



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Edinburgh embarks on major drive to forge study links in India**

More than 40 academics from the University of Edinburgh are to take part in events across India this month to encourage new research and teaching links.

Experts in medicine, science and the humanities will present a series of public lectures and academic events. The tour will help establish new partnerships with institutions across the sub-continent and highlight Edinburgh's place as the partner of choice for Indian researchers and students.

Topics as diverse as animal welfare, clean energy and genetics will be the focus of events in Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai and in other locations.

It is hoped that by sharing knowledge, researchers will aid efforts to improve animal and human health in India – particularly in rural areas. Scientists also hope that Edinburgh's expertise in low-carbon innovation can support efforts to harness solar energy in the region.

There will also be presentations on using gene technology, pioneered at the University's world-famous Roslin Institute, to help to tackle disease, as well as discussions on the role of women in education in India.

The University of Edinburgh has bucked the UK trend in attracting students from India, with numbers in 2014/15 increasing by 14 per cent on the previous year. Russell Group Universities as a whole saw a decline of five per cent in the same period.

Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Edinburgh said: "As India's population and economy grow, so too does the demand for world-class education. Our aim at Edinburgh, through visits like this, is to build and strengthen partnerships which will reinforce our position as the partner of choice in the Indian knowledge economy."

A key conference entitled *Nation Building in India*, which will take place in Kolkata on 19 and 20 February, will examine the role of government in relations between India and the UK. It will also explore the role of women and migrant workers in the Indian economy and assess how treatment for Malaria is evolving in Asia.

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Professor Suranjan Das, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, which is hosting the conference, said: “Calcutta University, being one of the oldest Universities in India, has a long cherished tradition of academic collaboration with Universities in the UK.

“I’m confident that the upcoming conference, in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh, will create further opportunities to enhance academic co-operation between educational institutions in the UK and those in West Bengal and the Eastern India region.”

The University of Edinburgh has a long-standing connection with India, with its first Indian student graduating in 1876. This year Edinburgh’s scholarship funding for Indian students will rise to almost £100,000.

The University will also establish new partnerships with the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), the Christian Medical College (CMC) in Vellore, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Anna University in Chennai, and the Corbett Foundation in Mumbai.

These agreements will complement existing partnerships that include an agreement with the Institute of Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine (inStem) in Bangalore, which has resulted in significant advances in the treatment of autism and dementia.

Other collaborations include the University of Edinburgh’s School of Informatics working with computer scientists across India. There are also agreements between Edinburgh and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Delhi University; the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS).

The University recently established the Edinburgh India Institute, to encourage a greater awareness of India in Scotland. This included the University’s first India Day, in 2014, which was addressed by Gopalkrishna Gandhi, the eminent diplomat and grandson of Mahatma Gandhi.

The University is also home to the Centre for South Asian Studies, the principal academic unit in Scotland dedicated to the study of the Indian subcontinent.

These events are the latest overseas initiative for Edinburgh and will be supported by the University’s Mumbai Office, which opened in 2010 and is an integral part in Edinburgh’s India strategy.

A blog, which will be updated by Edinburgh staff on a frequent basis, will provide a window on the various activities and events and can be found at [www.ueindia.wordpress.com](http://www.ueindia.wordpress.com)

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