

Press Note

Canada India Acceleration Program (CIAP): International Start-up Exchange Program between AICTE and Carleton University

A group of ten female entrepreneurs from India have arrived in Ottawa, Canada's capital city, to participate in the Canada India Acceleration Program (CIAP) for the next two weeks. The CIAP is part of the International Start-up Exchange Program between All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the apex body that regulates and facilitates technical education for over 10,000 institutes in India, and Carleton University, a leading comprehensive university in Canada with over 30,000 students and faculty members.



Visiting AICTE delegation and Carleton University's team with H.E. Vikas Swarup

The CIAP will support **100 women-led tech start-ups from both countries** over a period of five years. It involves a two-week intensive boot camp & acceleration program comprising of start-up ecosystem exposure, industry visits, and meetings with Canadian ecosystem enablers like investors, government officials, and business mentors. The first cohort of entrepreneurs are from wide range

of fields including Agri-tech, life science, medical technologies, and energy. The opportunities provided by the CIAP will enable them to explore emerging market opportunities in Canada while accessing business acceleration facilities at Carleton University.

The CIAP was originally announced on 20th February 2018 during the visit of Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau and is the lead initiative of a comprehensive action plan between Carleton and AICTE for providing global exposure to start-ups led by Indian and Canadian women. In addition to CIAP, Carleton and AICTE will also collaborate to support open innovation, technology-based start-ups, faculty training, capacity building of incubators, and other related endeavours in innovation and entrepreneurship.

His Excellency Mr. Vikas Swarup, the High Commissioner of India to Canada, and CICE's Governing Council's Chair, Dr. Pradeep Merchant, were honoured guests at the official inauguration of the program on 24th September at Carleton University. Mr. Swarup praised the joint efforts of AICTE and Carleton University and recognized the bootcamp as one of the tangible outcomes of the Canadian Prime Minister's visit to India. The High Commissioner also spoke about the importance of the initiative in building cross-cultural linkages for Indian and Canadian entrepreneurs. Dr. Pradeep Merchant, a leading Indo-Canadian neonatologist, expressed a desire to connect and support participating start-ups with a focus on health technologies to connect with the healthcare sector in Canada. He further stressed the importance of encouraging Canadian institutions to adopt Indian technical institutions which are involved in innovation on medical and healthcare technologies.



Dr. Poonia felicitating H.E. Vikas Swarup

Professor. M P Poonia, Vice-Chairman of AICTE, leads the delegation from India that is comprised of the first ten female entrepreneurs, the Chairman of AICTE's Start-Up Policy Implementation Committee, Mr. Sanjay Inamdar, and other members of the implementation committee including Mr. Hiranmay Mahanta and Mr. Dipan Sahu. Professor Poonia's aim is to explore and connect the start-up ecosystems between the two countries and encourage further collaboration opportunities. At the inauguration, Professor Poonia highlighted various initiatives by the AICTE that focus on improving the employability of Indian students.

The program was hosted by Harry Sharma, Manager of Carleton's Canada-India Centre for Excellence (CICE) and Professor Tony Bailetti, Director of the Technology Innovation Management (TIM) Program at Carleton University. CICE is a centre of excellence to promote bilateral ties between Canada and India. TIM is dedicated academic program to support and create entrepreneurs in technology fields. The Program has supported creation of over 100 start-ups that generate approximately \$50 million in annual revenue.