

Asia New Zealand Foundation launches dedicated India Fund

The Asia New Zealand Foundation is pleased to announce the establishment of a dedicated India Fund to help it scale-up its work in and with India.

Valued at \$350,000, the Fund will cover a new entrepreneurship programme dedicated to bringing together top innovators from New Zealand to India. It will also fund the establishment of a Young Leaders Dialogue, to complement the annual experts' track II dialogues the Foundation has led for many years.

Suz Jessep, the Chief Executive of the Asia New Zealand Foundation, has been following developments in India for many years. "There is no question that India is a country on the rise, and the decisions it takes will be consequential to New Zealand's future."

"It's important we deepen our knowledge, confidence and connections in India, so that we're equipped to thrive in this important part of the world, and can work together to navigate shared challenges."

The India Fund will also support the scaling-up of the Asia New Zealand Foundation's existing activities in India. These include artist residencies and curator visits, sports connections, growing emerging business connections, and ongoing research into the New Zealand-India relationship.

"Growing our ties with India is a collective effort", says Suz Jessep. "For many years, New Zealanders of Indian heritage have played a huge role connecting our people and businesses, and business chambers have forged linkages and helped others to grow in India. Artists and sports teams have exhibited and competed in India and shared their experiences with others. Tourism and education also continue to make a big contribution to building relations. But our research shows more work is needed to deepen our understanding of India."

"In our latest *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* longitudinal survey, 40 percent of New Zealanders said South Asia was important or very important to our future, up from 36 percent in 2019. It's still a way behind the importance New Zealanders place on North Asia (71 percent), but the trendlines show shifting perceptions and a growing sense of India's importance both as a regional actor and bilateral partner."

Suz Jessep will be visiting India during the visit led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Rt Hon Winston Peters, next week.

About the Asia New Zealand Foundation Te Whītau Tūhono

Established in 1994, the [Asia New Zealand Foundation](https://asianz.org.nz) Te Whītau Tūhono is New Zealand's leading authority on Asia. Its mission is to equip New Zealanders to thrive in Asia, by providing experiences and resources to build their knowledge, skills, and confidence. The Foundation's activities cover more than 20 countries in Asia and are delivered through nine core programmes: arts, business, education, entrepreneurship, leadership, media, research, Track II diplomacy and sports.

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