

NOV / DEC 2025

NAVIGATION NEWS

Bi-Monthly Members Magazine | rin.org.uk

**MARITIME NAVIGATION:
ART OR SCIENCE?
A PILOT'S PERSPECTIVE**

Path Integration

**LESSONS FROM THE
DESERT ANTS**

**FROM PAPERS TO
POLYTUNNELS**

PLUS: 2026 Awards & Fellowship Deadline • Women in Navigation Group



The Interview

A Q&A with Inchara Lakshminarayan,
Technical Lead & Navigation Engineer, GMV



gmV
INNOVATING SOLUTIONS



By Michelle Brown,
Member of RIN Council

What is your name and where are you from?

My name is Inchara Lakshminarayan and I'm originally from Bangalore, India. Before moving to the UK, I have spent a decade in the USA pursuing doctoral studies and building my career.

What was your first impression of the RIN and do you have a favourite RIN memory?

My first impression of RIN was it's a welcoming and friendly community of experts, having impactful discussions. Attending RIN events gives you the bigger picture of navigation – not just the technology itself, but also the wider industry needs today and where it's headed in the future. It's so easy to get caught up in the small details of day-to-day work, but RIN helps you step back, see the bigger picture, and better understand your role in the field as well.

My favourite RIN memories are listening to senior members share stories about the evolution of navigation in their younger days, and how it has evolved through their eyes. You won't find those conversations in any textbook! We're lucky to still have the generation that lived through the creation and

"I use Google maps app extensively, so digital maps and GPS are both quite integral parts of my life right now. I definitely trust them more than my memory."

early days of GPS. With how fast the technology has taken off in recent years, it's pretty incredible to reflect on just how far we've come.

If you were stranded on a desert island, what are your three must haves?

Cozy socks – because I have actual cold feet all the time!

A Map – so I can hopefully find my way somewhere.

My music book – because when I need a break, I like to sing.

Do you drive with Maps, GPS, or memory?

I use Google maps app extensively, so digital maps and GPS are both quite integral parts of my life right now. I definitely trust them more than my memory.

If you could make a documentary, what would it be about and who else would feature in it?

Most people have no idea of how much their daily life relies on PNT or GNSS technology. (GPS is famous for getting from one place to another but it is much more than that!). I would make a documentary that tells this story in a way everyone can connect. It would feature an ordinary person through their day, with experts jumping in to show how GNSS is quietly at work the whole time.

What is your favourite navigational aid?

GPS on my phone in daily life, but the stars when I want perspective!

If you were a rapper, what would your rap name be?

Honestly, I love my name and would never change it. It's unique and already means 'music' in Kannada (my native language).

"The best advice I received recently was from an Aunt in Texas – "Never forget what your parents taught you."

What three people – living or dead – would you like to have dinner with?

1. Kalpana Chawla – She was someone who had a big impact on me growing up, and I wanted to shoot off into space like her. I was devastated when she didn't make it back the second time.
2. APJ Abdul Kalam – An Indian aerospace scientist who went on to become the President of India. He was truly an exemplary man and influenced many in my generation.
3. Prof. Rudolf E. Kalman – I've worked with Kalman Filtering so much that it would be a real shame to miss a dinner with the inventor himself. I'd probably bring along a blackboard to dinner, just to pick up a few advanced estimation tricks from him!

What is your best achievement – professional or personal?

Frankly there are quite a few that have impacted me greatly, so it's hard to choose.

My favourite achievement, though, was getting my first patent approved. The whole experience was surreal – a great team, great work and genuinely enjoyable throughout. For me, this will probably remain the best one for a while.

What is the best advice you have ever received or given?

The best advice I received recently was from an Aunt in Texas – "Never forget what your parents taught you." It resonated well with me when she said it. The values they instilled have carried me far and given me the courage to pursue uncharted territory without fear. They were practical in their approach, and my mother, especially, is a brave woman who never shies away from a challenge.

"But one thing that bothers me is how undervalued women often are, both by society and by themselves."

If you could only ever use one piece of technology again, what would it be and why?

I was really into cassette tapes growing up (probably like most kids my age). I've missed having a physical music collection and a proper cassette library for all the latest songs. I wouldn't mind if cassettes made a comeback for regular use!

What is something you have had to learn the 'hard' way?

Learning to 'filter' out the noise, recognize 'spoofing' and maintaining a 'steady heading' was a tough chapter even in real life for me. Not all sweet talkers tell the truth, and not every piece of advice you receive is going to be right for you!

How would you like to be remembered?

I simply try to live life as a strong and free woman – and I hope others can take inspiration from that and remember me as such.

But one thing that bothers me is how undervalued women often are, both by society and by themselves. The barriers are rarely about ability anymore, but more often about confidence, support, or opportunity. Before I leave this planet, I'd love to do my part to encourage and support women in science and innovation, particularly in under-represented fields. I'm glad to see my thoughts resonate with other members within RIN, and together we hope to strengthen support for women navigators through our new initiative – WING.

WING

We're excited to introduce the early stages of a new initiative within the RIN:

WING – Women in Navigation Group.

Navigation, in all its forms, thrives on collaboration, yet gender imbalance remains a challenge-reflecting broader trends across the sector. WING is being formed with a clear and meaningful purpose: to connect and support women across the RIN community, and to help improve representation and diversity within the Institute.

Through WING, we aim to cultivate a vibrant community that supports one another, shares experiences, and contributes to shaping the future of the field. We're building a space where women in navigation can collaborate and lead. From mentorship to advocacy, WING seeks to foster meaningful connections, encourage dialogue and the exchange of ideas among women working in or passionate about navigation. Though the group is still evolving, early conversations have already surfaced exciting directions, from amplifying women's voices within RIN to exploring how we can better support career development and visibility.

We welcome all who are interested to be part of this journey and help shape what WING becomes. Stay tuned for a formal launch in the new year! ■