



University of Southampton to host a full India Week in March 2022 to celebrate three glorious occasions

12 January 2022

The University of Southampton will host a special week from 14th to 18th March 2022 to celebrate the growing Southampton-India ties in collaboration with Southampton City Council, India Business Group, and supporting partners.

As the first of its kind, this landmark week full of diverse range of events will bring together Southampton's global community of students, staff, alumni, partners, industry stakeholders and local community to celebrate three momentous occasions: 75th anniversary of Indian independence, 70th anniversary of the University's royal charter status and 3rd anniversary of the University India Centre.

Established in March 2019, the University India Centre for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development brings together cross-Faculty expertise and disciplines to address pressing global challenges including innovations in higher education, water sustainability, climate change mitigation, women's empowerment and healthcare inequalities within the broader UN's sustainable development agenda.

Led by the University India Centre, the landmark week will host an assortment of bespoke in-person and hybrid programme of events and activities aimed at showcasing, promoting and strengthening relations between Southampton and India.

The week will feature a wider portfolio of our high impact research, education and enterprise activities, promote cross-cultural understandings and awareness of Indian arts, culture, films, music and food. The main event activities will be open to members of the public and guests attending from India, including Bollywood celebrities, sports personalities, industrialists and renowned thought leaders.

The programme highlights will include showcasing the University's collaborative work with Indian state governments, higher education institutions and NGOs on a range of ongoing research projects, including impact evaluation of environmental sustainability programmes, capacity strengthening activities, the Kaifi Azmi Global UK-India Virtual Internship and Global Leadership Programmes.

Professor Mark E. Smith CBE, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton said: *"I am delighted that the University of Southampton is hosting a special week in March 2022 to celebrate three grand occasions in collaboration with our supporting partners from UK and India. The University has cherished a long-standing relationship with India, and through our high impact research, education and enterprise activities across the institution, we are shaping the next chapter of our transformative engagement in and with India."*

The City has strong historical and cultural links with India. Mahatma Gandhi, the epitome of global peace and non-violence, arrived in Southampton docks in September 1888 by sea, as he went on to study for his Law degree in London. In June 2019, the University of Southampton hosted the then Indian High Commissioner to UK, H.E. Mrs. Ruchi Ghanashyam IFS who planted a special memorial tree to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Councillor Daniel Fitzhenry, Leader of Southampton City Council added, *“We are proud to be supporting the University of Southampton in delivering this week of India celebrations. The council has already made a commitment to build upon and deepen our relationship with India, recognising our important current and historic links. The opportunities to explore closer ties and working across so many areas, including culture, business, sport and education are truly exciting. We look forward to working with the university and a wider range of our UK City of Culture 2025 bid partners to ensure that this week is a huge success.”*

Shelina Permolloo, Chair of Southampton 2025 Trust said *“Southampton 2025 are delighted to be supporting this week long celebration of events delivered by our partners University of Southampton and India Business Group. Southampton’s deepening relationship with India offers the city many different ways to showcase our international links. This developing relationship not only highlights the connections between our cultural, education, research, sports and marine organisations and institutions, it also gives us the opportunity to celebrate the wonderful communities of Southampton. Events such as these help to put Southampton on the map not just locally, but internationally.”*

At a time when the UK-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations are being formally processed by both nations, there are significant bilateral opportunities for businesses and higher education institutions to co-create and innovate solutions for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Amarjit Singh as Special Advisor for India to the University of Southampton, and CEO of India Business Group commented *“As the world’s largest democracy and a growing economic superpower with high representation of youth population, India has become a priority partner for the United Kingdom across the full spectrum of emerging opportunities and the formation of mutually beneficial partnerships”.*



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