



GURU NANAK  
INSTITUTE  
OF GLOBAL STUDIES

2<sup>nd</sup>

# International Sikh Research Summit

"Sikhi in a Globalized World"

September 23 & 24, 2023 (Sat/Sun)  
Hybrid (In person & Online)  
Surrey City Hall, Surrey, B.C. Canada

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Get set for a weekend of learning and networking – explore the schedule and discover the people behind the research & the summit!

<b>WELCOME MESSAGES</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>
<b>SUMMIT OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>GREETINGS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MEET OUR EMCEES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>KEYNOTE &amp; DISTINGUISHED GUESTS</b>	<b>6 - 7</b>
<b>PRESENTERS</b>	<b>8 -10</b>
<b>MODERATORS &amp; PANELISTS</b>	<b>11 - 18</b>
<b>AGENDA</b>	<b>19 - 22</b>
<b>SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>ABOUT GNI &amp; OUR GOALS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>MEET OUR BEHIND THE SCENE TEAM</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>OUR SPONSORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>STAY CONNECTED</b>	<b>27</b>

*We are grateful to host this Summit within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Semiahmoo, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Musqueam, Qayqayt, Tsleil Waututh, and Tsawwassen First Nations.*

**Please enjoy viewing the  
Sikh National Archives of Canada display in the lobby**

# WELCOME

To GNI's 2nd International Sikh Research Summit  
[www.gurunakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunakinstitute.ca)

On behalf of the Guru Nanak Institute of Global Studies, we look forward to hosting you at our highly anticipated International Sikh Research Summit on September 23 and 24, 2023; a two-day hybrid (in-person and online) event filled with knowledge, inspiration, and meaningful conversations. The conference aims to bring together scholars, experts, and participants from around the globe to explore various aspects of Sikhi and its relevance in dealing with contemporary issues in the world. The conference includes inspirational keynote speakers, insightful presentations, and interactive roundtable discussions and workshops. Amidst this vibrant environment, participants will not only expand their horizons but also discover new perspectives, unlocking boundless opportunities for future collaborative endeavors.

Thank you for joining us in person in Surrey, British Columbia. Also a warm welcome to everyone joining us online. Experience the warm hospitality, cultural richness, and natural beauty that make Surrey an exceptional venue for this transformative event. We are thrilled to inform you that as part of the International Sikh Research Summit we have organized guided and self-led visits to several significant sites that showcase both Sikh heritage and other prominent tourist attractions in the Surrey and BC Lower Mainland area. These visits will provide a comprehensive experience, allowing you to immerse yourself in Sikh history while also exploring the diverse cultural and natural wonders of 'Beautiful British Columbia.'

We thank our partners, presenters, volunteers, and you - our attendees - for taking time from your busy personal and professional lives to join us at our 2nd International Sikh Research Summit. The Summit promises to provide a unique platform for networking, forging international partnerships, and building lasting friendships that transcend borders. Welcome!

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh



**Kamaljit Kaur Sidhu, Ph.D.**  
*2023 Summit Chair*



**Amanpreet Singh Hundal, MBA, FMA**  
*2023 Summit Planning Committee Chair*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

September 23 & 24, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca

It is with immense pride and great joy that I welcome every one of you to the 2nd International Sikh Research Summit. It is an honour for the Guru Nanak Institute of Global



Studies (GNI) to host such an auspicious gathering that brings together scholars, researchers, and thinkers from across the globe. Your contributions to the fields of history, science, religion, culture, environment and technology hold immense value, not just for the Sikh community, but for the world at large.

The importance of this summit cannot be overstated, especially in today's interconnected world. Our forefathers came to Canada in the

late 9th century, with Captain Kesar Singh, the first Sikh, landing in Canada in 1897. The Sikh community has been an exemplar of values such as selfless service, community engagement and spiritual commitment. These values resonate across cultures and nations, reminding us that despite our many differences, there are guiding principles that can bring us together for a common purpose.

As we convene to discuss various topics, from the historical contributions of Sikh scholars and leaders to the contemporary challenges facing the community, let us remember the richness and diversity of Sikh heritage. It is a heritage that has imparted timeless wisdom, spiritual solace, and an indomitable sense of community. The pioneering research and academic discussions you will undertake here will not only illuminate Sikh heritage, but also help guide its future.

Your presence here today reflects your commitment to scholarly pursuits and a collective understanding of the Sikh community's contributions to the world. As you share your research and insights, you also strengthen the intellectual bridges that connect us. It is my hope that this summit will serve as a fertile ground for the exchange of ideas, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility among us all.

In the Sikh tradition, we have a beautiful term, "Sarbat Da Bhala," which means welfare of all humanity. It is a vision of a more inclusive, compassionate world. I hope that the research, discussions, and friendships fostered here will contribute to this noble vision. I wish you all a most productive and inspiring summit. May your deliberations be fruitful, your collaborations meaningful, and your experience enriching.

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Gian Singh'.

Gian Singh Sandhu

## SUMMIT OBJECTIVES

September 23 & 24, 2023  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)

**The International Sikh Research Summit brings together thought leaders, experts and passionate scholars who have interest to:**

- Advance Sikh studies by creating a space for multi-disciplinary dialogue, learning, and exchange
- Explore Sikh values and relevance at the global level
- Facilitate a platform for global networking of scholars
- Highlight Sikh research contributions in the modern era
- Learn about key GNI international research projects

**The Board of Directors of the Guru Nanak Institute of Global Studies welcomes you to our 2023 Summit!**



**Gurjit Kaur Bains**



**Gian Singh Sandhu**



**Jaswinder Singh Parmar**



**Kamaljit Kaur Sidhu**



**Harpreet Singh Dardi**

# GREETINGS

September 23 & 24, 2023  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)



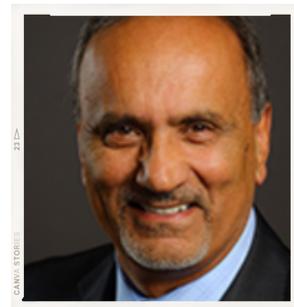
**The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau**  
*Prime Minister of Canada*



**The Hon. David Eby**  
*Premier of British Columbia*



**Mayor Brenda Locke**  
*City of Surrey, B.C.*



**Hon. Harry Bains**  
*Minister of Labour, B.C.*

## MEET OUR EMCEES

September 23 & 24, 2023  
www.gurunanakoinstitute.ca

### Saturday, September 23, 2023



**Gurjit Kaur** is an educator and lawyer from Brampton, Ontario, who obtained her law degree from City University, London and her Master's in law from Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto. With a deep commitment to community service and youth development, she's been a youth champion from her teens, leading diverse initiatives for their growth. In her teaching profession, Gurjit Kaur specializes in social justice and equity studies, specifically the Canadian legal system and public healthcare. An avid runner, Gurjit Kaur personifies endurance and determination, traits she seeks to nurture in her students. Her aim extends beyond education, striving to foster the potential for societal change within her students.

**Gurwinder Singh** is a Mechanical Engineer and SFU's Executive MBA alum, currently working as an Executive Director of the Career Management Centre at Simon Fraser University Beedie School of Business. He has extensive project management and R & D team leadership experience gained at one of the largest forest companies in North America. He has also provided business consultancy to small and mid-size firms to help them grow their businesses.



Following his passion for education and social entrepreneurship, Gurwinder also co-founded a non-profit organization providing education to over 250 underprivileged children in India annually. He collaborates with various NGOs to conduct youth camps on leadership, personality development and entrepreneurship mindset development.

### Sunday, September 24, 2023



**Major Jasbeer Singh** is a retired officer from the Indian Army Engineers. He relocated to Canada in the mid- 1970s and delved into IT, working for a telecommunications company. With a diverse background spanning engineering, commerce, and specialized training in Project Management, Jasbeer Singh has made significant contributions as a board member on both civic and provincial boards. Beyond his professional achievements, he possesses a passion for public communication and is adept in both print and audio-visual mediums. A proud co-founder of the "Sikh Federation of Edmonton," he has also been Vice President of WSO. A linchpin of GNI, Jasbeer Singh has been indispensable in steering the institute's direction, especially with the current major research projects.

**Dr. Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra**, a respected historian, publisher, and dedicated educator, boasts notable academic achievements. She shares her expertise through teaching at UBC, UFV, and GNI. Dr. Sandhra has enriched the research field with significant scholarly contributions. She co-authored "Challenging Racist BC: 150 Years and Counting" and "A Social History of South Asians in British Columbia." These publications exemplify her commitment to tackling racism and exploring the rich history and experiences of South Asians in British Columbia, reinforcing her stature as a prominent figure in her field.



# KEYNOTES & DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

September 23 & 24, 2023  
Daytime

## Saturday Opening Keynote



**Dr. Baljit Singh**, Vice President of Research at the University of Saskatoon, is a highly accomplished veterinary researcher and sought-after speaker. He has received prestigious accolades such as the Outstanding Veterinary Anatomist Award and the Pfizer Award for Research Excellence. Dr. Singh is a fellow of the American Association of Anatomists and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. His expertise lies in the cell and molecular biology of lung inflammation.

With extensive national and international experience, Dr. Singh has made significant contributions to the field.

## Saturday Afternoon Distinguished Guest

**Honourable Rachna Singh** has been an elected MLA for Surrey-Green Timbers since 2017 and serves as BC's Minister of Education and Child Care. With a background as a drug and alcohol counsellor and a support worker for victims of domestic violence, her experience speaks volumes about her commitment to societal change and education. As a community activist, Minister Singh has always championed the underrepresented. In addition to her professional achievements, she consistently prioritizes the well-being of all British Columbians.



## Sunday Morning Keynote



**David Byng**, with a distinguished 37-year tenure in public service for the Province of British Columbia, has held the position of Deputy Minister of Education, managing K-12 education and a budget of 6.5 billion. He brings a wealth of experience from senior executive roles across various BC Government Ministries. As a past Governor of Royal Roads University, Victoria, he continues his affiliation as a senior advisor to the university's President. His remarkable contributions have

earned him the British Columbia Premier's Award of Excellence and the Royal Roads University Founder's Award. Currently, he lends his strategic insights to GNI.

## Sunday Afternoon Distinguished Guest

**Kevin Falcon** is the sitting MLA for Vancouver-Quilchena and the Leader of the Official Opposition in British Columbia's Legislative Assembly. With a distinguished political career, he was MLA for Surrey-Cloverdale from 2001-2013. As one of the youngest Cabinet Ministers, he held significant roles, including Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance, and Minister of Transportation. Beyond politics, Kevin showcased his executive skills as the Executive Vice President for Anthem Capital and non-profits like Canuck Place and Lions Gate Hospital Foundations.



# KEYNOTES & DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
Evening Dinner

## Dinner Keynote



**Honourable Navdeep Singh Bains**, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer for Rogers Communications, directs Public Policy and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives. His prior roles include Vice-Chair in Global Investment Banking for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Canada (CIBC), focusing on Innovation and Sustainability. Navdeep Singh also has a long tenure as Federal Cabinet Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development. He has held academic roles at the Toronto Metropolitan University and the University of Waterloo, and worked in finance for Ford Motor Company of Canada.

## Dinner Emcee

**Amanpreet Singh Hundal** is a senior health leader who is passionate about improving the healthcare system. He has worked for Northern Health, Interior Health and the Doctors of BC, in British Columbia. Aman has led teams that facilitates system wide transformation and has experience managing provincial programs in a collaborative partnership with multiple stakeholders. Aman holds a BComm with a double major in Management and Finance, along with an MBA in Human Resources and Management and has attained his Financial Management Advisor designation. Additionally he has attained specialized training at Harvard and Oxford University in Executive Leadership.



## Fireside Chat Moderator



**Neesha Kaur Hothi** is a passionate executive with 17 years of experience in events, marketing and communications and a resounding entrepreneurial spirit. Her work has varied across a variety of arts, culture, lifestyle and entertainment brands. Neesha's key career appointments include being the Event and Public Relations Manager for the Olympic Superstore for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, the Marketing and Communications Director for the 2018 JUNO Host Committee and successfully running her own public relations agency. On a personal level, she is a champion for ethnic voices, particularly South Asian voices, and consistently supports local not-for-profits in their work to preserve, elevate and highlight arts and culture.

# PRESENTERS

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
[www.gurunankinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunankinstitute.ca)



**Dr. Nabila Rehman**, a distinguished academician and scholar, is a Director at the Institute of Punjabi and Cultural Studies at the University of Punjab, Lahore, and serves as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Jhang, Pakistan. Dr. Rehman's extensive research predominantly encompasses the realms of classical and Sufi literature, feminism, and a diverse array of literary and social subjects. Author of 10 books and an impressive corpus of research articles, she successfully organized the first-ever Guru Nanak conference in Pakistan, coinciding with the momentous unveiling of the Kartarpur Corridor in 2019.

**Dr. Harjinder Singh Sandhu** is an AI technology entrepreneur, a former Assistant Professor of Computer Science at York University, Toronto, and currently Vice President of Technology Strategy at Nuance Microsoft. His three start-ups focused on using AI to improve clinical documentation, automate patient engagement, and document doctor-patient encounters. Dr. Sandhu obtained a B.Sc. from the University of British Columbia and a Master's and Doctorate degrees from the University of Toronto, all in computer science.



**Dr. Satinder Kaur Brar**, an esteemed Professor and Chair of Environmental Engineering at York University, Toronto, has a notable H-index of 77, marking her key contributions to waste enhancement and contaminant eradication. Her innovative strategies implemented globally substantiate her leading position in her field. Dr. Brar has received several awards and participated in international panels, emphasizing her influential role in environment engineering. Her presentation will discuss the alignment of Sikh teachings with the environment.

**Dr. Satvir Singh** is a distinguished educator and researcher specializing in international business, organizational behaviour and law. Holding a Ph.D. from the University of Texas at El Paso, an MBA from Willamette University and a law degree from Punjabi University, his profound understanding of global complexities is multi-dimensional. Noteworthy for his instruction and mentorship, Dr. Singh significantly influences academia through his numerous publications and presentations. His latest research on the role of Granthis in Gurduaras (Sikh places of assembly and worship) demonstrates his ongoing contributions to pertinent scholarly discourse.



**Dr. Gurmail Singh**, head of Religious Studies at Punjabi University, Patiala, earned his master's and Ph.D. in Sikh Studies there. His expertise spans Sikh and religious studies, substantiated by over three dozen papers, 26 of which were presented at major conferences. His literary contributions are also significant, with four books authored and three edited. As a mentor, Dr. Singh has guided 15 graduate students to success and advises seven Ph.D. students. His dedication to teaching and research has garnered him respect in religious studies. He voluntarily supervises the 'Gurbani Arth Milaan' project for GNI.

## PRESENTERS

Sunday, September 24, 2023  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)



**Dr. Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra**, a respected historian, publisher, and dedicated educator, boasts notable academic achievements. She shares her expertise through teaching at UBC, UFV, and GNI. Dr. Sandhra has enriched the research field with significant scholarly contributions. She co-authored "Challenging Racist BC: 150 Years and Counting" and "A Social History of South Asians in British Columbia."

These publications exemplify her commitment to tackling racism and exploring the rich history and experiences of South Asians in British Columbia, reinforcing her stature as a prominent figure in her field.

**Dr. Tarunjit Singh Butalia** is a Research Associate Professor at The Ohio State University (OSU) in Columbus, Ohio, USA, where he also directs the OSU Coal Combustion Products Program and is an Affiliated Faculty with the OSU Sustainability Institute. He has received numerous accolades, including the David C. McCarthy Engineering Teaching Award (2020), Lumley Research Award (2001, 2007, 2012), and the USEPA University Research Award (2008). In interfaith relations,



Dr. Butalia serves as the Executive Director of Religions for Peace USA and has been a Board Member of the Parliament of World's Religions for 12 years. In 2021, he published "My Journey Home: Going Back to Lehnda Punjab," chronicling a poignant visit to his ancestral home in Pakistan. His impactful roles in academia, research, and interfaith dialogue make him a multi-faceted leader.



**Dr. Paramjit Kaur**, a gold medallist and Associate Professor at Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa College's Department of Religious Studies, has a notable career as an author and researcher. Her literary prowess is evident with five authored, two edited and six reviewed books. Dr. Kaur's research includes 30+ published papers and 55+ conference presentations. She is a board member of several institutions, including Punjabi University Patiala's Guru Gobind Singh Department. She edits

and oversees the publication of the "Guru Tegh Bahadur Journal of Religious Studies."

**Dr. Akhtar Hussain Sandhu** is a renowned professor and principal at Govt. Islamia Graduate College, Civil Lines, Lahore. His academic journey includes a Ph.D. and M.Phil. from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and an MA from Punjab University, Lahore, followed by postgraduate research and a postdoctoral degree from the University of London, UK. Dr. Sandhu is a prolific author with books like "Dila da Chanan" and "Martin Luther King Jr." His media contributions span newspapers like Daily Nawa-i-Waqt Islamabad and Daily Pakistan, Lahore, and he is a sought-after news analyst by television and radio stations.



## PRESENTERS

Sunday, September 24, 2023  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)



**Dr. Mohinder Kaur Grewal** dedicated over 30 years to academia, culminating in her role as Principal at the Government College for Girls in Ludhiana. Beginning her career as an Associate Professor in 1984, she ascended to Department Head and College Principal roles. Dr. Grewal is an award-winning scholar in Botany and a key participant in the NAAC accreditation process. Her impressive career garnered numerous accolades, including the Lifetime Education Achievement

Award and the International Education Leadership Award. Dr. Grewal's contributions to academia include five books and 36 published papers and involvement in over 200 global educational conferences.

**Dr. Tejinder Pal Singh**, currently an Assistant Professor at the University College Miranpur in Punjab, has dedicated the entirety of his professional life to conducting in-depth research into Gurbani and Sikh Studies. In particular, his expertise lies in the detailed study of Sikh cultural and spiritual heritage as encapsulated in the revered Sri Guru Granth Sahib. He has authored three books and published over 100 research papers in diverse national and international publications.



**Mohnaam Kaur Shergill** is a litigation associate at Farris LLP in Vancouver, where she maintains a broad litigation practice. Her practice includes corporate and commercial litigation, class actions and civil disputes. Ms. Shergill has appeared before all levels of court in British Columbia. Ms. Shergill is an avid writer and speaker and is a founding member of the Sikh Heritage Society of British Columbia, where she currently serves as media coordinator.

**Dr. Manpreet Kaur Sahota** is an educator, researcher and radio talk show host. Currently a Professor in the School of English and Liberal Studies at Seneca College, Toronto, she has also been an Assistant Professor of English in India and a sessional lecturer at the University of Toronto. She earned her Ph.D. (Race, Gender and Multiculturalism in Canadian Literature) from Panjab University, Chandigarh and completed her post-doctoral fellowship with the University Grants Commission (India). Dr. Sahota has shaped inclusive curricula to help her students navigate the intersectionality of Canadian identity vis-à-vis lived experiences of Indigenous and BIPOC communities. An accomplished Punjabi translator and public speaker, Dr. Sahota hosts a daily radiotalk show, "Roshni," addressing varied socio-cultural topics. She runs a podcast (Next Page) and YouTube channel as an audiobook repository of Punjabi literature and another podcast (ChaiLunge) featuring South Asian Immigrants' stories.



## MODERATORS & PANELISTS

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
[www.gurunankinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunankinstitute.ca)

### Addressing the Challenges Facing International Students in Canada



**Moderator**

**Dr. Victor V. Ramraj** is an accomplished law professor and CAPI (Centre for Asia Pacific Initiatives) Director at the University of Victoria. He previously worked for 16 years at the National University of Singapore as Vice Dean for Academics and twice seconded to the Center for Transnational Legal Studies in London. With five degrees from McGill Montreal, U of T Toronto and Queens University Belfast, he has taught in Thailand, Japan, and U of T Canada. Professor Ramraj served as a judicial law clerk at the Federal Court of Appeal in Ottawa and as a litigation lawyer in Toronto. His expertise includes comparative law, transnational regulation, and Asian State-company relations. He also leads the Advanced Scholars (QES-AS) funded research project, Regulating Globalization in South and Southeast Asia, with collaborations across multiple countries.

**Dr. Sharada Srinivasan** is an Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair in Gender, Justice and Development at the University of Guelph (U of G), Ontario. Her research delves into gender, development, and social justice, now incorporating generational analysis for social change. She has explored gender discrimination, violence, and empowerment in India and Canada. Currently, Dr. Srinivasan is reviewing international students' experiences in gender-based violence in Canada through a SSHRC grant. She served as the inaugural director of CIRCLE (2020-2023) and co-facilitates the People Archive of Rural Ontario (PARO). Dr. Srinivasan earned PhD in Development Studies from the international Institute of Social Studies, part of Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands. She taught at York University, Toronto, before joining U of G.



**Panelist**



**Panelist**

**Dr. Lisa Ruth Brunner** is a distinguished scholar-practitioner specializing in international, adult, and higher education and immigration. She is a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC), a Sessional Lecturer in the Department of Educational Studies and an International Student Advisor at the University of British Columbia (UBC). She is also involved in an SSHRC project on Punjabi international student experiences. Dr. Brunner earned her Master's from Simon Fraser University (SFU) and a Ph.D. from UBC, where she explored the ethics of the education-migration nexus in Canada. Her robust research interests span public policy, migrant integration, and social justice, showcasing her adeptness in writing, advising and university teaching for diverse audiences.

## MODERATORS & PANELISTS

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca



Panelist

**Dr. Mandeep Kaur Mucina** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Victoria (UVic) School of Child and Youth Care. With over 20 years in the human services sector, she has held roles as a child protection worker and violence against women counsellor. Dr. Mucina's educational journey includes an undergraduate degree in child and youth care, a master's in social work from the University of Toronto (U of T) and a doctorate focusing on "honour" relation violence in the South Asian

Diaspora. Adopting a feminist, anti-racist, and anti-colonial lens, her research addresses family violence, trauma in migration, and immigrant youth experiences. Dr. Mucina's future endeavours will explore gun violence in British Columbia's South Asian communities and the intricate ties between migration, trauma and child protection.

**Jaspreet Singh** came to Canada in 2015 as an international student and Studied Electromechanical Engineering at Sheridan College, Toronto. Now actively working in the same field, Jaspreet's passion for advocacy was ignited during his college days. Serving initially as the Sikh Student Association President, he later founded the International Sikh Students Association in 2018 to support and advocate for international students. Jaspreet has played a pivotal role in bringing the challenges faced by international students to the forefront, addressing key issues such as the exploitation of students by public- private colleges/universities and employers, restrictions on working hours, and the pathways to permanent residency. To further amplify his advocacy efforts, he joined the World Sikh Organization of Canada in 2022, ensuring enhanced representation for international students.



Panelist

---

### A Discussion with Sikh and Indigenous Elders: Keeping the Ethos Alive



Moderator

**Bhupinder Singh Hundal** is a seasoned media professional with nearly 20 years of experience, currently serving as the News Director and Station Manager at Global BC. Before this, he was the Senior Producer at CBC News Vancouver and founded CrossConnect Media targeting ethnic communities. Between 2014-2018, Bhupinder was a vital part of the Hockey Night in Canada in Punjabi, both on camera and in strategy development. He also successfully managed OMNI Television's

multilingual newscasts in BC. Acknowledging his community contributions, Bhupinder is a recipient of Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

## MODERATORS & PANELISTS

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)



Panelist

**Wade Grant** was first elected to the FNHC as a Vancouver Coastal Representative in June of 2019, and then appointed as Chair in September 2021. He is the Intergovernmental Officer for the Musqueam First Nation and as a board member for Covenant House Vancouver. Previously, Wade spent three years with the BC provincial government as the special advisor to the Premier on Indigenous issues and held a number of roles including member of the Vancouver Police Board, band council member with the Musqueam Indian Band, assistant general manager of the Four Host Nations Aboriginal Pavilion during the 2010 Olympics, policy analyst for the BC Assembly of First Nations and as executive assistant to the Solicitor General of British Columbia. Wade was recognized by Vancouver Magazine's "Power 50" list in 2015 and 2013, and in 2012 he received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal for services to community.

**Sukhvinder Kaur Vinning** is a Decolonization Consultant and former Executive Director of the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO). She is a skilled leader and manager who has spearheaded diverse community projects, including disaster relief and food rescue initiatives. With expertise in societal decolonization, she advises businesses and governments on creating equitable cultures and establishing non-colonial relationships with Indigenous communities. An influential voice in interfaith dialogues, she also addresses tokenism in organizations through impactful seminars. A frequent speaker on Sikhi and social justice, Sukhvinder Kaur brings a unique blend of activism, managerial acumen, and religious understanding to drive meaningful change.



Panelist



Panelist

**Kiran Singh** is an award-winning journalist with CBC News Vancouver. While his focus areas include international education and investigative reporting, his passion is community-based stories. A leader for diversity and inclusion in media, his notable achievements include being the face of Langara Journalism Review and CBC's Surrey Bureau Reporter. Professionally, his medium of choice is radio, but his heart is devoted to Punjabi poetry. Born and raised in the Punjab, he calls Vancouver home now.

# MODERATORS & PANELISTS

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca

## Mental Health & Sikhi



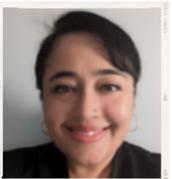
**Moderator**

**Dr. Bali Sohi** received her Ph.D. in Counselling Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA, in 1998. She received a dissertation research award for her work in physical pain and wound Healing. Dr. Sohi moved to Canada and started work at Riverview Hospital (RVH) in May 2001. She supervised pre-doctoral psychology interns at RVH for six years. She maintained a private practice for 15 years and also worked and is still working in Pain and Medical Management Programs in different locations. Through her private practice, Dr. Sohi provided treatment for workers on disability and worked with various disability insurers for over 16 years. She also worked in an Occupational Rehabilitation 2 program for 11 years. Other clinical experience includes working with severe persistent mental illness, dementia, substance abuse, brain injury, spinal cord injury, and PTSD and creating a treatment program for sexual abuse. She enjoys inspiring people to live their best life.

**Dr. Birinder Singh Narang** is a Clinical Assistant Professor with the Department of Family Practice at the University of British Columbia, a Medical Contributor for Global BC and CKNW 980, and a Family Physician for the REACH Community Health Centre. He is currently serving as Co-Chair for the BC Digital Referral and Orders Steering Committee and is Past Chair for the Board of Directors at Burnaby Divisions of Family Practice. He also serves on the Board of Governors for the South Asian Community Health Task Force, where he also co-founded the 'This Is Our Shot' Vaccine Confidence Campaign across Canada. He received the 2021 College of Family Physicians of Canada's Award of Excellence and the 2022 UBC Clinical Faculty Award for Excellence in Leadership / Service.



**Panelist**



**Panelist**

**Dr. Grace Kaur Gulati** is a psychiatrist with the Burnaby Mental Health Team in the Fraser Health Authority. She has a special interest in severe, persistent and chronic mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective, and bipolar disorder. She works with young individuals suffering from first-break psychosis through the Early Psychosis Intervention team. She grew up in the lower mainland with roots in the Sikh community. She is a mother of two, and she enjoys yoga and walks with her dog. She is dedicated to inspiring young people to explore their passions while serving the community at large. Dr. Gulati's compassionate and culturally sensitive approach blends evidence-based pharmacological treatments with spiritual insight, offering patients a comprehensive path to recovery.

## MODERATORS & PANELISTS

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
[www.gurunanakainstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakainstitute.ca)



Panelist

**Dr. Aridaman Singh Mahal** is a distinguished Herbal Consultant from Amritsar, Punjab. A former professor at Guru Nanak Dev University's Ayurvedic College, he is a global advocate for herbal medicine, emphasizing the principle of 'Let Your Food Be Your Medicine'. Dr. Mahal has been a guest on various international shows and TV channels, where he champions natural healing and preventative care. His work has focused on addressing chronic psycho-somatic conditions. Beyond healthcare, Dr. Mahal is deeply committed to preserving Punjabi culture and has been instrumental in peace initiatives between India and Pakistan. His legacy encompasses both holistic and cultural preservation.

**Kulpreet Singh** is a public speaker, project consultant and community advocate, collaborating on health equity, mental health, and Sikh community programs and events across Canada and the US. He founded the South Asian Mental Health Alliance (SAMHAA), a non profit organization championing advocacy and capacity building on topics of mental health and substance use among South Asian communities. SAMHAA hosts conferences, workshops, trainings and retreats for diverse groups in collaboration with professionals and community organizations. Singh serves as an advisor to Students Overcoming Substance Use Disorder and Addictions (SOUDA), a non profit society founded in 2019 in response to the drug toxicity crisis, which provides culturally appropriate, language specific substance use education and harm reduction training.



Panelist

# MODERATORS & PANELISTS

Sunday, September 24, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca

## Substance Use and a Toxic Drug Supply



Moderator

**Rena Kaur Heer** was a former broadcast journalist for 15 years before joining the global communications firm Edelman. She is a Vice-President in the Corporate Communications practice and leads Edelman Canada's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives. Rena provides strategic communications counsel, leads integrated communications plans, manages media relations and media training and supports government relations and issues management activities for various clients. Rena has worked in the newsrooms of CTV, CP24, Global TV, and Channel M. As a former Toronto-based journalist, Rena covered elections, transportation, housing, budgets and policing at Queen's Park and Toronto City Hall. She has interviewed Prime Ministers Stephen Harper and Justin Trudeau, Premiers and Mayors.

**Dr. Rupinder Kaur Brar**, MD, CCFP, CSIAM, is a Canada Addiction Medicine Research Fellow with the BC Centre on Substance Use and a primary care and addictions medicine physician with the PHS Community Services Society in the Downtown East side. She also works as an addiction consultant at St. Paul's Hospital and Surrey Memorial Hospital and as a Clinical Instructor with the Department of Family Practice at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Brar's research interests include alcohol use disorder and how it affects the treatment of concurrent substance use disorders, as well as alcohol use disorder in South Asian communities.



Panelist



Panelist

**Brooke Kinniburgh, MPH** earned her master's degree in public health with a concentration in maternal and child health in 2004. Brooke brings experience from the federal, state, and provincial levels, having worked both in the United States and Canada. She has previously worked at the Canadian Institute for Health Information and is an alumna of the Canadian Field Epidemiology Program.

**Anmol Swaich** is a Master of Health Sciences student at Simon Fraser University, focusing on the link between unregulated drug supply toxicity and violence exposure among drug users. She conducts frontline data collection in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Previously, Anmol initiated a harm reduction campaign at the University of Victoria, offering naloxone training and substance use education. She also worked for UVic, delivering workshops on healthy relationships with substances. Currently, she is an organizer with the Surrey-Newton Union of Drug Users. A native of Whalley, Anmol is committed to community capacity-building and advocates for equitable drug policy.



Panelist

## MODERATORS & PANELISTS

Sunday, September 24, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca



Panelist

**Kamaljit Singh Juggal** is the Founder and Executive Director of Mukti Society. Singh is a Substance Use Counsellor and Motivational Speaker, passionately working to engage and support vulnerable individuals, with a particular focus on youth and the South Asian community. Through his talks, he shares his lived experience of his past mental health and addiction challenges. As a Counsellor, Singh focuses on Positive Psychology utilizing a Strength-Based, Humanistic Approach.

### Empowering Young Researchers & Scholars

**Dr. Baljit Singh**, Vice President of Research at the University of Saskatoon, is a highly accomplished veterinary researcher and sought-after speaker. He has received prestigious accolades such as the Outstanding Veterinary Anatomist Award and the Pfizer Award for Research Excellence. Dr. Singh is a fellow of the American Association of Anatomists and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. His expertise lies in the cell and molecular biology of lung inflammation. With extensive national and international experience, Dr. Singh has made significant contributions to the field.



Moderator



Panelist

**Dr. Balbir Kaur Gurm**, a fellow of the Canadian Nursing Society, is an award-winning nursing leader with over 30 years of expertise in education, leadership, and social justice. Highly regarded for her contributions to cultural safety and relationship violence, she serves on various boards and panels to influence policy and community improvement. An advocate for equity, Dr. Gurm practices Guru Nanak's philosophy of championing marginalized groups. She has been honoured with multiple awards, including the 2022 Darpan and Drishti awards, the 2021 BC Achievement Award and two YWCA Women of Distinction awards. Dr. Gurm was pivotal in securing funding for the South Asian Canadian Legacy Project in BC and earned a Lieutenant Governor's Historical Writing Honourable mention for her editorial work on South Asian history. She is celebrated for using her influence to foster societal change.

**Dr. Tarunjit Singh Butalia** is a Research Associate Professor at The Ohio State University (OSU) in Columbus, Ohio, USA, where he also directs the OSU Coal Combustion Products Program and is an Affiliated Faculty with the OSU Sustainability Institute. He has received numerous accolades, including the David C. McCarthy Engineering Teaching Award (2020), Lumley Research Award (2001, 2007, 2012), and USEPA University Research Award (2008). In interfaith relations,



Panelist

Dr. Butalia serves as the Executive Director of Religions for Peace USA and has been a Board Member of the Parliament of World's Religions for 12 years. In 2021, he published "My Journey Home: Going Back to Lehnda Punjab," chronicling a poignant visit to his ancestral home in Pakistan.

# PANELISTS

September 23 & 24, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca



Panelist

**Dr. Deepinderpal Singh** serves as a Professor in Zoology (Entomology) and Deputy Director of Administration and Internal Quality Assurance at Desh Bhagat University. Holding a Ph.D. from Punjabi University, he teaches UG and PG courses, guides Masters and Ph.D. students, and has 16 research papers and a book to his name. A seasoned presenter, Dr. Singh has participated in over 20 national and international conferences and workshops. He has received the Dr. H.S. Pruthi award in entomology and has led research projects funded by India's Ministry of Environment. His administrative roles include serving as HoD of Entomology, Dean of Agriculture College, and Chief Administrative Officer.

**Dr. Simarpreet Singh** is a recent doctoral graduate in chemistry from the University of Manitoba. His research interests are investigating chemical reaction mechanisms and designing novel, efficient, and faster catalytic methods. He was a research associate at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Saskatoon. Numerous awards have recognized Dr. Singh's research throughout his doctoral career. His research has been published in various reputable scientific journals. Dr. Singh is a passionate advocate for education accessibility. He continuously engages with academic institutions and all levels of government for increased funding for education, scientific research, and graduate student researchers. He is also an active member of WSO and Sikh Heritage Manitoba in Winnipeg.



Panelist

## WRAP UP



Day 1  
Summary

**Dr. Satpal Singh** is a distinguished scholar and a former Professor of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at State University of New York. His research endeavours revolve around understanding and combating neurodegenerative diseases. In terms of his academic trajectory, he received his Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from the renowned Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Bombay in 1980 before further honing his research skills through extensive training in Germany and the United States.

Dr. Singh is a 1984 Sikh genocide survivor. Besides Academia, he is a key promoter of interfaith harmony as a founding trustee of the Sikh Council for Interfaith Relations and a regular op-ed writer for Washington Post and the Huffington Post.

**Dr. Amritpal Kaur**, an esteemed past Academic Dean at Punjabi University, Patiala, has an impressive history of diverse roles, such as Dean of Languages, Department Head, and Additional Dean. She boasts a prolific portfolio of over two dozen published books and has guided the intellectual journeys of fifteen Ph.D. candidates. Besides her distinguished academic career, she is a renowned poet, a committed researcher, a dedicated teacher, and a social worker. In recognition of her numerous contributions, she has received several significant awards.



Summit Closing  
Summary



# DAY 1 AGENDA

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)

8:00 a.m.	<b>Registration &amp; Continental Breakfast</b>
8:45 a.m.	<b>Tanti Saaj - Jasdeep Kaur and Baljit Singh</b>
9:00 a.m.	<b>Welcome &amp; Opening Remarks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ardaas</i></li> <li>• <i>Land Acknowledgement</i></li> <li>• <i>Greetings: The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of Canada, The Hon. Premier of British Columbia, The Hon. Minister of Labour, BC, and the Mayor of Surrey.</i></li> </ul>
9:30 a.m.	<b>Keynote with Dr. Baljit Singh</b>
10:00 a.m.	<b>Presentation 1: Multilingualism, Cultural Diversity and Sri Guru Granth Sahib with Dr. Nabila Rehman</b>
10:30 a.m.	<b>Presentation 2: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Impacts: Academia, Research, and Sikhi with Dr. Harjinder Singh Sandhu</b>
11:00 a.m.	<b>Break</b>
11:10 a.m.	<b>Presentation 3: Planetary Health: Sikh Scholars' Contributions with Dr. Satinder Kaur Brar</b>
11:40 a.m.	<b>Presentation 4: Granthis in Gurduaras: Challenges and Opportunities with Dr. Satvir Singh</b>
12:10 p.m.	<b>Presentation 5 (In Punjabi) : Gurbani Arth Milaan (GNI Research Project): Impacts &amp; Opportunities with Dr. Gurmail Singh</b>
12:40 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
1:30 p.m.	<b>Distinguished Guest: The Hon. Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care, B.C.</b>

**NOTE: All times listed in Vancouver, B.C. Canada Time (PST)**



# DAY 1 AGENDA

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca

---

1:45 p.m.	<b>Expert Panel Overviews</b>
-----------	-------------------------------

---

2:15 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Interactive Sessions (Expert Panel Discussions):</b> <b>Main Stage - Addressing the Challenges Facing International Students in Canada</b> <b>(University of Victoria, BC, and GNI collaboration)</b> <b>Lower Level Boardroom - A discussion with Sikh and Indigenous Elders: Keeping the Ethos Alive</b> <b>Upper Level Boardroom - Mental Health and Sikhi</b>
-----------	---

---

4:00 p.m.	<b>Panel Summaries</b>
-----------	------------------------

---

4:30 p.m.	<b>Day 1 Summary: Dr. Satpal Singh</b>
-----------	--

---

**Location Change:**  
**Mirage Banquet Hall, 17767 64 Ave, Surrey, BC V3S 1Z2**

---

6:30 p.m.	<b>Dinner</b>
-----------	---------------

---

	<b>Keynote Fireside Chat with The Honourable Navdeep Singh Bains</b>
--	--

---

	<b>GNI Video &amp; Recognitions</b>
--	-------------------------------------

---

8:30 p.m.	<b>Networking Time</b>
-----------	------------------------

---

**NOTE: All times listed in Vancouver, B.C. Canada Time (PST)**



## DAY 2 AGENDA

Sunday, September 24, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca

8:00 a.m.	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>
8:45 a.m.	<b>Tanti Saaj - Jasdeep Kaur and Baljit Singh</b>
9:00 a.m.	<b>Welcome Keynote: Mr. David Byng, Former Deputy Minister of Education, B.C.</b>
9:20 a.m.	<b>Presentation 6: Sikh Diaspora and Networks of Resistance with Dr. Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra</b>
9:50 a.m.	<b>Presentation 7: Charda and Lehnda Punjab: Making Peace with Each Other for a Better Future with Dr. Tarunjit Singh Butalia</b>
10:20 a.m.	<b>Presentation 8: Sikhi: Relevance, Adaptation and Innovation in the Modern World with Dr. Paramjit Kaur</b>
10:50 a.m.	<b>Break</b>
11:00 a.m.	<b>Presentation 9: Kartarpur Corridor and Peace with Dr. Akhtar Hussain Sandhu</b>
11:30 a.m.	<b>Presentation 10: Sikh Women: Gurbani, Historical Perspectives &amp; Current Practices with Dr. Mohinder Kaur Grewal</b>
12:00 p.m.	<b>Presentation 11 (in Punjabi): Spiritual Love in Gurbani: Theory and Practice with Dr. Tejinder Pal Singh</b>
12:30 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
1:15 p.m.	<b>Distinguished Guest: Kevin Falcon, Leader of the Opposition, Legislative Assembly of B.C.</b>

**NOTE: All times listed in Vancouver, B.C. Canada Time (PST)**



## DAY 2 AGENDA

Sunday, September 24, 2023  
www.gurunanakinstitute.ca

---

1:30 p.m.	<b>Presentation 12: Engaging Sikh Youth in Today's World with Mohnaam Kaur Shergill</b>
2:00 p.m.	<b>Presentation 13: : The Model Minority Narrative: Sikhs in a Multicultural Canada with Dr. Manpreet Kaur Sahota</b>
2:30 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Interactive Sessions (Expert Panel Discussions):</b>  <b>Main Stage - Substance Use and a Toxic Drug Supply</b>  <b>Lower Level Boardroom - Empowering Young Researchers &amp; Scholars</b>  <b>Upper Level Boardroom - Networking Room</b>
4:15 p.m.	<b>Panel Summaries</b>
4:30 p.m.	<b>Guru Nanak Institute of Global Studies - Past, Present, Future with Gian Singh Sandhu</b>
4:45 p.m.	<b>Closing Summary</b>
5:00 p.m.	<b>Group Picture in Civic Plaza</b>

---

**NOTE: All times listed in Vancouver, B.C. Canada Time (PST)**

# SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Meet the people behind this Summit  
[www.gurunakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunakinstitute.ca)

Name	Location
Amanpreet Singh Hundal	Kelowna, B.C. - Canada
Dr. Bahaderjeet Singh Sidhu	Bathinda, Punjab - India
Dr. Baljit Singh	Saskatoon, Sask. - Canada
Dr. Deepinderpal Singh	Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab, - India
Gian Singh Sandhu	Surrey, B.C. - Canada
Dr. Jatinder Singh Bal	Surrey, B.C. - Canada
Dr. Kamaljit Kaur Sidhu	Surrey, B.C. - Canada
Kumarjeet Singh Arora	Brampton, ON - Canada
Dr. Mohinder Kaur Grewal	Ludhiana, Punjab - India
Ramandeep Kaur	Surrey, B.C. - Canada
Dr. Satpal Singh	Buffalo, New York, USA
Dr. Tarunjit Singh Butalia	Columbus, Ohio, USA

## ABOUT GNI

Learn more about the Guru Nanak Institute of Global Studies  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)

The name of Guru Nanak (the revealer of Sikhi) is synonymous with equality, equity, justice, compassion, open dialogue, spiritual revolution, life-long learning, and emancipatory teaching. The Guru Nanak Institute of Global Studies (GNI) is a non-profit foundation. GNI was founded in 2021 by prominent leaders from the Canadian Sikh community, the largest outside of India, to commemorate Guru Nanak's 550th anniversary. Today, the global Sikh population exceeds 28 million (the fifth largest religious faith), of which over 750,000 call Canada home.

- GNI's founders currently form the institution's Board of Directors and are supported by an Advisory Board, made up of academics and professionals, as well as an Academic Board composed of educators and researchers from countries around the world, including Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and India. GNI is proud to host:
- A faculty comprised of globally based university professors from a variety of fields and disciplines, with strong representation from British Columbia's post-secondary institutions.
- A staff that reflects the composition of the community it serves and that of our student body.
- A diverse and inclusive student body comprised of domestic learners from British Columbia and Canada as well as international learners from the global community.
- Research scholars from around the world.

## OUR GOALS

- Provide a world-class infrastructure and academic environment for research and teaching on Sikh philosophy, history, literature, culture, and devotional music in an interdisciplinary manner.
- Establish partnerships with accredited, public secondary and post-secondary institutions to offer for-credit courses, evolving into micro-credential programs and then to diplomas and certificates, ultimately becoming a degree-granting institution accredited by the Province of British Columbia.
- Support independent applied research on topics relating to Sikhs, Sikhi, and other related fields, where researchers are provided with an environment of complete academic freedom, unconstrained by GNI or outside influences.
- Enable educational research that is focused on curriculum development and assessment, the evaluation and implementation of tools for teaching and learning, as well as educational technologies and methodologies.
- Ensure equal and open access to all prospective students by alleviating funding and other financial barriers.
- Support ground-breaking research projects and student scholarships.



# MEET OUR BEHIND THE SCENE TEAM

September 23 & 24, 2023  
[www.gurunanakainstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakainstitute.ca)

**Dr. Jatinder Singh Bal**



**Director of  
Operations**

**Ramandeep Kaur**



**Executive  
Assistant**

**Joan L. Ross**



**Office  
Administration**

**Neesha Kaur Hothi**



**Marketing  
Specialist**

**Barinder Singh Bhullar**



**Public & Government  
Relations**

**Kuwarjeet Singh Arora**



**Social Media  
Coordinator**

**Devinder Deo**



**Creative Brand  
Designer**

**Rami Pandher**



**Legal Advisor**

**Jasbinder Singh Butalia**



**Financial  
Advisor**

**Simandeep Singh Brar**



**IT Specialist**

## OUR SPONSORS

We are grateful to the following sponsors of Summit 2023  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)

THE ART OF COMFORT  
**vangogh**  
DESIGNS



**SRI GURU  
SINGH SABHA  
GURDWARA**



**GURDWARA  
GURSAGAR  
MASTUANA  
SAHIB**



**SUNSTONE  
CUSTOM  
HOMES LTD**



**GILL  
HOSPITALITY  
LTD**

**THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN  
OUR MISSION AND VISION**

ਸਾਡੇ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਜ਼ਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ  
ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਆਪ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਧੰਨਵਾਦ

## STAY CONNECTED

Follow us and stay tuned for our upcoming events  
[www.gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://www.gurunanakinstitute.ca)

Our courses are approved by the Private Training Institutions Branch (PTIB) of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, British Columbia.

### Approved Diploma/Certificate Programs

- Sikh Studies Diploma (7 courses)
- Gurmat Music Diploma (6 courses)
- Business Administration Diploma (7 courses)
- Operation and Supply Chain Management Diploma (7 courses)
- Punjabi Studies Certificate (4 courses)
- Frontline Management Certificate (50 hour course)

### Awaiting Approval

- Cyber Security Diploma (20 courses)

For more information on our courses please visit our website at  
[gurunanakinstitute.ca](http://gurunanakinstitute.ca)

## Follow Us



@ GuruNanakGlobal



@ GuruNanakGlobal



@ Guru Nanak Institute of Global Studies



@ GuruNanakGlobal