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## MEDIA RELEASE

## Petter to further SFU's engagement in India

January 15, 2014

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**Simon Fraser University** President Andrew Petter will travel to India Jan. 18-24 to advance existing relationships and to forge new partnerships with academia, industry and government.

Petter, who first visited India in 2011, will make stops in Jaipur, Mumbai and New Delhi.

"Our relationships with India have continued to deepen and grow as part of our vision for SFU as an 'engaged university' with an international focus," says Petter.

"During this visit we will sign agreements to strengthen relationships we have been working hard to develop. These agreements will open up opportunities for SFU students and researchers while benefiting communities in B.C. and India."

Plans include the signing of a Statement of Intent with **Indian Oil Corporation** (IOC), that will see SFU and IOC develop a partnership in hydrogen and fuel cell research.

SFU will also sign an MOU with **IIT Bombay** to facilitate student exchanges and research collaborations in areas such as solar energy and fuel cell technology. The MOU builds on relationships formed when Petter visited IIT Bombay in 2011.

Also on the agenda are visits to the **Tata Institute of Social Sciences** in Mumbai and **Jawaharlal Nehru University** and **TERI University** in New Delhi. SFU signed an MOU with TERI University in 2012 to develop collaborations in shared fields of interest, including energy, public policy, environmental health and sustainable development.

While in New Delhi, Petter will meet with the chair of the **Development Alternatives Group** to discuss possible initiatives with SFU. He will also address the **Society for Participatory Research in Asia** (PRIA) on SFU's vision and experience as Canada's 'engaged university.'

SFU V-P External Affairs Philip Steenkamp and V-P Research Mario Pinto will accompany Petter during the visit. The trio will meet with representatives from the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi as well as from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

ICCR and SFU are sponsors of Vancouver's Indian Summer Festival which has been held for the past three years at SFU's Goldcorp Centre for the Arts. While in Jaipur, Petter will meet with festival's organizers to discuss future plans.

### Backgrounder

**Simon Fraser University** believes it was the first Canadian university to develop an integrated India Strategy.

Since 2006, the SFU-India Advisory Council—comprised mainly of members of British Columbia's South Asian community—has supported a number of key initiatives, including an international cardiovascular conference, a South Asian cultural festival, and an annual Diwali Celebration.

Over the past decade, SFU has established numerous formal partnerships and initiatives with institutions on India, including MOUs related to health sciences and business and field schools in the arts and education. Since 2007, the university's India Initiative has supported visits from 20 Indian scholars.

Currently six per cent of SFU's international students are from India. Since 2007, over 120 students have participated in experiential learning opportunities such as co-op, field schools and research practicums, including 51 who have been supported in India through SFU's BC-India Mobility Initiative.

SFU researchers are active in a number of India-based projects, including the development of a new treatment for bacteria-infected newborns and research projects addressing the critical state of cardiovascular health and childhood obesity. SFU also runs a popular field school exploring the contemporary culture of India in cooperation with [Jawaharlal Nehru University](#) in New Delhi and [Banaras Hindu University](#) in Varanasi.

**Highlights of the 2011 visit** (*Mumbai, New Delhi, Bangalore and Chandigarh*):

- Signing of MOUs with IIT-Ropar and Baba Farid University for Health Sciences in Punjab;
- SFU's membership in Infosys's global internship program (its first two students undertook internships in 2013);
- Meetings with senior administration at the Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI), which laid the foundation for an MOU signing between SFU and TERI University in 2012, along with faculty visits and student mobility opportunities;
- Meeting with Jawaharlal Nehru University resulting in renewal of an MOU between JNU and SFU in 2012, and a furthering of the partnership;
- Meeting with IIT-Bombay senior administration resulting in student mobility opportunities, visiting scholars, SFU's participation in a clean-advanced energy materials conference and workshop in 2013, and next week's MOU signing;
- The announcement of several initiatives to attract top students from India's Delhi Public Schools, to study in Canada.

Simon Fraser University is consistently ranked among Canada's top comprehensive universities and is one of the top 50 universities in the world under 50 years old. With campuses in Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey, B.C., SFU engages actively with the community in its research and teaching, delivers almost 150 programs to more than 30,000 students, and has more than 125,000 alumni in 130 countries.

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