

Tools to help you become conversant on Asian culture and contemporary affairs exist in both Canada and Asia. The following are some ways through which Canadians are enhancing their Asia competency.



Sign up for a language immersion program

In the same way that Asian students are coming to Canada to learn English, a growing number of Canadians are taking 6 months to a year to study Mandarin in China.

Participate in professional and executive training courses

There are now graduate and executive training courses which offer and/or require modules and placements in Asia. These include:

- **Joint-degree programs** such as Schulich's MBA program in India and Queen's International MBA Exchange Program
- **Graduate degrees** such as the MA in Asia Pacific Policy Studies at UBC and the MA in Asia-Pacific Studies at the University of Toronto
- **Executive training** courses such as UBC's China Links Professional seminars, which teaches North American executives how to be effective in China

Gain study, work and travel experience in Asia

Did you know that only 2% of Canadian university students go on exchange? And even less goes to Asian countries. The majority of students go to English-speaking countries.

If you are a student: consider an exchange or internship in Asia. Many educational institutions and organizations such as CIDA and Canadian Embassies offer short term placements in Asia.

For recent graduates and young professionals: work abroad through SWAP or the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program.

If you have a business: regional trade fairs, conventions or missions offer an opportunity to explore and build new markets and networks in Asia.

Read up, find sources on Asia

Check out daily news updates, blogs and editorials on Asia in Canadian news sources and on the websites of organizations such as the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.

Attend public talks and lectures

Look out for visiting speakers from Asia or lecture series on Asian issues offered by your local board of trade, chamber of commerce, professional associations and community groups.

Explore cultural events and festivals

Check out cultural events in your community to familiarize yourself with Asian history, culture and contemporary issues. Examples include the touring Terracotta Warriors exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum; annual Diwali, Lunar New Year and Cherry Blossom celebrations; as well as local film festivals, and Bollywood conventions.

Participate in Asia-related networks

Interact with people already well-versed in Asian culture and issues to boost your intercultural and communication skills. Attend a campus event or language club to meet international students or check out events hosted by business organizations, such as the Canada-India Foundation.

Learn an Asian language

Mandarin, Japanese, Korean and other Asian-language courses are increasingly available in Canada at universities, community colleges and high schools.

Sign up for an Asia-focused Class

Take an Asian studies course offered by a Canadian school or continuing studies institution.

Did you know that the University of Manitoba added Korean to its 2011 curriculum?