CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION

Democracies Working Together

GLOBAL INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY FORUM (GIPF)

International Conference for building a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous society



TORONTO

SEP 11, 2026

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Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum 2026

September 11, 2026 Toronto

Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum 2026

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Prosperity That Reaches Everyone

On behalf of the Canada India Foundation, I welcome you to the first Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum. CIF has spent close to twenty years working in the space between two large democracies. We have brought governments, industry & communities together on healthcare, energy, agriculture, mining and education; raised funds for the families of fallen soldiers; acted during the Covid pandemic. That work taught us something simple. A relationship between two countries only counts for something if ordinary people on both sides are better off for it.

Today we bring that same question to a wider stage.
The world has created extraordinary wealth in our lifetime, and a great deal of good has come from it. Millions of people have been lifted out of poverty. At the same time, the gains have gathered in fewer hands. Seven companies now account for roughly a third of the market value of the S&P 500. Technological change, an unsettled geopolitical scene, climate pressure, migration and fragile supply chains are all quietly deciding who gets to take part in the economy and who is left standing outside it. The International Monetary Fund estimates that almost 40% of jobs worldwide are exposed to Artificial intelligence (AI), rising to about 60% in advanced economies such as Canada, with roughly half of those exposed jobs likely to be affected for the worse. A transition of that size, handled carelessly, will widen a gap that is already too wide.

None of this is fate.
Let me be clear about what this Forum is not. We are not here to argue against markets, and we are not asking for handouts. Wealth creators are job creators. Enterprise has lifted more people out of poverty than any programme ever designed, and it should be encouraged and celebrated. There is one honest complication, and it belongs on the table. For two centuries the bargain held. Enterprise created wealth, and wealth created work. AI is the first technology that allows a company to multiply its value without multiplying its workforce. If that old bargain is under strain, it is far better for business, government and civil society to say so now and work on it together.

Our question is therefore a practical one. We can now deliver education, skills, healthcare and a decent quality of life. The distance between what is possible and what actually reaches people is no longer mainly a question of technology. It is a question of will, of design, and of who takes responsibility. Government has a part in that. So does civil society. So does business, which is why corporate social responsibility belongs at the centre of this conversation rather than at its edges.

India has required its larger companies to spend 2% of their average net profits on social projects since 2014, and Canadian firms with Indian subsidiaries already work within that system. Germany built its skills base on apprenticeship. Singapore gives its citizens a learning account they carry through their working lives. None of these transfers to Canada unchanged, and each has its critics. But we should be studying all of them, taking what works, adapting it to our own conditions, and leaving the rest. Canada has never been the largest country in the room. We have done best when we were the most willing to learn.

You will see that spirit in the day ahead. Our sessions run across policy leadership, food security, healthcare, skill development, technology & AI, community engagement, philanthropy and compassionate entrepreneurship. Inequality does not come through one door, and it cannot be answered through one either.

Over forty speakers have joined us from Canada, India, USA and UK, drawn from universities, government, industry, and organizations that work with communities usually left out of these conversations. I thank H.E. Dinesh Patnaik, High Commissioner of India to Canada, the Hon. Michael Tibollo and the Hon. Chris Alexander for honouring us with their presence. My particular thanks go to Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan O.C., Forum Chair. GIPF grew out of his work and conviction over many years, and it carries his stamp. I thank the organizing committee, our national conveners and volunteers. A forum is only as good as the honesty of the conversation inside it. We have gathered the people. The rest is up to all of us.

Ritesh Malik
Chair, Canada India Foundation and Co-Chair, Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum 2026

GIPF CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Inclusive Prosperity for Quality of Life



I feel highly privileged, in my capacity as Chair, to welcome you to Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum, a landmark public policy initiative that is becoming a reality today after 15 months of planning. The journey involved reaching out to thought leaders from around the world representing key sectors of human endeavour. If the list and variety of speakers who will be addressing us and the topics they will be discussing today are any indication, I believe that we will have had a successful launch of this important dialogue that I hope will become an annual event, along the lines of the World Economic Forum and complementing it.

We have seen great changes in the human condition during our lives, both at a global level and at a personal level. None of those changes occurred at a pace that we are seeing today, and across multiple dimensions. At a global level, we have seen conflicts that surprise and challenge us. At the social level, we are torn apart by conflicting ideologies, whose adherents are characterized by a high level of mutual intolerance. At the economic level, we may see the baseline of prosperity move up in terms of material comfort, but it has been accompanied by an ever-widening gap between the extremes of the prosperity spectrum. The human appetite for innovation literally has us reaching for the stars, while all the time focused on providing a superior return on investment for the financial stakeholders. We have been willing participants and happy beneficiaries of the amazing technological developments of the 21st century, but apprehensive and even fearful of what lies ahead for us in terms of our quality of life. This is particularly true with Artificial Intelligence, perceived by many as an overreaching and even sinister version of the more benign "machine learning".

What makes Canada eminently qualified to be the venue of this forum on inclusive prosperity? Three things come to mind immediately. First, Canada's proactive participation in the Colombo Plan, which was launched in 1951 to address poverty issues in South and Southeastern Asia. Canada's involvement in the Colombo Plan was a significant aspect of its foreign policy and international development efforts, reflecting its commitment to supporting the economic and social progress of developing countries. Second, Canada's pioneering implementation of Universal Healthcare, based on the principles of equity, accessibility and collective responsibility, ensuring that catastrophic illness does not result in financial ruin or helpless surrender for individuals or families. Third, Canada's enlightened immigration policies that moved beyond welcoming only people from Europe to people from around the world, including the Global South. Today, Canada's urban centres are a mosaic of colours, nationalities and ethnicities all vying for a prosperity that is inclusive in its accessibility.

India, the country of origin of most members of Canada India Foundation, has continually been pushing as well for inclusive prosperity for all its citizens, since its independence nearly 80 years ago. From reservations in education and jobs for its historically underprivileged groups, including women, introducing mid-day meals for its school going children, the implementation of the Aadhaar identity card for all its citizens, ensuring that all Indian citizens have a direct bank account to enable them to receive benefit payments from the government, and to the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), a digital payment system which allows users to send money, pay bills and manage accounts through a single mobile application, India has demonstrated a leadership in inclusive prosperity, not just to the developing nations but to the developed ones as well.

Pursuing economic prosperity has been the goal of individuals and nations from time immemorial. However, economic prosperity alone is not enough. Prosperity may be a necessary condition for enhanced human quality of life, but it becomes a sufficient condition as well only when it is inclusive in its scope, and prosperity can be inclusive only when it is accompanied by peace and goodwill among people. The full commitment and active participation of civil society is crucial. If inclusive prosperity is the end goal, the topics that are being discussed today form part of the toolkit required to reach that goal. At a personal level, I am grateful to the CIF Executive and my fellow Organizing Committee members for sharing my belief in the importance and timeliness of this forum and for extending support of the highest quality towards its implementation. I sincerely hope that their efforts and the messages that today's speakers will convey will make all of you believers as well and committed to doing your part to make the world inclusive, prosperous and at peace.

V.I. Lakshmanan O.C., Ph.D.
Chair, Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum

उच्चायुक्त
HIGH COMMISSIONER



सत्यमेव जयते

भारत का उच्चायोग
ऑटवा
High Commission of India
Ottawa

11 September 2026

MESSAGE

I am delighted that the Canada India Foundation is organizing the first ever Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum in Canada.

Inequality is today growing across the world, not just in wealth and income but we are also witnessing information and digital gaps as well as resources climate & institutional gaps which are creating hindrances for the global community to be able to grow in an inclusive, prosperous and sustainable manner. As these inequalities continue to grow, it is important for all thinking people to come together to discuss how we, as a comity of nations and peoples, could address this problem and take necessary steps to build an inclusive global framework. We need to discuss what are the targetted scalable reforms that we can bring and what are the issues which we need to address politically, economically and socially to achieve our goals.

In the India-Canada context, this is very timely, given that both Indians and Indian-origin people make up more than 3 million of Canada's population. It is important that they give a thought to address this issue. Having experienced the strengths and weaknesses of both nations, specially the fact that both countries enjoy similar values in democracy, human rights and diversity in its population, this community is uniquely positioned to make a difference.

I look forward to participate in the Forum and urge all citizens of both Canada and India who are interested in building a better future for the peoples of our two nations to participate actively in this Forum.

(Dinesh K. Patnaik)
High Commissioner

10, Springfield Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K1M 1C9
Tel : +1-643-744-3751; Fax : +1-613-744-0913 Email : hcoffice.ottawa@mea.gov.in / hc.ottawa@mea.gov.in

Ontario

Premier of Ontario - Premier ministre de l'Ontario

September 11, 2026

A MESSAGE FROM PREMIER DOUG FORD

Global prosperity relies on creating opportunities for all by breaking down barriers and investing in the future to ensure the benefits are shared across generations. I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone gathered today for the 2026 Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum.

This international gathering features 40 speakers and leaders from government, business and academia. They'll discuss today's most pressing geopolitical, economic and technological issues through keynote addresses and panel sessions.

Thank you to the Canada-India Foundation for its efforts to discuss actionable solutions towards creating a more inclusive and sustainable society for the future. Know that our government will continue to do its part by building strong communities, expanding opportunity and fostering enduring economic growth.

My best wishes for a productive forum.

Doug Ford
Premier



CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION
Democracies Working Together

Message from the Premier of Alberta

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to send greetings for the inaugural Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum.

As the world continues to change, we are all looking for the best possible solutions to a challenging geopolitical and economic climate. This forum is a great opportunity for policymakers, academics, and business and community leaders to come together and discuss pathways to a brighter tomorrow for everyone.

With its history of promoting Canada-India relations, the Canada India Foundation has a unique perspective on the issues at hand and the benefits of democracies working together. Thank you to everyone who has helped make this event possible.

Please accept my best wishes as you launch the Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum. I look forward to hearing about the forum's outcomes and recommendations to help us achieve a more prosperous and sustainable future.



Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta

PREMIER
OF MANITOBA

Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8
CANADA

A MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the Government of Manitoba, I am pleased to provide greetings to the Canada India Foundation and everyone taking part in the inaugural Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum 2026.

This forum brings together leaders from government, business, academia, civil society and innovation to consider some of the most important challenges facing our world. Its focus on building a more inclusive, prosperous and sustainable future is especially timely, and reflects values that matter deeply to Canadians.

Here in Manitoba, we know that true prosperity is strongest when more and more people have the chance to participate and succeed. Bringing diverse voices together to share ideas, build understanding and develop practical solutions is an important part of creating stronger communities and a better future for everyone.

Thank you to the Canada India Foundation and all those who have helped bring this new forum to life. I wish all attendees a thoughtful and productive gathering, and every success as the Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum begins what I hope will become a meaningful annual tradition.



The Honourable Wab Kinew
Premier of Manitoba

Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum 2026

Venue: Holiday Inn Toronto Airport

Address: 970 Dixon Road, Rexdale Toronto, ON M9W1J9 Canada

The Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum (GIPF) 2026, is a landmark international thought leadership summit, organized by Canada India Foundation (CIF) to discuss and propose actionable solutions towards building a more inclusive, prosperous and sustainable society for the future. GIPF will bring leaders from government, business, academia, civil society and the innovation ecosystem in a day-long event to present ideas through keynote addresses and panel sessions, highlight today's most pressing geopolitical, economic, technological and social challenges and engage in collaborative dialogue on themes critical to inclusive prosperity.

GIPF is being positioned as an annual event, quite appropriately set in Canada, known for its inclusion, diversity, democratic governance and leadership in technological innovation. For Canada India Foundation, already known for its many thematic forums promoting Canada India relations, this is their first forum addressing a theme of global significance.

Why the Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum?

The 21st century of the modern era is already being characterized by unprecedented technological change, a continuously conflicted geopolitical scene, challenges from ongoing climate change, human migration and its impact on the demographic map of the world, and on the positive side, the unsatiable human appetite for innovation, quite literally reaching for the stars. At the same time, countries are looking to enhance the skill sets of their citizens through prosperity-appropriate learning, while effectively managing their supply chains for sustainable economic stability and growth, in which no one is left behind.

In this context, an independent space for nations, thought leaders and organizations to come together to discuss the above challenges and come up with solutions, became necessary. The World Economic Forum (WEF) has been successfully providing that space for years. However, as its name indicates, the focus of WEF has been more on overall economic prosperity and not as much on such prosperity being inclusive. The Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum is positioned as complementing the WEF, by making inclusive prosperity as its primary objective rather than one of its priorities.

GIPF can succeed in its mission by:
- Emphasizing shared prosperity, rather than just economic growth
- Providing broader representation to less represented people, communities and institutions in the dialogue on growth
- Addressing all forms of inequality, including new ones that may be emerging with the implementation of new technologies
- Coordinating economic, social and environmental objectives
- Creating trust that a new paradigm of inclusive prosperity is achievable

Objectives
- Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth
- Encourage entrepreneurship, innovation and investment to promote inclusivity
- Promote social policy dialogues between nations and trans-national organizations
- Develop youth leadership and encourage participation of women and underrepresented communities in developing economies of the future
- Develop actionable recommendations on public policy and inclusive business strategy

Expected Long-term Outcomes of current and future forums

1. Develop a Global Action Plan, endorsed by stakeholders
2. Obtain Partnership Commitments between government, business and civil society
3. Obtain Pledges of Financial/technical support for social equity projects
4. Identify Models, Metrics and Policies - Theoretical, mathematical, and operational equity models, policy recommendations with metrics.
5. Create National and trans-national standards for CSR Guidelines
6. Create an Economic Inclusiveness Fund for disadvantaged communities, seeded by corporate pledges.
7. Track national/corporate performance through an Economic Inclusiveness Index

Forum Format

The first GIPF will be a day-long event, featuring Opening Addresses, Keynote Addresses, Panel Sessions and Closing Sessions. The program will conclude with a formal dinner event featuring a prominent dignitary speaker.

Following are the themes of the Panel Sessions:

- Enablers of Inclusive Prosperity (Healthcare, Food security, Skill Development)
- Philanthropy and Compassionate Entrepreneurship
- Technology Leadership and Artificial Intelligence
- Social Persuasion and Community Engagement
- Policy Leadership
- Learning as Engine of Change

Speakers

About 40 speakers are expected to present their thoughts at the forum. Some of the institutions they represent or have represented include University of Toronto, Cambridge University, University of Guelph, University of Georgia, Concordia University, The Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Bharathidasan University, and MIT. The speakers also include the former Chief Scientist of the World Health Organization, the former Chief Election Commissioner of India, and domain experts in Artificial Intelligence, Venture Capital, Finance, Skill Development, Agriculture and Food Security, Critical Minerals, Gender Empowerment, Healthcare, Law, Management and Engineering.

Looking Ahead

The organizers hope that GIPF will become an annual multi-day event and become Canada's premier platform to bring together influential thought leaders from all sectors and regions to discuss and shape ideas and initiate action to achieve inclusive prosperity. By promoting shared responsibility and cooperation to go with innovation, GIPF hopes to contribute to a future in which economic progress is measured by its inclusivity.

About Canada India Foundation

Canada India Foundation has been the leading independent, non-partisan public policy voice in the Canada-India space for nearly 20 years since its inception. During this period, it has hosted countless events and meetings featuring government representatives from Canada and India, provided a strong and balanced perspective to the Canada-India Parliamentary Friendship Group on Canada-India matters, promoted India's traditional knowledge systems, raised funds to support the fallen soldiers of Canada and India through its annual charity golf event and recognized several renowned people of Indian origin through its CIF Global Indian Award. Its most recognized achievement in the public policy space has been its organization of thematic forums addressing specific areas of collaboration between Canada and India. The sectors covered have included healthcare (3 times), energy, agriculture, mining and metals, infrastructure and education. The visionary behind these forums was CIF's past-Chair, Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan O.C., who is also the Chair of GIPF. GIPF is an evolution of the conferences on Smart Villages that Dr. Lakshmanan and some of the forum committee members had organized in earlier years.

For more information, please contact:
Canada India Foundation
5160 Explorer Drive, Unit #1 Mississauga, ON L4W 4T7 Tel: 905-602-1001
E-mail: cifevents@canadaindiafoundation.com
Web: www.canadaindiafoundation.com

Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum 2026

PROGRAM

September 10, 2026
Pre-Event Networking, Dinner (For Speakers, Special Guests and CIF Board)
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

September 11, 2026
7:30 am – 8:30 am Registration and Networking for Delegates

Opening Session
8:30 am – 9:10 am

Welcome Remarks: **Mr. Ritesh Malik**
Chair, Canada India Foundation, Canada
Conference Chair's Address: **Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan O.C.**
Forum Chair; Past-Chair, Canada India Foundation; Chair, Ore2Metal Inc., Canada
Inaugural Address: **Shri. Dinesh Patnaik**
High Commissioner of India to Canada

Keynote Session
9:15 am – 10:35 am

Moderator: **Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan O.C.**
Forum Chair; Past-Chair, Canada India Foundation; Chair, Ore2Metal Inc., Canada
Speaker 1 **Mr. T.S. Krishnamurthy**
Former Chief Election Commissioner, Government of India
Speaker 2 **Prof. Rene van Acker**
President, University of Guelph, Canada
Speaker 3 **Dr. Soumya Swaminathan** (Virtual)
Chair, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), India
Speaker 4 **Mr. Stephen Ibaraki**
Founder, AI for Good - ITU, Canada

10:35 am – 10:50 am Coffee Break

Panel Session I Policy Leadership for Inclusive Prosperity
10:55 am – 11:55 am

Moderator: **Mr. Gary Comerford**
President and CEO, CMC Global, Canada
Speaker **Prof. M.B. Athreya** (Virtual)
Mentor to NGOs, India
Panelist 1 **Mr. Craig Brown**
Senior Counsel, Cassels, Canada
Panelist 2 **Mr. Girish Menon**
President, Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge University, United Kingdom
Panelist 3 **Mr. Ritesh Kotak**
Principal, Ritesh Kotak Consulting, Canada
Panelist 4 **Mr. Jacques NdoutouMve**
Vice-President, Canada-Africa Chamber of Business, Canada

Panel Session II Enablers – Food Security, Healthcare, Skill Development

11:55 am – 12:55 pm

Moderator: **Mr. Chocko Valliappa**
CEO, Vee Technologies, India

Panelist 1 **Mr. Ravi Ramachandran**
R&D Head, Crop Protection Development, Syngenta Canada Inc., Canada

Panelist 2 **Prof. Evan Fraser**
Professor of Geography, University of Guelph, Canada

Panelist 3 **Dr. Milos Popovic**
Prof. Biomedical Engineering, University of Toronto; Director, Toronto Rehab, Canada

Panelist 4 **Mr. Paul Clipsham**
Director, Stakeholder Engagement, Skills Ontario, Canada

Lunch Session

1:05 pm – 1:25 pm

Lunch Address

The Honourable Michael Tibollo
Associate Attorney General, Government of Ontario, Canada

1:25 pm – 2:00 pm Lunch

Panel Session III Technology Leadership and Artificial Intelligence

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm

Moderator: **Mr. Shrish Mishra**
Principal, Enterprise AI, North America & Country Head, AIONOS, Canada

Panelist 1 **Mr. Bill Inman**
Entrepreneur and Advisor to High Growth Companies, USA

Panelist 2 **Mr. Barun Gorain**
CEO, Ore2Metal Inc., Canada

Panelist 3 **Mr. Atul Tyagi**
Chief Strategy Officer, Alpha Global-IT, Canada

Panelist 4 **Dr. Mamatha Bhat**
Scientist, University Health Network Research, Toronto, Canada

Panelist 5 **Dr. Venkat Bhat**
Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto, Canada

Panel Session IV Learning as Engine of Change

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm

Moderator: **Dr. Purnima Tyagi**
Director, Health and Social Innovation Research, Centennial College, Canada

Panelist 1 **Prof. Kumar Murty C.M**
Professor of Mathematics, University of Toronto, Canada

Panelist 2 **Prof. Guneet Kaur**
Associate Professor, School of Engineering, University of Guelph, Canada

Panelist 3 **Dr. Gayathri Srinivasan**
Executive Director, Corporate Relations, M.I.T, USA

Panelist 4 **Dr. R.H. Narendra**
Mentor – Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, IIT Madras, India

Panelist 5 **Mr. Suchit Ahuja**
Associate Professor, Supply Chain Management, Concordia University, Canada

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm Wellness Break

Panel Session V Social Persuasion and Community Engagement

3:35 pm – 4:35 pm

Moderator: **Ms. Manu Pant**
Senior Manager, UNICEF Canada
Speaker: **Mr. Nachiket Mor** (Virtual)
Former National Director, Gates Foundation India
Panelist 1 **Prof. Sundar Bharadwaj**
Professor of Marketing, University of Georgia, USA
Panelist 2 **Dr. Richard Olumide Oyefeso**
Consultant Pediatrician with focus on empowering underserved communities, Canada
Panelist 3 **Prof. Venkatesh Athreya**
Adjunct Professor, Asian College of Journalism, India

Panel Session VI Philanthropy and Compassionate Entrepreneurship

3:35 pm – 4:40 pm

Moderator: **Mr. Alex Vaccari**
Vice-President, Colonial House Capital, Canada
Panelist 1 **Mr. Chocko Valliappa**
CEO, Vee Technologies, India
Panelist 2 **Dr. A.R. Raghupathi**
Director, Strategic Growth, Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences, India
Panelist 3 **Dr. Sankar Das Gupta**
Chair, Electrovaya, Canada
Panelist 4 **Mr. Huston Loke**
Chief Strategy Officer, Bespoke Metrics, Canada
Panelist 5 **Mr. Ray Sharma**
Founder, Extreme Venture Partners, Canada
Panelist 6 **Dr. Surjit Babra**
CEO, Skylink Capital Group, Canada

Closing Remarks:
4:45 pm – 4:55 pm
Mr. Sanjay Makkar
Co-National Convener, Canada India Foundation, Canada

5:30 pm – 6:15 pm Dinner Session / Networking

6:20 pm – 6:40 pm
Going Forward **Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan O.C.**

Introduction of Speaker **Mr. Pankaj Dave**
National Convener, Canada India Foundation, Canada

6:40 pm – 7:10 pm
Dinner Address **The Honourable Chris Alexander**
Former Minister of Citizenship & Immigration, former Ambassador to Afghanistan, Canada

7:15 pm – 8:15 pm Dinner

CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION

Democracies Working Together

Objectives

Canada India Foundation (CIF) is a national, not-for-profit, nonpartisan, non-governmental organization established with the following objectives:

- Foster bilateral relations between Canada and India
- Create opportunities for qualified Indo-Canadians in the public sphere
- Create a better understanding of the new India among Canadians & protect Canada's interests in India
- Annually recognize & honour a prominent global Indian achiever. CIF Global Indian Award is presented to an outstanding person who has demonstrated global leadership, vision, and personal excellence
- Organize sectoral forums that enable a better understanding of the expanding economic relations between Canada and India
- Position the need for a strategic partnership between Canada and India as critical to Canada's future.

Public policy

Since its inception in 2007, Canada India Foundation has taken a leadership role in fostering stronger bilateral relations between Canada and India through active participation in the public policy debate and engagement with Parliamentarians, CIF plays a pivotal role in transforming Canada's relations with India by emphasizing India's criticality to Canada's future

CIF works towards raising the profile of Indo-Canadian community by facilitating:

- Participation by qualified Canadians of Indian origin in the policymaking and the legislative process and within crown agencies, government boards and judicial and quasi-judicial tribunals
- Engagement with federal and provincial elected representatives on crucial bilateral issues such as trade enhancement, national security, simplifying immigration procedures, professional accreditation

CIF takes an active role in increasing the awareness among Canadians about the changing face of India, and the promotion of Canada's interest in India. CIF members are among Canada's top industrialists, entrepreneurs, corporate executives, and top-tier professionals. Together, CIF members provide employment to a few thousand Canadians, and they are key influencers of Canadian public policy enjoying tremendous pelf and prestige in Canada.

CIF proactively assists in shaping a definitive pro-India policy framework in Canada by working with decision makers in the federal and provincial Canadian governments. Policy analysts following the amazing progress of Canada – India relations concur that substantial improvements have occurred in the last ten years – coinciding with the formation and growth of CIF.

Philanthropy

CIF members are dedicated philanthropists who continually donate for a cause globally and especially in Canada and in India.

CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION
5160 Explorer Drive, Unit #1,
Mississauga, ON L4W 4T7
(+1) 905-602-1001
info@canadindiafoundation.com
www.canadaindiafoundation.com

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Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum 2026
September 11, 2026 Toronto



SPEAKER PROFILES

Dr. A.R. Raghupathi



Dr. A.R. Raghupathi is the Director Liaison and Strategic Growth Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research in Muddanahalli, Karnataka, India. His medical journey began at the Government Medical College, Mysore, where he received his M.B.B.S degree in 1978. His initial professional career included private practice in the early years and service as medical officer with the Government of Karnataka, before he began a long and distinguished academic career, specializing in Pathology and moving up the academic ranks ultimately becoming Professor and Head of Department of Pathology at the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute, before retiring in 2015. During this period, he also held additional responsibilities as Deputy Director of Medical Education, Special officer to Medical Education Minister and Special Officer to Nursing and Para Medical Board. Since retiring, he has continued his medical service as Chief Medical Officer and Director of Medical Education at Sri Sathya Sai institutions, Director of Medical Education Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research, and his current role.

Alex Vaccari



Alexander ("Alex") Vaccari is a senior executive with experience in philanthropy, healthcare, and investment management. He leads national initiatives for The Schroeder Foundation and oversees communications and philanthropy for the Schroeder Ambulatory Centre Foundation. Previously, Alex was Vice President and Chief Development Officer at Toronto Rehab Foundation for 8 years. He has also held leadership roles at Colonial House Capital and the University of Toronto. He is a graduate of the University of Toronto, where he was a Cressy Award recipient.

Atul Tyagi



Atul Tyagi, with over 30 years' experience in executive and operational roles across Canada, the US, India, and beyond, leads Alpha Global IT Inc. as Chief Strategy Officer and Director of Operations. Under his leadership, Alpha has expanded and diversified, notably in digital health, offering products like EMR, Patient Portal, interoperability, clinical workflow, and AI solutions. Atul has fostered collaborations with Ontario Health, OntarioMD, and healthcare stakeholders, pioneering digital health initiatives in Ontario and Canada. He has spearheaded AI-enabled healthcare solutions, automating clinical documentation, workflows, billing, and more, emphasizing responsible AI that integrates into clinical workflows while safeguarding privacy and improving patient care. He was instrumental in Alpha's participation in Supply Ontario's AI Scribe Vendor of Record program. His broader career spans founding companies, developing cross-border strategies, and leading technology, healthcare, defence, and transformation projects globally.

Dr. Barun Gorain



Dr. Barun Gorain, P.Eng., is CEO and co-founder of Ore2Metal Resources, a Canadian critical-metals resource company with a focus on becoming a diversified producer of critical metals from mine tailings, mine waste and other secondary resources. Ore2Metal Resources' strategy is to turn resources already mined into productive critical-metal assets, creating new supply while reducing the environmental legacy of mine waste. Dr. Gorain has more than 25 years of international mining, metallurgy and technology leadership experience. His senior roles have included Mt Isa (now Glencore) in Australia, Teck Resources in Canada and the United States, Barrick Gold in Toronto, and Chief Technology Officer of Hindustan Zinc (Vedanta) in India. He has led advanced technology and capital-project initiatives that delivered more than US$1 billion in commercial value. Dr. Gorain holds a Ph.D. in Metallurgical Engineering from the University of Queensland in Australia and a B.Tech. in Mineral Engineering from the Indian School of Mines (now IIT Dhanbad). His current focus is scaling Canadian innovation into commercial critical-metal production through partnerships with leading mining companies.

Bill Inman



Bill Inman is Founder & CEO of Dectec - short for Decentralized Technologies - a decentralized AI company recently acquired by AI Financial Corporation, a publicly traded company listed on Nasdaq under the ticker AIFC. He is an entrepreneur, inventor, and technology executive with over 25 years of experience building and scaling businesses at the intersection of artificial intelligence, blockchain, data, and the future of work. Bill's work today centers on one of the defining questions of the AI era: When AI learns your knowledge, expertise, relationships, clients, and identity, who owns what it becomes? His work has spanned AI, blockchain, enterprise technology, data, human capital, fintech, and emerging digital infrastructure. Through Dectec, Bill is building the infrastructure for owning your own AI — including the training data, knowledge base, permissions, digital identity, and intelligence that make up an individual or enterprise AI twin. His vision is an AI architecture in which people maintain control of their intelligence, businesses protect their proprietary knowledge, and client data remains protected rather than becoming part of someone else's platform.

Chocko Valliappa



Chocko Valliappa is Vice Chairman & CEO of The Sona Group, a 100-year-old enterprise spanning technology, manufacturing, education, and incubation, with 10,000 employees in seven countries. In 1980s he co-founded Valliappa Software Tech Park, home to Texas Instruments, Cisco, and Oracle. In 2000 he founded Vee Technologies, a global IT, AI, and engineering services company. In 2024 he launched Sona SPEED, a precision manufacturing facility near Bengaluru serving the space, defence, and aerospace sectors, and VeeVault Capital, a global investment platform. He is Vice Chairman and Trustee of the family trust behind Sona College of Technology, School of Management, Thiagarajar Polytechnic College, and College of Arts and Science. Vee Technologies and Sona College have made a multi-million dollar contribution to Canada's FIBRE initiative with University Health Network and the University of Toronto, for wearable smart textiles in healthcare.

The Honourable Chris Alexander



Chris Alexander is a diplomat, author, former Canadian cabinet minister and international affairs expert with more than three decades of experience in diplomacy, development and public policy. He served as Canada's ambassador to Afghanistan and later as Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Afghanistan, working at the intersection of development, governance, security and international cooperation.

Mr. Alexander has served in Stephen Harper's government as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence and as Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. As minister, he oversaw major reforms to Canada's immigration system, including the introduction of Express Entry, and worked on refugee resettlement and integration.

Today, Mr. Alexander advises organizations on strategy, international affairs and public policy. He is the author of *The Long Way Back: Afghanistan's Quest for Peace.*

Craig Brown



Craig Brown serves as Senior Counsel in the Business Law Group at Cassels. His practice focuses on representing principally technology and life sciences companies in the areas of mergers and acquisitions, corporate finance, and corporate and governance matters. He also guides companies through transformative events and critical governance matters including acquisitions, sales, debt and equity financings, joint ventures and material licensing transactions. Prior to joining Cassels, he co-founded one of Canada's leading emerging technology practices and for over two decades has been very active in the Ontario innovation ecosystem. Craig also seeks to intermediate opportunities for his clients, including identifying qualified investment targets for private equity and venture capital clients and introducing Canadian companies to strategic domestic and international partners and investment groups capable of providing catalytic growth capital. Craig was past president of the Tie-Toronto (The Indus Entrepreneurs) and is currently the chairman of the board of directors of the Canada-India Business Council.

Prof. Evan Fraser



Evan Fraser is Executive Director of the Arrell Food Institute and full Professor of Geography at the University of Guelph. One of Canada's most cited academics on the future of food, sustainability, and climate change, he has written five books and over 150 academic publications, with commentary in CNN, the Guardian, and all major Canadian outlets. In 2025 he was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada for his work on global food security. He is inaugural co-chair of the Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council, which advises the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and one of fifteen international experts on the United Nations' High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition. He is vice chair of the Maple Leaf Centre for Food Security and a founding member of the Canadian Alliance for Net Zero Agrifood. He held a Canada Research Chair from 2010 to 2020.

Gary Comerford



Gary Comerford has spent over 40 years in financial services, across individual and group insurance. He began in 1977 at Canada Permanent Trust, rising to Vice President of Marketing. In 1986 he joined Sun Life of Canada, serving as General Manager for India and retiring as Senior Vice President, International. In 2009 he joined Reinsurance Group of America as Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, and in 2014 founded CMC Global, a consultancy specializing in international expansion. Gary is a Director of Novelis and a past director of Aditya Birla Minacs, the International Insurance Society, and Birla Sun Life. He is past President and CEO of the Canada India Business Council. In 2008 the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce gave him its President's Award for strengthening Canada-India trade ties. He received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 and chaired Brock University's Board of Trustees, 2017 to 2021.

Dr. Gayathri Srinivasan



Dr. Gayathri Srinivasan is the Executive Director of MIT Corporate Relations, where she oversees the Industrial Liaison Program and Startup Exchange, connecting MIT's research and innovation ecosystem with leading companies worldwide. With a career spanning scientific discovery, technology commercialization, and strategic partnership development, she has built a reputation for forging impactful collaborations that accelerate innovation and create global impact. Dr. Srinivasan earned her PhD in Microbiology from The Ohio State University in 2004. During her doctoral research, she contributed to the discovery of pyrrolysine, the 22nd genetically encoded amino acid. She subsequently joined MIT as an NIH Postdoctoral Fellow. Transitioning from academic research to technology commercialization, Dr. Srinivasan joined MIT's Technology Licensing Office followed by UMass Medical School's Office of Technology Management. Later, she served as Director of Public and Private Partnerships for the Woodruff Health Sciences Center at Emory, before becoming Executive Director of Corporate Relations in 2019 and subsequently leading the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations in 2021

Girish Menon



Girish Menon is the 10th President of Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge, having taken office in October 2025. He is a highly respected leader with nearly four decades of experience in international development, education, and social impact, committed to advancing social justice, equity, and opportunity for underserved communities. Before Cambridge, Girish served as Interim CEO of UNICEF UK, CEO of STiR Education, and Chief Executive of ActionAid UK. Earlier, he was International Programmes Director and Deputy CEO of WaterAid UK, overseeing programmes across Africa and South Asia. Born and raised in India, he began his career with the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme and later held leadership roles with ActionAid, Plan International, and DFID. At Lucy Cavendish, Girish champions inclusive excellence and educational access, continuing the College's mission to open Cambridge to talented students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Prof. Guneet Kaur



Dr. Guneet Kaur is an Associate Professor of Biological Engineering, and Director of the Canada India Research Centre for Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at the College of Engineering, University of Guelph, Canada. Kaur's research and teaching focus on industrial biotechnology and the design of efficient bioprocesses for the production of agri-biochemicals, biomaterials, and novel food ingredients. The central idea of Kaur's research is sustainability – technical, economic, social, and environmental – and she uses her international academic training and work experience in Canada, Hong Kong, Europe, and India, to redefine and engineer sustainability for addressing some of the most pressing global challenges, including sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition, and circular economy.

Huston Loke



Huston is an executive leader with deep expertise across technology, industry, and regulation. As the former President of DBRS Limited (now Morningstar DBRS), he led global analytical teams while engaging with international investors, issuers, and official sector leaders. His public sector tenure includes senior leadership roles at the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Ontario Securities Commission (OSC). Huston also served as the Chair of the Canadian Council of Regulators, statutory Ombudsman of Insurance, and Executive Vice President of Market Conduct at the Financial Services Regulatory Authority, regulating over 100,000 financial services licensees. Huston was also previously the Ontario committee member for the Basel-headquartered Financial Stability Board (FSB). Today, Huston drives strategic growth and innovation in technology and artificial intelligence. He is a CFA Charterholder, holds an MBA in Finance and Accounting, and has completed executive education at Harvard University.

Jacques NdoutouMve



Jacques NdoutouMve is a Canadian Chemical and Process Engineer and international business leader with two decades of experience in engineering, project development, natural resources, and Canada-Africa business. He is Founder and CEO of EL Consulting & Management Ltd., a Toronto firm he started in 2009, working in engineering, technology transfer, environmental advisory, and value-added industry development in Africa. His projects span mining, renewable energy, water treatment, agro-processing, cosmetics, and healthcare manufacturing. Jacques holds an MSc and Dipl.-Ing. in Chemical and Process Engineering from the University of Dortmund, with further study at Virginia Tech. He is a Professional Engineer in Ontario and a member of the VDI. His earlier career includes ThyssenKrupp AG, research at the University of Toronto, and senior consulting with Hatch Ltd. Since 2019 he has been Vice-President of the Canada-Africa Chamber of Business. His vision is simple: move from exporting African resources to building African industries.

Prof. V. Kumar Murty C.M.



V. Kumar Murty is Professor of Mathematics at the University of Toronto and past Director of the Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Sciences. He works in the areas of number theory, algebraic geometry, mathematical modelling and information security. He has published more than 150 papers in these areas as well as edited or authored 10 books. His work has been recognized by election as Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and Foreign Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences (India), as well as by appointment as Member of the Order of Canada. He was also awarded the prestigious E. W. R. Steacie Fellowship by NSERC and the Coxeter-James Prize by the CMS. Recently, he has embarked on a study of "smart villages" to mathematically understand the dynamics of communities and to derive the economic and social implications of various models of growth.

Dr. Mamatha Bhat



Dr. Mamatha Bhat is a Hepatologist and Co-Lead of the Transplant AI initiative at the University Health Network's Ajmera Transplant Centre, and Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Toronto. She is internationally recognized for her research in developing and implementing multimodal tools of Artificial Intelligence for personalized predictions and complex decision-making in transplant. Her work has been funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research), Canadian Liver Foundation, American Society of Transplant among others. She has published over 215 papers in journals such as Lancet Digital Health, Journal of Hepatology, Gut and Hepatology. Dr. Bhat has been the recipient of the 2025 Canadian society of Transplant Research excellence award, 2022 CASL Research Excellence award and the 2021 American Society of Transplantation (AST) Basic Science Career Development Award. Dr. Bhat is also Partnership & Engagement Lead for the Temerty Centre for AI Research and Education in Medicine, Director of the Clinician-scientist training program in the Dept of Medicine at the University of Toronto, and current Chair of the Transplant AI Taskforce of the AST.

Manu Pant



Manu Pant is a strategic partnerships and stakeholder engagement leader, currently serving as Senior Manager, Association Partnerships at UNICEF Canada. She works with faith-based organizations and diaspora communities across the country to mobilize key resources, drive shared advocacy priorities and advance children's rights. Previously at Plan International Canada, Manu led implementation of the organization's flagship Girls Belong Here initiative, building impactful cross-sector partnerships to promote youth leadership and gender equality. Her background spans nonprofits, grassroots advocacy, and outcome-based financing, with a focus on centering equity and sustainability in systems change. Manu holds a Master of Global Affairs from the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Politics and International Relations from the University of Exeter. She is committed to leveraging policy, partnerships, and advocacy to drive meaningful, long-term change.

The Honourable Michael Tibollo



The Honourable Michael A. Tibollo is Ontario's Associate Attorney General and MPP for Vaughan—Woodbridge with the Progressive Conservative Party since 2018. He has held roles as Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, and as the first Minister responsible for Mental Health and Addictions. A practicing lawyer for over 30 years, Tibollo holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto and a law degree from the University of Windsor. He has been practising lawyer for 30 years. He has received multiple honours, including the Order of the Republic of Italy, Queen's Jubilee Medal, and humanitarian awards, and is active in multicultural and mental health initiatives.

Dr. Milos Popovic



Milos R. Popovic is Professor and Director of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Toronto. He is a neuroscientist specializing in functional electrical stimulation (FES), neuroprostheses, neurorehabilitation, and brain-machine interfaces. He is also Director of the KITE Research Institute at Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – UHN. Dr. Popovic has founded major research entities including the Rehabilitation Engineering Laboratory, the Neural Engineering and Therapeutics team, the CRANIA initiative, and the FIBRE platform. His pioneering work has led to innovations in FES-based rehabilitation for stroke and spinal cord injury, hybrid assistive devices, and neuroprosthetics, earning honors such as the 2008 Engineering Medal for Research and Development, the 2014 UHN Inventor of the Year Award, and fellowships in multiple Canadian and international engineering and health sciences academies. He co-founded MyndTec Inc., commercializing portable FES devices, and plays a leading role in advancing neurotechnology translation to clinical practice.

Dr. Mrityunjay Athreya



Dr. Mrityunjay Athreya has been a Founder and Pioneer of the Indian Management Profession. Following Gold Medals in Cost Accountancy, he earned his Ph.D. from the Harvard Business School, USA, in 1967. He has been a Professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata, London Business School and Scottish Business School. For the past five decades, he has been establishing management practices in all sectors and corners of India. He has been honoured by the Government of India with a Padma Bhushan in 2014. Professionally, he has also been honoured as Bhishma Pitamaha (Grand Guru) of the Indian HRD and is respected as an icon of the Indian costing profession. Dr. Athreya is an advocate of Dharma in all walks of life. The revered Sringeri Shankaracharya has conferred on him the title of Dharma Pracharak. He is now a National Evangelist on the 5 challenges before India in the 21st century: 1) World Peace, 2) Climate Healing, 3) Coping with China, 4) Reduction of Inequality and 5) Sustaining Dharma.

Dr. Nachiket Mor



Nachiket Mor is an Indian economist and banker known for his work in financial inclusion, rural development and health system design and reputed as a key influencer in India's economic and social development landscape. He served as National Director for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation from 2015 to 2019. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, specializing in Finance at the Wharton School. He joined ICICI Bank in 1987 and became the President of ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth in 2007. He has been instrumental in designing financial devices and strategies to deliver banking services to villages, addressing India's financial inclusion challenges. He also served on the Reserve Bank of India's Central Board. Currently, he is a Visiting Scientist at the Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health and a Visiting Professor at the Indian School of Business, focusing on the design of national and regional health systems. He also serves on the boards of several healthcare-related organizations.

Pankaj Dave



Pankaj Dave, the Founder/CEO of Manas International Inc, an international Steel and Metals trading company, has over 20 years in the metal industry. He has lived and worked on three continents and has actively participated in developing diaspora community organizations. "Life is a 100-meter dash"- Pankaj is fond of saying stressing on achieving the most as quickly as possible. He combines in him a core belief in the Indian wisdom traditions as well as the best of modern age. An adherent of 'Vasudaiv Kutumbkam (World is One)' philosophy, he finds it easier to maintain his core Indian values while being successful in his personal and professional life in the West. He has contributed substantially to improving the Canada-India bilateral trade, especially in steel and other related metals business. Pankaj does not miss an opportunity to serve the community and is known to offer support to causes that help and enhance the image of Indo Canadians.

Paul Clipsham



Paul Clipsham is the Director of Stakeholder Relations at Skills Ontario, a non-profit organization promoting skilled trades and technologies in Ontario since 1989. As part of the senior leadership team, his role involves leadership of the communications & marketing team as well as maintaining and developing partner/stakeholder relationships. Prior to his current function, Clipsham spent 16 years with Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, rising to become Senior Director, Program Development and Member Engagement. He was also in charge of gathering intelligence on policy and business issues across the country that are of critical importance to members and converting that intelligence member input into sound policy and advocacy. He holds a B.A. (Hon.) in history from Western University, followed by Post Graduate studies at Niagara University in International Business Administration. He is a strong advocate for the Canadian industry.

Dr. Purnima Tyagi



Dr. Purnima Tyagi serves as Director of WIMTACH and Social Innovation Research at Centennial College, where she has led the expansion of the College's applied research and innovation ecosystem. Under Dr. Tyagi's leadership, WIMTACH has become a trusted applied research and innovation partner for companies seeking to transform promising ideas into market-ready technologies and commercially viable solutions. She has broadened the Centre's research portfolio beyond digital health and medical technologies to include artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. She has also established strategic research partnerships with academic, healthcare, industry, and community organisations, such as the Fabric-Based Research Platform (FIBRE) in collaboration with University Health Network. She has supported approximately 400 companies through applied research collaborations focused on developing and commercialising digital health technologies, medical devices, and other innovative solutions.

Dr. R.H. Narendra



Dr. Narendra is Mentor at the School of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in IIT – Madras. He is a mechanical engineer, with extensive research, innovation, manufacturing and entrepreneurship credentials. From his high school days, he has been innovating and building a variety of mechanical and electrical devices. His range of interests, training and technical achievements include smoke detectors, fire control panels, battery chargers, plastics, refrigerators. He co-founded Lectro Mech India Ovt. Ltd, designing fire control panels and battery charger for fire alarm panels and later set up Devidayal Detectors manufacturing plant. He developed an RFID based refrigerator to monitor drug usage and also an RFID based software for vehicle parts tracking. He is responsible for the start-up of Shiv Kiran Mobility at IIT Madras for building auto, car, tractor etc. He has lectured about fire protection in all the major cities in India. He continues to mentor student groups on numerous innovative projects e.g., space rocket launcher and solar powered racing car.

Dr. Ravi Ramachandran



Dr. Ravi Ramachandran is Head of Research & Development for Crop Protection at Syngenta Canada. He holds BSc and MSc degrees in Chemistry from Bangalore University and a PhD in Chemistry from Western University. With more than 25 years of R&D and commercial leadership experience, he has contributed to numerous innovative crop protection and seed-treatment technologies, including 15 U.S., Canadian and international patent publications. His work advances more precise, resource-efficient agricultural solutions that support sustainable production and food security. Dr. Ramachandran has held leadership roles with the Chemical Industry Association of Canada, Chemical Institute of Canada, and Canadian Society for Chemistry, and currently chairs the Canada International Group of the Society of Chemical Industry, UK. He brings a science-led perspective on how agricultural innovation, public engagement and cross-sector collaboration can advance food security and inclusive prosperity.

Ray Sharma



Ray is the founder and leader of Extreme Venture Partners, Canada's top seed stage venture fund. Ray and Extreme Venture Partners have lead-funded or founded 100+ startups with exits to Apple, Google, Electronic Arts, McKesson, Salesforce and many others. Previously he spent 10 years on Bay/Wall Street in investment banking research. He was the top-ranked wireless technology analyst based on both Greenwich and Brendan Woods International surveys of fund managers for 5 of 8 eligible years.Ray served for four years on the Ontario Judicial Council and then served six years on the Royal Ontario Museum Board of Trustees. He's been an advisor to the Governments of Canada and Ontario on open data strategy and authored a chapter with the CIO of Canada on the role of 5G on citizen services. He also served on the Technical Advisory Committee of Duality Accelerator at the University of Chicago, the most advanced program in the U.S. on quantum science technology and applications. Ray founded mass market educational initiatives such as the Great Canadian Appathon, Canadian Open Data Experience, and Hackergal. His current focus is entrepreneurship education through his organization E/P/S and "The Concise Funding Handbook".

Prof. Rene Van Acker



Dr. Rene Van Acker is the President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guelph and a respected scholar and academic leader in agricultural science. A proud University of Guelph alumnus, he holds B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees from U of G and a PhD from the University of Reading in the United Kingdom. Before becoming president in 2025, he served in several senior leadership roles at U of G, including Dean of the Ontario Agricultural College and Vice-President Research and Innovation. His scholarly work focuses on weed science, crop–weed ecology, sustainable agriculture, and agri-food systems, and he has published extensively in these fields. Throughout his career, Dr. Van Acker has advanced research, teaching, experiential learning, infrastructure development, and partnerships that support the University's mission to improve life.

Dr. Richard Olumide Oyefeso



Dr. Richard Olumide Oyefeso, MD, FAAP, is a Consultant Pediatrician, global child health advocate, and Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics. With an international career spanning Nigeria, the Caribbean, and North America, Dr. Oyefeso brings a deep clinical background and a lifelong commitment to advancing pediatric care in underserved communities. Beyond clinical practice across the United States and Canada, Dr. Oyefeso is also currently developing an innovative educational platform focused on preventive parenting—equipping families with actionable strategies to foster emotional resilience, behavioral wellness, and balanced development in children. He is also the Founder and Executive Director of *4 Breath 4 Life*, a non-profit initiative established to combat high infant and maternal mortality rates in underserved regions, particularly in Nigeria. Under his leadership and in strategic synergy with Nigeria's national child health bodies, PAN and NISONM, the organization delivers healthcare capacity-building programs, essential newborn resuscitation workshops, and grassroots community health education, driving measurable improvements in neonatal survival.

Ritesh Kotak



Ritesh Kotak spent eight years in policing with two Canadian police agencies and on several international assignments, then moved to the private sector in Big Tech before being called to the Bar in 2023. His career spans public safety, digital transformation, and regulatory strategy, and he speaks regularly on the societal impacts of AI, cyber risk, and technology-driven change. In 2018 he was selected by Harvard Kennedy School for its Emerging Leaders Executive Program. He holds an MBA with distinction from the University of Edinburgh, a BBA from the University of Toronto, and a J.D. with an option in Technology Law from the University of Ottawa. He has presented at the World Internet Conference in China, Intersec in Dubai, and a NATO-sponsored cyber-security conference in North Macedonia. He has appeared three times as a witness before the House of Commons, and writes for the Financial Times and the Economist.

Ritesh Malik



Ritesh Malik is Chair of the Canada India Foundation and a domain leader in international trade, logistics, and agri-business. He believes the Canada-India trade corridor is structurally underserved, and that end-to-end, infrastructure-backed platforms are the way to unlock it. A graduate of Delhi University with an MBA in Global Marketing, he began his international career with O'Neil Software, building its presence across Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Since the early 2000s he has been a partner and Director at OM Group, a 30-year-old Indian logistics conglomerate, leading its international division into China, Japan, and North America. As founding principal of OmTrans North America, he brings that owned infrastructure to importers and exporters on India trade lanes, offering verified, asset-backed capability rather than brokered capacity. He also leads Fruitsy, a fresh produce and fruit trading company, and is building Arth, a fintech supporting first-time women entrepreneurs in rural India.

Sanjay Makkar



Sanjay Makkar, the Founder & President of InSureU! is a successful entrepreneur with twenty years of experience in insurance industry. As a Licensed Principal Broker, and Certified Canadian Accredited Insurance Broker, he leads a large team of insurance professionals. Sanjay has also worked in the hospitality sector in senior management roles previously. He holds a Degree in Hotel Management, Catering and Nutrition and Honors in Mathematics. Sanjay has lent a helping hand to many community organizations working in the nonprofit sector and is considered a source of inspiration for anyone planning to launch such institutions. Sanjay has championed many Not for Profit and Business community organizations at a leadership level including Panorama India, Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC), United Way of Peel, Mississauga Churchill Meadows Lions Club.

Dr. Sankar DasGupta



Dr. Sankar DasGupta is a scientist, entrepreneur, innovator and philanthropist who has been awarded over 75 US patents and has created interesting, research-based companies in water purification, lithium batteries, advanced ceramics, critical materials, plant cloning and laboratory real estate. One of his companies, Electrovaya, a leading lithium-ion battery technology and manufacturing company is listed on NASDAQ. He has advised PM Modi on electric cars, energy and batteries. Dr. Sankar was a member of the White House Committee on Energy and Environment chaired by then Vice- President Al Gore and the Toronto Calcutta Foundation is the vehicle for his philanthropic work. He is a founder charter member of TIE-Toronto and is a frequently invited speaker at conferences and universities worldwide. Sankar received his Doctorate from Imperial College, London and is a graduate of Presidency College, Calcutta.

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan FRS



Dr. Soumya Swaminathan is a pediatrician and global expert in tuberculosis and HIV research. She served as the World Health Organization's first Chief Scientist and, before that, as Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research and Secretary for Health Research to the Government of India. Since 2023 she has chaired the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation. She is Principal Advisor to India's National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme, Chair of the ICMR Scientific Advisory Board, and National Science Chair of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation. In 2026 she was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and The World Academy of Sciences. Trained in India, the UK, and the USA, she has authored over 480 peer-reviewed publications and holds honorary doctorates from Karolinska Institute, EPFL Lausanne, McGill, and Guelph. She currently co-chairs the global commission "Our Common Air" and serves on the ACCRA Reset High-Level Panel. Her current work focuses on climate change and health, and food system transformation.

Stephen Ibaraki



Stephen Ibaraki is Chairman and Founding Managing General Partner of REDDS Capital, Founder and Chair of Outreach ITU ACM XPRIZE AI for Good Global Summit, and Founding Chairman of the Technology Advisory Council, FinTech Ideas Festival. A serial entrepreneur, venture capitalist, investor, educator, researcher, author and global speaker, he has held 300+ senior executive roles since the 1970s and worked with technology since 1965. His philanthropic focus includes advancing research, innovation, entrepreneurship, start-ups, science, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and ITU World Summit on the Information Society Action Lines. Stephen has received numerous global honours for lifetime achievement and leadership, including Fellow and Distinguished Fellow distinctions, Global Fellow and Global Hall of Fame recognition, IT and Advanced Technology Lifetime Achievement Awards, and 24 Microsoft awards, including Global Gold Awards and Most Valuable Professional recognition.

Suchit Ahuja



Suchit Ahuja is Associate Professor of Business Technology Management at the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University, and Co-Director of Concordia's Applied AI Institute. He was the founding Director of John Molson's MSc in Business Analytics and Technology Management and co-chairs the Information Systems Division of ASAC. He holds a PhD in Management Information Systems from Queen's University. His research on frugal digital innovation, digital public infrastructure, and responsible AI, funded by SSHRC, FRQ and Mitacs, draws on years of fieldwork in India on rural primary healthcare and digital access to welfare entitlements, and has appeared in Information Systems Journal, Information Technology for Development, Forbes India and The Sunday Guardian. He is Senior Editor of IEEE Transactions on Technology and Society, has served on Standards Council of Canada committees, and advises Quantum Tiger, an AI infrastructure company in India, as well as several Indian universities.

Dr. Sundar Bharadwaj



Sundar Bharadwaj is the Coca Cola Company Chair Professor of Marketing at University of Georgia and Senior Research Fellow at the Indian School of Business. Prior to that, he served as a Professor of Marketing at Emory University. He has held visiting faculty positions at the Wharton School, Cornell University, HEC (Paris), Singapore Management University and BI (Norway). His research focuses on business problems relating to current and long-term returns and risks to marketing investments in brands, customers, innovation, and marketing strategy. His research has been published in the Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, Harvard Business Review, Marketing Science and Management Science among others. He was listed among the 50 most productive researchers worldwide in the AMA journals for the decade 2009-2018. His research has been recognized for journal and conference awards from the American Marketing Association, Academy of Marketing Science, Institute for Study of Business Markets and Product Development Management Association.

Dr. Surjit Babra



Surjit S. Babra is a Canadian serial entrepreneur, investor, philanthropist and mentor with over five decades of experience building enterprises across travel, aviation, logistics, transportation and food manufacturing. He moved to Toronto in 1979, where he became the founding force behind the SkyLink group of companies. In 2014, with three partners, he acquired the former Heinz processing facility in Leamington, Ontario, which has now grown to 600 jobs at 2 locations as Highbury Canco Corporation. Through SkyLink Children's Charity and other initiatives, he has supported children's health, education, disaster relief and community causes in Canada and internationally. He has made significant philanthropic contributions to Toronto Metropolitan University's School of Medicine and the Royal Ontario Museum and, in 2025, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws by TMU. He is the recipient of B'nai Brith Canada's Award of Merit, the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, as well as several humanitarian awards.

T.S. Krishnamurthy



T.S. Krishnamurthy is a former Indian Revenue Service officer and the 13th Chief Election Commissioner of India. He was the first officer from the IRS to attain the position of Chief Election Commissioner, having previously served as an Election Commissioner and as Secretary in the Department of Company Affairs from 1997 to 2000 during a 36-year career in public service. He oversaw the 2004 Lok Sabha elections. His career included senior roles in the Finance Ministry, corporate regulation, and as IMF advisor abroad. Post-retirement, he authored Miracles of Democracy and has been active in corporate boards and public causes. He has advocated for electoral reforms, including simultaneous elections across states and the national level, reduced multi-phase polling, and stricter oversight of political funding to safeguard democratic integrity. In recent years, he has defended India's electronic voting machines against external skepticism and highlighted the need to protect democratic institutions from undue influences.

Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan O.C.



Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan is the Chair of the Global Inclusive Prosperity Forum. He is an internationally renowned scientist, innovator, entrepreneur and teacher in technologies for sustainable development. He is a co-founder and former Chair of Process Research ORTECH and current Chair of Ore2Metal. He is a recipient of the Officer of the Order of Canada (OC) in 2022 from the Govt. of Canada and the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award in 2023 from the Govt. of India and Honorary Doctorate from the University of Guelph. He is also a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering and recipient of the Queen Elizabeth Diamond and Platinum Jubilee medals. He has 6 books, 130 publications and 40 patents to his credit. He is also Adjunct Professor in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Toronto. As co-founder and past Chair of Canada India Foundation (CIF), Dr. Lakshmanan conceived and chaired several thematic public policy forums, on behalf of CIF, as well as 5 Smart Villages forums with University of Toronto and University of Guelph. He facilitated 3 visits to Canada by India's former President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

Dr. Venkat Bhat



Venkat Bhat, MD MSc FRCPC DABPN MBA, is a psychiatrist, clinician-scientist, and Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. He leads the AI for Mental Health (AI-M) Program and is National Lead for the Mental Health Community of Practice at the Temerty Centre for Artificial Intelligence Research and Education in Medicine (T-CAIREM). His work brings together academia, government, industry, and communities across Canada and globally to advance responsible AI, including generative and agentic AI, for mental health, education, and healthcare. He leads interdisciplinary initiatives spanning wellness and resilience, depression, and PTSD, emphasizing AI and neuroscience, human-AI collaboration, and safe, equitable, scalable adoption. To date, he has authored over 200 peer-reviewed publications, delivered over 200 presentations, contributed to more than 30 funded grants and clinical trials, and trained over 50 doctoral and postdoctoral students and fellows across medicine and engineering.

Prof. Venkatesh Athreya



Venkatesh Athreya (Ph D, University of Wisconsin) is a chemical engineer turned development economist. He has worked and published extensively in the areas of agrarian change, food and nutrition security, education, health policy, gender and political economy of development. He served as Professor of Economics at Bharathidasan University in Tiruchirapalli, India for over three decades. He has also been actively involved, as planner and social activist, in campaigns and interventions for literacy and gender equality and against female feticide and infanticide. Prof Athreya has published more than a hundred scholarly articles and authored/co-authored five books: Barriers Broken (1990), Literacy and Empowerment (1996), Report on the State of Food Insecurity in Rural India (2008), Report on the State of Food Insecurity in Urban India (2010) and Marxian Political Economy (2011). Prof Athreya has also served as Vice Chancellor in-charge, Registrar-in-charge and Dean of Social Sciences in Bharathidasan University, and member of Executive Committees, Academic Councils and Boards of Studies in several universities of India.



SPEAKER ABSTRACTS

Dr. Barun Gorain

From Mine Waste to Critical-Metal Production: Canadian Technology for Global Inclusive Prosperity
The global race for critical minerals is usually framed around discovering and permitting new mines. This talk presents a complementary proposition: some of the world's next critical-metal resources have already been mined and are sitting in historic and operating tailings.

Ore2Metal Resources is leveraging ReCLAIM™, a Canadian technology platform designed to convert these legacy materials into productive critical-metal assets. By combining pre-concentration, atmospheric hydrometallurgy and selective separation, the approach is being developed to recover copper, nickel, cobalt, rare earth elements, germanium, gallium, antimony, scandium and other strategic metals from copper, nickel, zinc and legacy iron tailings. Iron and sulfur can also be converted into stable products such as goethite and gypsum, reducing the residual waste burden.

The opportunity extends beyond metal recovery. Reprocessing tailings can extract more value from resources already disturbed, reduce closure liabilities, extend productive activity in mining regions and strengthen resilient supply chains without relying exclusively on new mine development. Ore2Metal Resources aims to translate this capability into commercial production through joint ventures with mine owners, aligning technology, capital, operating capability and long-term value creation.

Collaborative programs involving Rio Tinto's Kennecott Copper in the USA, Antamina (JV of BHP, Glencore and Teck) in Peru and Caldera's Pea Ridge Heavy Rare Earths project in the United States illustrate this pathway. The broader message is that Canada can contribute to global critical-mineral production not only through what it mines, but through the technologies and partnerships that transform yesterday's waste into tomorrow's strategic supply - creating a practical pathway from resource stewardship to inclusive prosperity.

Bill Inman

BYOAI — Don't Just Use AI. Bring Your Own.
Artificial intelligence is rapidly moving from something we use to something that can work, communicate, negotiate, and transact on our behalf. For mortgage professionals and entrepreneurs, that shift creates an extraordinary opportunity—but also a critical question: Who owns the AI that learns your business, your expertise, your relationships, and your clients?

In BYOAI, technology entrepreneur and decentralized-AI pioneer Bill Inman explores the transition from traditional AI tools to intelligent agents and personally owned AI. Attendees will see how AI can multiply individual productivity, create increasingly autonomous businesses, transform customer relationships, and allow professionals to scale their knowledge and capabilities far beyond themselves.

The presentation also examines why data ownership and AI ownership will become increasingly important as AI becomes more personal and more powerful. The future is not simply about learning how to use AI. It is about building AI that knows you, works for you, represents you—and ultimately belongs to you.

Craig Brown

Inclusive prosperity is not merely a moral objective. History suggests it is a strategic necessity. The societies that achieve enduring prosperity are those that continuously expand participation in the creation of wealth. The societies that decline are often those in which opportunity, education, capital, and political influence become increasingly concentrated, and the economic disparity gap widens. The most successful inclusion policies are typically those that expand participation in wealth creation rather than focusing exclusively on wealth redistribution.

Prof. Evan Fraser

While AI is presented as a strategy to improve food security , a great many questions remain including data ownership, and how AI models are trained. In this talk, I will draw on a recent report written for the UN's Committee on World Food Security and explore what needs to be true for AI to reach its food security potential. The full report can be accessed here: https://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/insights/news-insights/news-detail/new-note--harnessing-ai--digitalization-and-data-governance-for-fsn/en

Dr. Gayathri Srinivasan

Inclusive prosperity across democracies requires deliberate infrastructure, not accident.
Drawing on two decades of building partnerships across continents, Dr. Srinivasan explores how institutions can intentionally design ecosystems that connect innovation across borders. The most transformative innovations emerge when researchers, entrepreneurs, and funders from different countries collaborate. But these connections require bridge-builders and strategic infrastructure to happen at scale.

She introduces three principles for inclusive global innovation ecosystems:

1. Understand the Business of Science — Democratize business literacy globally
2. Match Science with the Right Partner — Fund bridge-builders everywhere
3. Build Relationships, Not Transactions — Create sustained cross-border collaboration

Drawing on her experience at MIT connecting industry partners from around the world with faculty, researchers, students, and startups, she offers five actionable steps for democracies and institutions: invest in bridge infrastructure globally, make partnerships intentionally inclusive, build sustained ecosystems, train in business literacy, and measure impact on lives improved and trust built.

Key Takeaway: When democracies choose to collaborate systematically on innovation and entrepreneurship, they accelerate solutions to shared problems while proving that prosperity and opportunity can be genuinely inclusive.

Prof. Guneet Kaur

From Knowledge Transfer to Knowledge Co-Creation: How Universities, Industry, and Farmers Build Inclusive Prosperity Together. Innovation in agriculture and biomanufacturing is often viewed as a linear process in which knowledge is generated at universities and transferred to industry and end users. In practice, the most transformative innovations emerge when learning flows in all directions. Through my work in agri biochemical manufacturing and sustainable food systems, I have seen how farmers contribute practical knowledge of field conditions and adoption barriers, industry partners provide insights into scale-up, market needs, and commercialization, and universities contribute scientific discovery, technological development, and talent training. This presentation will explore how innovation emerges at the intersection of these perspectives, where research questions are refined, engineering solutions are adapted to real-world constraints, and innovative solutions are co-created for sustainable and inclusive prosperity.

Jacques NdoutouMve

Africa's extraordinary mineral wealth presents both a historic opportunity and a profound policy challenge. For decades, many African economies have remained disproportionately dependent on the export of unprocessed natural resources, while much of the value, technology, industrial capacity and wealth generated along global mineral value chains has accrued elsewhere. The question for contemporary African policy leadership is therefore no longer simply how to attract investment and extract resources, but how to transform natural resource endowments into broad based, sustainable and locally anchored prosperity.

My presentation examines the role of policy leadership in building a more responsible and inclusive extractive sector, with particular attention to local value addition, domestic industrialisation, employment, skills development, supplier ecosystems and wealth creation. It argues that responsible mining must move beyond a narrow conception of environmental and social compliance toward a broader development compact in which mineral resources become catalysts for economic diversification, productive capacity and intergenerational prosperity. Gabon for example provides an important and timely case study. The country's significant manganese resources, emerging iron-ore potential, and other mineral endowments create an opportunity to reposition mining from an enclave export activity into a foundation for industrial development. Recent policy measures—including the ambition to end the export of raw manganese by 2029, expand domestic processing, strengthen transparency and governance, and develop infrastructure around major mining projects—signal a strategic shift toward greater national value capture.

The objective is not to reject responsible foreign investment or the role of multinational mining companies. Rather, it is to redefine the partnership between governments, investors, communities and citizens so that extraction becomes the beginning—not the end—of value creation. For Africa, and for countries such as Gabon,

the next generation of mining policy should therefore be judged by a diAerent measure: not simply how much mineral wealth is extracted, but how eAectively that wealth is converted into productive capacity, shared prosperity and a more diversified economy for current and future generations.

Dr. Mamatha Bhat

From Artificial Intelligence to Collective Intelligence: Designing AI for Inclusive Prosperity

Artificial intelligence cannot only automate tasks but also fundamentally reshape how expertise is accessed and how complex decisions are made. Drawing on experience developing multi-agent AI systems for high-stakes decision-making in organ transplantation, this presentation will explore a broader vision of AI as a tool for collective intelligence by bringing together diverse expertise and perspectives while preserving human judgment and accountability. Such systems could help democratize access to specialized knowledge across geography, institutions and socioeconomic settings, with particular relevance to countries such as Canada and India. However, scaling intelligence without addressing access, representation and fairness risks amplifying existing inequities. Technology leadership in the AI era must therefore move beyond developing increasingly capable algorithms toward designing human-AI systems that augment people, broaden access to expertise, and preserve human agency. The ultimate measure of AI's success should be not simply what machines can accomplish, but whether their capabilities expand opportunity and improve quality of life for all.

Dr. Mrityunjay Athreya

Peace is essential for Prosperity. Humanity should help settle the ongoing hot wars. We should resolve all issues that can escalate into wars. The Middle Powers should help. Prosperity does not guarantee peace. Military expenditure should be sharply reduced. Resources should be poured into equitable growth. Groups like Brics, Asean etc should be more assertive. Pursue the Vision of a World Government. Peace can also be disturbed by Climate Change, Epidemics and AI. Practise Dharma. Ethics. Move forward towards Human Flourishing.

Prof. Rene Van Acker

A Future of Inclusive Prosperity

In an era of compounding disruption and eroding certainty, institutions must choose their future deliberately rather than merely predict it. The pressures defining the present moment are many and include war, climate change, AI risk, inequality, misinformation, geopolitical tension, migration, energy and housing shortages, biodiversity loss and polarization creating simultaneous rather than sequential crises. In addition, it is increasingly hard to know and trust what we know to be truly happening in the world. Pivotal evidence of this is the collapse of visual trust. About 88% of people now struggle to distinguish genuine from AI-generated content, and visual inspection alone no longer suffices.

Works such as Novacene and Rise of the Robots place this within longer debates on hyperintelligence and technological displacement. If the future cannot be reliably forecast, it must be navigated by principle. Principled leaders call for setting positive "North Stars," and engaging in civility. Deliberateness follows: the University of Guelph's commitment to supporting the living world — microbes, plants, animals and humans — is an example of an institutional expression of that stance, alongside a wider movement toward humanity-centred practice, including in business and finance. As we approach the singularity, inclusive prosperity will not arrive by default. It requires deliberate, principled work to support the living world, humans and our shared environment included.

Dr. Richard Olumide Oyefeso

The Village Reimagined: Strengthening Families as a Catalyst for Human Capital Development

As clinicians, we often meet families when something has already gone wrong. A child is struggling at school. Behaviour has become difficult to manage. Sleep, anxiety, mood, or social relationships have deteriorated. Parents are exhausted and uncertain about what to do next. By the time a family reaches the healthcare system, what began as a manageable challenge may have become a much more complex problem. These encounters have made one issue increasingly difficult to ignore: we are often trying to repair problems that could have been addressed much earlier by strengthening families. Parents today are raising children in circumstances that are very different from those experienced by previous generations. Technology is embedded in virtually every aspect of childhood. Work and family demands compete for limited time and attention. Extended family may live far away, and the informal networks that once provided advice, practical

help, and reassurance are less consistently available. Parents are consequently being asked to manage increasingly complex developmental and social challenges, often with little preparation and considerable pressure. This matters because the family is a child's first developmental environment. Long before a child encounters a teacher, physician, psychologist, or other professional, they are learning from relationships at home. The ways in which parents respond to distress, establish boundaries, encourage independence, resolve conflict, and model emotional regulation can influence how children learn to understand themselves and relate to others.

Research across developmental science, public health, and economics supports the importance of early caregiving environments and shows that interventions that strengthen children and their caregivers can have benefits extending well beyond childhood. Yet our systems remain predominantly reactive. We have sophisticated services for diagnosing and treating illness, but far fewer structures designed to help ordinary families develop the knowledge and confidence needed to prevent difficulties from escalating. This paper proposes a different approach: move from managing family problems to building family capacity. The concept draws on the familiar saying that "it takes a village to raise a child." Historically, that village included grandparents, extended family, neighbours, schools, community leaders, and others who shared in the practical and social work of raising children. Many families no longer have access to that kind of support. We therefore need to reconsider what the village should look like in the twenty-first century. We propose a Reimagined Village: an intentional network of support that surrounds families with practical, accessible, and evidence-informed resources from the earliest stages of parenthood. This would include parenting and child-development education, caregiver resilience and mental-health support, guidance for navigating the digital environment, opportunities for community connection, and appropriate social, economic, and workplace supports. Universal prevention would provide the foundation, with more intensive assistance available when families require it. This is not a proposal to medicalize parenting or to transfer responsibility for raising children from families to institutions. Quite the opposite.

The aim is to give parents the knowledge, confidence, support, and resources needed to do their job more effectively. The implications extend beyond individual families. The capabilities developed during childhood—emotional regulation, resilience, communication, problem-solving, social competence, curiosity, and the ability to develop healthy relationships—eventually influence educational participation, employment, productivity, and community life. In this sense, the family is not only a private social institution; it is one of the places where society's future human capital is first developed. For clinicians, this represents a shift from asking only "How do we treat this child?" to also asking "What could we have done earlier to strengthen this family?" For policymakers, it raises a broader question: Are we investing enough upstream in the environment where human development begins? And for society, the challenge is perhaps simpler still. If it truly takes a village to raise a child, then we need to build a village capable of raising children in the world we have today. The village has changed. Our approach to supporting families must change with it.

Ritesh Kotak

Policy leadership can ensure emerging technologies such as AI and cybersecurity continue to drive broad, inclusive prosperity rather than deepen inequalities. As AI reshapes economies and cybersecurity threats challenge trust in digital systems, the choices leaders make today will determine whether innovation empowers communities or concentrates advantage. Guardrails, governance models, and securityfirst strategies are needed to build a future where technological progress uplifts everyone.

Dr. Sankar DasGupta

Stunted Children Reduction and Wealth Creation in Rural Bengal: a 6 year journey
Some centuries ago, Bengal accounted for ~12% of the entire world's GDP and more than all of Western Europe combined. This wealth mainly came from the agriculture sector which has been severely dislocated by geopolitics.

Our work over the last 5-6 years has been focussed on reducing stunted children (India accounts for 33% of the global total) and creating bottom-up agrarian wealth through scientific breakthroughs. We are making progress and believe have started creating wealth in about 100,000 rural households, created a few thousand rural entrepreneurs, and become a catalyst.

Dr. Venkat Bhat

Learning is a powerful engine of inclusive prosperity, building human capability, social mobility, and resilience to technological and economic change. Artificial intelligence can accelerate this through personalized learning, multilingual access, and scalable education, potentially extending expertise to communities underserved by traditional systems, aligning with the Forum's emphasis on skills, innovation, inclusion, and shared prosperity.

The AI for Mental Health (AI-M) Program led by Dr. Bhat illustrates this potential through generative AI, conversational AI, and agentic AI paradigms for education, simulated clinical interactions, knowledge synthesis, decision support, workflow automation, and support for patients and clinicians. However, AI can also amplify disparities, bias, misinformation, safety risks, and digital exclusion. Work through the AI-M Program emphasizes that realizing this value will require rigorous evaluation, human oversight, equitable access, and collaboration across academia, industry, and government.

Prof. Venkatesh Athreya

While it is an unfortunate fact of human history that people can be mobilized for the most destructive causes, historical experience also suggests that, when people in society come together for a shared progressive cause, even challenging tasks become achievable. In the current era, when the enormous centralization of and advances in science, technology and production is leading to huge concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few, it becomes imperative to empower communities at the local levels to both benefit from the advances and to meet the challenges thrown up by the concentration and centralization of power and resources. It is in this context and perspective that my presentation explores some positive experiences from two southern states in India that demonstrate the importance of democratic decentralization and social mobilization in empowering people and local communities.

The first example I wish to cite is the achievement of total literacy by the state of Kerala way back in 1990 through a process of social mobilization that had three key characteristics: voluntarism, mass participation and a campaign approach. Though thirty odd years have passed since then, no major state in India has been able to replicate this achievement. But the Kerala experience demonstrates that it is doable. The second, also from Kerala, is that of the achievement of total digital literacy, again through a campaign mode involving elected local bodies and social mobilization.

The other state that figures in my presentation is Tamil Nadu, a much larger state in terms of area and population than Kerala, its neighbour. The state has had a long history of political and social mobilization around issues of economic exploitation and social oppression, and has achieved significant economic and social progress, but remains well behind Kerala in terms of human development indicators, though it gets far more frequently cited than Kerala as an example of progress! A mass literacy campaign in Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu in 1991-92 in which 30,000 volunteer activists imparted literacy to nearly 300,000 non-literates showed that social mobilization for a progressive cause was not a Kerala monopoly! An even more impressive instance of social mobilization was the campaign against female infanticide in the district of Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu in 1998-99.

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