

**THE SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE**  
**SOUTH ASIAN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**DRAFT**

Dec 18, 2018

**BACKGROUND**

The South Asian Studies Institute's (SASI) Research Fellowships foster the development of evidence-based research to inform educators, policy developers, organizations and other stakeholders regarding key contemporary issues within the diasporic South Asian community. The Fellowship will bring together (up to five) inter-disciplinary scholars (located both within UFV and external to the University) for a period of two years (or less) to create a nexus point for particularly designed research and related activities.

The Fellows will be research scholars with a background on the South Asian Canadian Diaspora and Canada/South Asia relations. Fellows will have made contributions to diaspora-related issues in one of the following areas: public policy, business and economic development, arts and culture, civil society, political science, global development, the social sciences and humanities. Fellows will undertake research on SASI directed projects (for up to two years on a topic), with a goal of gathering research-based evidence and providing recommendations for SASI to further the issues and inform pertinent stakeholders.

Fellows will work on applied research with the expectation that the outcomes from the Fellowship will assist in providing key findings for stakeholders as they work to find long-term, sustainable solutions to issues, and will inform best practices for appropriate responses.

Up to four Fellows will be recruited and funded for two-year long projects. Each Fellow will receive a stipend for assistance with student research, travel, meeting costs, etc. Each project will be determined by SASI with input from an Advisory Committee and in consultation with researchers and stakeholders. The agreed-upon project will entail evidence-gathering, utilizing student researchers and engaging with other scholars/stakeholders. Fellow(s) will co-produce research

paper(s), reports, develop industry-supported databases, give talks, present research and provide academic support to research students. Fellows may also contribute by writing opinion pieces, providing media responses, contributing policy-focused papers and organizing and participating in events.

The Fellows will provide a report to a SASI Advisory Committee who will guide and implement the research project. The Call for Fellows will be initiated in December of each two-year term with a goal to initiate the research in the spring of that year.

## **NOMINATIONS**

Nominations for Fellowships will be vetted by the South Asian Fellowship Advisory Committee under the following criteria:

- The scholar's contributions to Canada/South Asia research;
- Previous record of work that complements SASI's research mandate;
- Proven research experience on issues relevant to the research topic;
- Proven analytical, research and communications skills;
- Ability to contribute to one of the SASI's thematic pillars;
- Experience in engaging in high-level Canada/South Asia networks particularly with academia, government, business, and civil society;
- Hold an affiliation with a Canadian or South Asian university, college, or research institute;
- Academic/Practitioner in the field of study appropriate to the project;
- Ability to engage with community and stakeholders.

Start/End Dates: Fellowships will run for 24 months normally

## **SOUTH ASIAN FELLOWSHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAFAC)**

The South Asian Advisory Fellowship Committee (SAFAC) will comprise of a Chair and members who can assist with the research project (e.g. discipline specific academics/researchers, affiliated stakeholders, academic scholars from other disciplines, practitioners, service providers, etc.). Members will be solicited through various communication channels by SASI. Two members from the SASI South Asian Community Advisory Committee (SACAC) may be invited to sit on this Committee.

Members of the SAFAC will be invited by the SASI Director to assist with a goal to provide guidance, support, feedback, suggestions and advice from an inter-

disciplinary and community engagement viewpoint on current research projects. Members will meet at least four times a year to develop, support and implement the Fellowship Project guidelines and outcomes for each research projects.

Membership numbers will vary in accordance with expertise required for each Fellowship. The SASI Director will hold the position of Chair of the SAFAC.

Members may also meet as needed upon the call of the SASI Director to help direct project goals, receive information and to provide feedback.

Phase 1: Meet to develop the criteria and scope of the Research Project

Phase 2: Issue the Call for Fellows and approve the application process. Offer the Fellowships and seek research plan.

Phase 3: Approve the Fellows' research plans and initiate project with clearly defined expected goals and outcomes

Phase 4: Provide timely evaluations, review draft reports and assist with project management

Phase 5: Accept final report for analysis and/or support for further development

## **GOVERNANCE**

- The research project mandate and timely reporting will be managed by the SASI Director
- The SASI will provide timely reports to the SACAC through the SAFAC members
- Funding and finances for the Fellowships will be managed by the Director of the SASI
- The SASI will create a comprehensive Fellowship communication plan that will keep stakeholders informed
- The SASI will provide administrative and secretariat services to the Fellows and the Committees