


faculty to discover research synergy.

- More big projects to ignite the imagination, like CIRCE (which as a centre has faded from view, though some of its projects are strong). Projects and problems like “water,” which bring people together across universities, disciplines, and countries, are tremendous connectors. But big projects alone will not suffice. We also need smaller projects and money to fund individuals including students. Canada should step back into funding more of these—for example, through the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. Such projects are currently funded by the Government of India and Shastri’s institutional member fees only.
- Minimal visa restrictions—either no restrictions at all, or longer visas (10 years or more). Currently, people are deterred by the complexity and time involved in getting visas, especially research visas, so they often get a one-time visa for one specific conference or academic visit. To build connections, we need easier travel, sometimes on short notice. Sometimes visas to Canada are the hardest to get for young, highly educated professionals, as there is allegedly the greatest fear that this type of person will seek to remain in Canada rather than return to India. It is not my intent to criticize immigration policy, but simply to point out the tension between current visa policy and the free-flowing mobility of

young, well-educated persons, who can be the lifeblood of academic research and educational relationships.

- More flights to keep costs low and ensure greater availability of seats. Although there have been recent improvements (such as Air Canada’s increased service non-stop to both Delhi and Mumbai from Toronto and from Delhi to Vancouver), more would be beneficial, especially from other major cities in both countries. Additional carriers would keep costs low.
- More shift away from Canadian negative attitudes to India. Outside the Indian diaspora, there is still very little knowledge of contemporary realities in India in the Canadian population. One example is the continuing problem of the Indian three-year bachelor’s degree from reputable institutions not being accepted as a full qualification to enter master’s programs in Canada, despite major efforts and a policy paper led by York a decade ago, showing that the core disciplinary knowledge in such three-year degrees is greater than in four-year degrees from Canada and the United States. If it isn’t a problem for UK graduates, why is it a problem for Indian graduates? There is also much bad press still around sexual harassment and assault in India, which deters many female students and researchers from going to India.

- More live exchanges, with activity measured by people travelling in each direction, not by exchanges on paper with no activity. Maintaining exchanges takes energy and ingenuity, as well as institutional commitment, especially as deans, VPs, and presidents come and go, and memory and commitments are lost. The current number of agreements between Canada and India, often cited to be around 400, is unsustainable, and most are not living agreements, just paper agreements. We need more focus. Each institution is different, so there is no “one size fits all.” Each must find its own agreements, a unique set of relationships and arrangements that work for it, and that could evolve over time.
- A reinjection of some energy and commitment. We need to keep some focus on India even as we all chase new markets around the world, and India is no longer the hottest newest thing. 

## REFERENCE

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