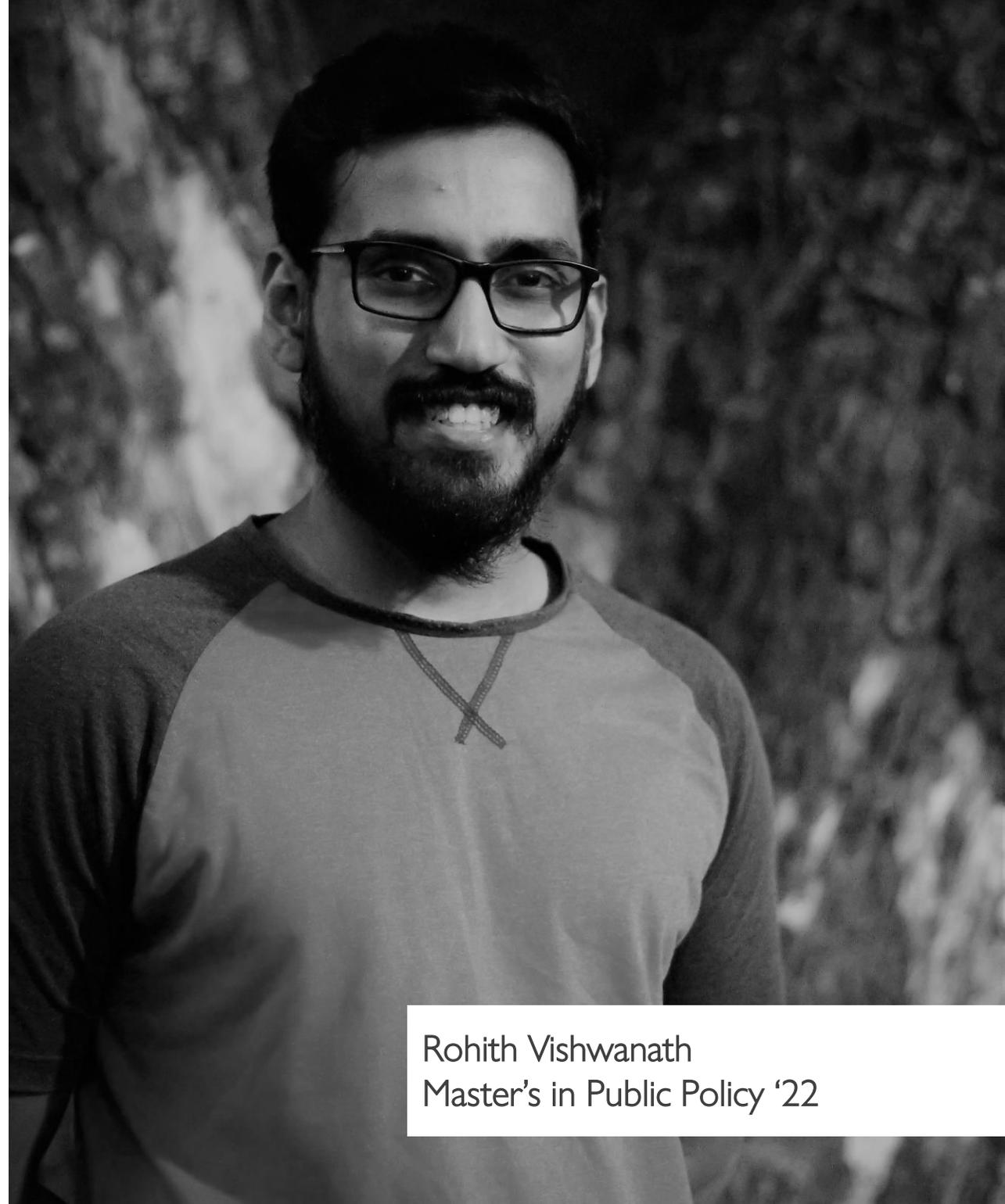


Professional in the Making

Rohith Vishwanath graduated from RMK College of Engineering and Technology, Anna University, Chennai with a B.E. in Electronics and Communication Engineering in the year 2017. Having been placed in Bank of New York Mellon (BNY Mellon) Technologies as a software engineer in campus placement, he continued to work there for a year. It was during his college and work years Tamil Nadu, his hometown faced a lot of turbulence in the socio-political sphere. Protests regarding Jallikattu, Vedanta's Sterlite factory, the NEET, natural disasters in the form of floods and cyclones and the death of two political stalwarts Ms. Jayalalitha and Dr. Karunanidhi made him realize how public policy and political events have an immense impact on the daily life of a common man. Engagement with CSR activities during his time with BNY Mellon gave him an understanding of the life outside the corporate framework. The socio-economic inequalities prevalent in the society sparked him to read more on politics, economics, history and philosophy. The conviction to work for the betterment of the disadvantaged made him quit his job and pursue a career in the public sphere. In 2019, he got admitted for "Policy in Action" fellowship under Young Leaders for Active Citizenship. There he worked for a Member of Parliament for two months, assisting in the preparation of a policy brief on "Strengthening Policy Interventions to Reduce Inequality in Odisha" with a special focus on the tribal population. He was certain that this was the correct field for him after this encounter, and he enrolled in the MPP programme in August 2020.

The Field Engagement component which was introduced in place of the fieldwork work component due to COVID 19 circumstances gave him an opportunity to work under the renowned environmentalist Mr. Ashish Kothari's Vikalp Sangam. In this short stint with Vikalp Sangam he got exposure to alternative methods of development from the grassroots to meet human needs and aspirations that would not accelerate towards more ecological devastation and social inequalities. Internship with Observer Research Foundation gave him an opportunity to work in different projects regarding West Bengal elections 2021, India's Sustainable Development Goals, COVID 19 Pandemic's effect on Globalization, and International policy concerning with BIMSTEC, BBIN and the Indo-Pacific. In a time when everyone were confined to their homes, opportunities to draft case studies from the experiences of bureaucrats enabled Rohith to relate theory with on-ground practice of public policy. With all this experience he is working on his dissertation that aims to understand the policies related to fisheries from the perspective of traditional fishermen.

Interested in data-backed and scientific methods, Rohith was also part of part of the team which participated in the Pandemic Policython organized by Harvard University in October 2020. The event was attended by over 1000 applicants. He was also one of five people from NLS who participated in NASPAA-BATTEN Public Policy Simulation competition's Asia Pacific leg.



Rohith Vishwanath
Master's in Public Policy '22