

Bridging Borders: FDDI * University of Northampton

A delegation from the University of Northampton (UoN), United Kingdom, visited FDDI on 22 May 2026 to strengthen academic collaboration and explore new avenues of engagement. The delegation comprised Ms. Debra Hinds, Director of Global Engagement; Ms. Nouhaila Jouibi, International Officer – India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, Department for Global Engagement; and Mr. Puneet Malhotra, Principal Representative, North India & Nepal Region.

The visit followed the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signed between FDDI and UoN last year, establishing a framework for academic partnership aimed at introducing international academic opportunities, including dual-degree and joint programmes, to enhance global exposure and academic mobility for students.



During the visit, the delegation met Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director, FDDI, in the presence of Mr. Sharad Srivastava, Joint Director, Centre of Excellence (CoE). Discussions focused on strengthening institutional engagement, expanding the basket of academic programmes and identifying new areas of collaboration aligned with emerging industry needs.

The interaction also explored opportunities for faculty and student exchange, collaborative research and development, and knowledge-sharing initiatives to foster innovation and address evolving industry challenges.

The visit reaffirmed the shared commitment of both institutions towards building globally connected and future-ready academic ecosystems.

**40 YEARS OF
EXCELLENCE
IN EDUCATION**

FDDI Signs MoU with the Indian Institute of Packaging in Presence of Hon'ble Minister Shri Jitin Prasada Ji

In a significant step towards advancing academic excellence, research, innovation and industry engagement, FDDI exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Packaging (IIP) during the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of IIP held in Mumbai on 14 May 2026.

The MoU was exchanged between Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director, FDDI, and Mr. R. K. Mishra, IRS, Director, IIP and Additional DGFT, Mumbai, in the esteemed presence of the Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Jitin Prasada Ji.

The collaboration brings together two premier institutions under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry with a shared vision of promoting excellence in education, research, innovation, training and capacity building.



A view of the MoU Exchange

During the celebrations, senior officials of both institutions deliberated on avenues for collaboration aimed at strengthening industry-academia linkages, promoting interdisciplinary learning and developing future-ready talent to address emerging industry requirements.

The partnership envisages cooperation across joint research, innovation and product development, skill enhancement programmes, faculty and student exchange, industry-oriented training, expert interactions, workshops, seminars and collaborative academic initiatives. It will also facilitate knowledge sharing, consultancy, testing, incubation support and the development of specialised programmes aligned with evolving industry needs.



FDDI Signs MoU with UPAY to Promote Inclusive Education & Social Innovation

On 17 April 2026, FDDI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UPAY, an organisation committed to providing quality education and holistic development opportunities to underprivileged children.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director, FDDI, and Ms. Yashvi Sharma of UPAY, in the presence of Mr. Varun Shrivastava, Founder & Chairman, UPAY.



The partnership reflects a shared commitment to leveraging education, skill development and innovation to create sustainable social impact. Under this collaboration, FDDI will contribute its expertise in design, innovation and industry-oriented training, while UPAY will bring its extensive community outreach and educational experience, benefiting over 10,000 children across India.

The initiative aims to promote skill development among underserved youth, encourage grassroots entrepreneurship and support community upliftment through integrated education and vocational training. It will also focus on fostering sustainable and affordable product innovation.

A key extension of the collaboration will be driven through the FDDI Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell), strengthening linkages with the broader innovation ecosystem through engagement with leading entrepreneurship cells and incubators, including IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay, IIM Ahmedabad and NSRCEL.

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FDDI Signs MoU with CII-IQ to Strengthen Quality and Competitiveness in the Footwear & Leather Sector

On 09 April 2026, FDDI formalised a strategic partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry – Institute of Quality (CII-IQ) through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The MoU was signed by Mr. Vivek Sharma, IRS, Managing Director, FDDI, and Maj Neil Castelino, Chief, CII-IQ.



The collaboration aims to strengthen quality standards, productivity and global competitiveness across India's footwear and leather ecosystem through focused industry engagement and capacity-building initiatives.

Key areas of cooperation include industry outreach and cluster development, enabling greater engagement with MSMEs and OEMs to promote quality-led industrial growth. The partnership will also facilitate structured training programmes on Operational Excellence and Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) for FDDI professionals and industry stakeholders.

Additionally, CII-IQ will provide consulting support to drive operational improvements, periodic performance reviews and continuous improvement practices across industry clusters. The initiative will further promote the development of a robust quality ecosystem through model excellence clusters, certification pathways and dissemination of industry best practices.

This collaboration marks a significant step towards building a future-ready, quality-driven and globally competitive footwear and leather industry in India.