperate and collaborate for focused collective efforts, so as to unleash synergies that can lead to self-actualization and mutual benefit, as well as benefit to the society/community, the world and the planet itself.

Is NRI-Natter free or a paid-for platform?

NRI-Natter is absolutely free, totally flexible, completely innovative, as long as you can afford your own devices, accessories and online connectivity.

Is this a social network or a professional network?

Neither. This is an enabling website for a potential grassroots movement involving middle-class / working-class NRIs aimed at spreading awareness and understanding of the world's most pressing problems first, and then exploring effective ways of solving them.

Is this a crowd-funding platform?

No. NRI-Natter is NOT a crowd-funding platform. Having said that, allow us to add: Social enterprises are dear to us, and it's one of the topics that will likely be discussed at length on our platform. Conceivably, some participants may decide to team up if there's a meeting of the minds on specific startup ideas.

What has NRI-Natter achieved so far?

Admittedly, we are nascent still, having set up the platform in late July / early August 2018. We are trying to make things happen. July 28 marked the kickoff, when a group of NRIs discussed a raging topic and arrived at some insights. More topical issues are shortlisted for discussion in the weeks/months to come. [Click here](#) for more details.

FAQs about participants (people/members)

What exactly does an NRI/PIO/RI need to do to participate in NRI-Natter live video seminars?

To indicate your interest, register on this website by filling up the form below. If the organizers accept your request, you will be informed in advance about forthcoming seminars. Upon receiving your expression of intent and confirmation of participation via email, WhatsApp, WeChat, etc, you will be given details on how to log in and

participate in a session. You can also check this website for details of forthcoming discussions (as well as past seminars).

The Dos & Don'ts ('Code of Conduct') applicable to participation in the discussion sessions are given separately. You may want to read and understand them thoroughly before logging in to participate in any live video seminar.

What are the eligibility criteria? Should I have any specific educational qualifications or other qualities or traits as prerequisites to join the group?

First of all, to participate in NRI-Natter, you need to be, well, an NRI; or, you need to be a PIO or an RI. To be more specific, you need to be a working-class / middle-class NRI, PIO or RI.

You are NOT a celebrity, luminary, iconic figure, key opinion leader (KOL) or a prominent personage. Instead, you are, like the rest of us, a common man/woman – an ordinary, conscientious, civic-conscious, right-thinking citizen with an activist mindset and fire in the belly.

We would prefer if you are knowledgeable, articulate, cordial, outspoken and soft-spoken. Participants communicate largely in English language, with some Hindi thrown in occasionally. You could say it'd help if you are bilingual (English and Hindi). That's about it.

Other than that, there are NO educational qualifications required nor any exclusive criteria like age, gender, community, religion, socio-economic status, etc.

I was an NRI. Now, I am back in India. Can I still join NRI-Natter?

Yes, you may. Please refer to the FAQ about "eligibility criteria" above.

I am in India. But very shortly, I will be going abroad for a long-term assignment. I am a potential NRI. Can I join you?

Yes, you may. Please refer to the FAQ about "eligibility criteria" above.

Actually, I am a PIO (OCI-cardholder), not an "NRI". Can I participate?

Yes, you may. Please refer to the FAQ about "eligibility criteria" above.

I like the idea of participating in a freewheeling, informal group discussion with like-minded middle-class NRIs. But I am not sure if that is a wise thing to do though because I am employed in XXXXXX country and I don't want to get into any trouble with the local authorities nor with my employer.

Well, as you rightly stated, the operative words here are “freewheeling” and “informal”. If you are not comfortable, you may choose not to participate.

Rest assured, the objective of NRI-Natter is to bring like-minded NRIs together to natter, chatter, to help sharpen the gray matter. Ideas matter – we believe they can help make things better.

The forum is not for discussions on divisive, explosive or potentially controversial topics like politics, ideologies, religions, etc. So, we don’t quite see why harmless, thought-provoking, orderly discussions online on socially relevant issues should pose problems to the local authorities or the employers concerned.

Can I participate in anonymous or confidential mode – I don’t want to reveal my identity, nor be held responsible or accountable for the views expressed on the online forum?

We don’t record the sessions, but notes are scribbled (minutes of the meeting), to be shared later on this website. But the emphasis is on substance/content, not individuals, not who said what. We believe ideas are more important than individuals.

The seminars are live video sessions. So, participants introduce themselves at the beginning. They cannot wear masks, outsize goggles, large hats or caps, etc, to hide their identity. We won’t discuss personal issues nor specific political / ideological matters.

Imagine a group of 10-20 people taking part in a stimulating, meaningful, enlightening discussion. If you are not confident, you may choose to skip.

If you wish to participate, you will be expected to be responsible, mature, dignified and level-headed, and not insane, irresponsible, uncivil or outrageous.

How much time do I need to dedicate for every session?

There is no time-limit for participation. There is no rule either that once you register, you need to participate in each and every event.

Even during a particular discussion, you may enter, exit, re-join, exit the debate as per your convenience. The emphasis is on substance, not style; the accent is on ideas, not individuals.

I want to only hear, not speak. I am shy. Can I participate?

We would prefer if you skip our events. This forum is not for passive participants or

mute spectators. This platform is for thinking, conscious, articulate, brainy, sharp or smart NRIs, PIOs and RIs who are proactive, fearless, mature and professional in outlook. This forum is for people with ideas, views, opinions and convictions.

This is NOT an arena for practicing or demonstrating bureaucracy, artless diplomacy, 'political correctness' for fear of being perceived this way or that, evasiveness, non-committal or dull participation, pretentiousness, pseudo-intellectualism, etc.

I can speak only in my regional language XXXXXXXX. I can't communicate in English. I don't even know how to speak in Hindi actually.

As we stated earlier, this forum will be largely in English, with a smattering of Hindi thrown in occasionally. Emphasis will be on ideas, not individuals; on substance, not just style; on communication, not eloquence, vocabulary, grammar, turn of phrase, etc.

Are there any off-bound topics that I need to avoid if I decide to participate?

The seminars online will be focused on particular topics. Participants are expected to focus on the topic of the day, and not digress into subjects or issues that are not germane to the discussion. We shall always desist from discussing needlessly divisive or controversial issues that are deemed out of bounds, illegal or subversive.

What are the broad areas or specific topics to be covered by this group in the near future?

As we said earlier, this forum is nascent, still growing and evolving. There is no fixed format as of now. Through brainstorming, consultation and polls, we shall pick topics that could generate lively discussions and ideas for identifying, understanding and solving problems that have implications for all middle-class NRIs, PIOs and RI, and potentially the rest of humanity and the planet itself.

Do I have to compulsorily introduce one more person to the group like in pyramid or Ponzi schemes?

No. But if you are aware of any person(s) who you think can bring value to this group, we will appreciate if you could put in a kind word about us to him / her / them.

Is there a dress code?

No. This is an informal, freewheeling forum. But that does not mean, this is a "casual" place. Participants are expected to be presentable and personable. They are expected to be smart and decent in terms of their appearance, demeanor (manners or behavior) and social etiquette.

Considering that the events are going to be live video seminars, you would want to look your best; if that is not possible, you would want to be reasonably presentable and civil at least.

Can I date a participant I like in the group? Can I use the platform to forge personal relationships?

We would strongly advise discretion and mature, responsible conduct that is in line with the purpose of the forum (which is not a dating, relationship or matrimonial site/app).

How will participation in the forum benefit me?

If you think ideas, knowledge, information, a platform to articulate inner thoughts, educative discussions, thought-provoking seminars, ken-broadening debates, enlightening chatter and fun (but not trivial) natter are “benefits”, you may want to consider participating in our forum.

I am a foreigner friend of NRI/PIO/RI. But I am interested in joining the discussion. Can I participate?

We appreciate your interest. At the moment, this forum is only for NRIs, PIOs and RIs.

FAQs about sessions/participation (including technical issues)

How does NRI-Natter work? What do I need to do to get on board?

If you are aware of the purpose of NRI-Natter and wish to participate in our periodical group discussions live on video via apps such as Skype, Zoom, etc, you may first express your interest by completing and submitting the registration form on this website.

Upon receiving your expression of intent and confirmation of participation via email, WhatsApp, WeChat, etc, we will inform you in advance about how to log in and participate in a session (time, date, mode, format, app, topic, and so on). You may also get updates on this website.

If you are available and willing to participate, you may directly log in at the time of the seminar and participate. As simple as that.

What you need in terms of technical aspects like devices, accessories, equipment, connectivity, etc, is explained separately below.

Can I use my smartphone to participate? Or, do I have to use my office PC, home laptop, tablet, phablet or other hand-held device?

You are free to choose whichever device that can enable you to log in to the live video call. Ensure you have good-quality, stable, seamless internet connectivity, noise-free background and adequate light. Also ensure your devices/accessories like earpiece, headset, mic, webcam, etc, are functional, in good working condition.

Is my time zone a factor?

Yes. We will communicate in advance the time of the event, and state it in terms of different time zones. Obviously, a discussion at a certain time may be day in one time zone and night in some other time zone.

If the event time suits your convenience, and if the topic of the day piques your interest, you may want to participate. Remember, you are free to enter, exit, re-join, exit at any time of the event. There is no minimum time-limit for the duration of your participation.

Do I have to set up a studio-like setting at home or can I log in from anywhere?

As stated earlier, ensure you have good-quality, stable, seamless internet connectivity, noise-free background and adequate light. Also ensure your devices/accessories like earpiece, headset, mic, webcam, etc, are functional, in good working condition.

Other than that, we don't expect you to set up professional-grade studio, backdrop, etc. We are not doing a film and TV serial shooting. This is a freewheeling, informal chat live on video via apps such as Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp and WeChat.

Dos & Don'ts are stated separately. [Click here to download the document.](#)

Is there a quorum or upper limit for the number of participants in a video natter session? If their number is large, will I get a chance to speak at all?

Ideally, the quorum would be 10, in order for a session to be lively with multiplicity of views and plurality of perspectives. As of now, we are looking at 25 as the possible upper limit for a session.

We don't want cacophonous, disorderly, senseless discussions of the kind you get to watch on some news TV channels and in legislatures. Should a particular topic generate wide interest, we may consider have multiple sessions on the same topic, to accommodate diverse audiences across different time zones. In such a scenario, the topic will be the same but each session will feature a different panel (group of participants) at different times.

This arrangement, we hope, will enable every participant to have his/her say.

How can I keep in touch with NRI-Natter?

For general queries, we would prefer if you email us at nri-natter@outlook.com

For specific event-related queries, you may use instant messaging apps such as WhatsApp, WeChat, etc, or even contact the session moderators/co-moderators on mobile phone for urgent queries (like technical or connectivity issues). Such contact details will be shared on an ongoing basis.

I'd like to make a short presentation when it is my turn to speak during the video call. Can I share a document?

Sure, you may. Apps such as Skype, Zoom, do allow file transfers and screen sharing. Depending on which app we use on any given day, you may want to use the relevant feature. Apps will be chosen as per the preference of participants, reliability, technical parameters of the day, their performance record, so on.

Can we forward the URL of this website to our friends, networks or groups on WhatsApp, WeChat, Facebook, etc?

Of course. We will appreciate if you use your discretion though. We would not want to be inundated with trivial queries or spammed with junk email. First understand the purpose of NRI-Natter. And share details about it with people who you think may be interested in joining or can bring value to the forum.

Please bear in mind the current upper limit (for the number of participants for each session) being considered is 25, for logistical reasons. So, arguably, a wiser thing to do would be to share the URL with select people rather than with everyone and anyone in mass media/social media.

What is the way to exit a session and the group?

Once you register, we will inform you of any upcoming event. Upon receiving advance confirmation of your participation for a specific session, we will inform you how to log in and participate. You are free to enter, exit, re-join and exit the discussion as per your convenience. There is no minimum time-limit for the duration of your participation.

If you wish to exit the group, you may email us your request, and we shall delete you from our mailing list.

Joining the group is voluntary and free. There is no membership or subscription fee, nor any conditions like commitment of participation for a certain minimum period of time. If you are interested, you may seek to join. If you wish to exit the group, you may at any time.

NRI-Natter is an enabling website for natter among NRIs – a forum for freewheeling, informal (but not trivial) discussions on raging topics.

FAQs about miscellaneous issues

Can anyone help me with insurance, remittance, work permit, green card, residence permit, income-tax, bank issues?

To reiterate, NRI-Natter is an enabling website for natter among NRIs – a forum for freewheeling, informal (but not trivial) discussions on raging topics. We don't/won't do any of that stuff you mentioned above.

There are already many other resources/online destinations that deal with insurance, remittance, work permit, green card, residence permit, income-tax, bank issues pertaining to NRIs/PIOs. Please consult them.

How to contact you for any further clarifications or additional FAQs?

If you have more questions, email them to “nri-natter@outlook.com”.