



EVENT SUMMARY

Canada and the Indo-Pacific: Opportunities, Challenges, and Industry Engagement

Industry Roundtable

May 5, 2026, Mississauga, Ontario

Hosted by Invest Mississauga and the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APFC)

About the Industry Roundtable

On May 5, 2026, Invest Mississauga and the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APFC) co-hosted an invitation-only industry roundtable to discuss Canada's economic opportunities in the Indo-Pacific region. APFC is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to strengthening ties between Canada and the Indo-Pacific through research, education, and convening activities. Invest Mississauga is the City of Mississauga's Economic Development Division, mandated to attract new business investment and support local business growth. The roundtable was APFC's inaugural municipal-level convening initiative and included City of Mississauga Deputy Mayor Matt Mahoney, City staff, local business leaders from technology, education, agribusiness, logistics, and advanced manufacturing industries, and representatives from the Mississauga Board of Trade, Sheridan College and the University of Toronto Mississauga.

Opening Remarks & Keynote Briefing

Christina Kakaflikas, Director of Invest Mississauga, opened the roundtable by highlighting the existing strength and momentum characterizing Mississauga's relationship with the Indo-Pacific. Mississauga-based companies are trading over \$29B in goods annually with countries in Asia (excluding Australia and New Zealand), accounting for 23% of provincial trade in the region. Over the past five years, business investment between Mississauga and the Indo-Pacific has accelerated, with total bi-directional investment equal to \$1.6 billion - three times higher than the previous five years. Mississauga companies are globally connected and competitive.

City of Mississauga Deputy Mayor Matt Mahoney emphasized the City's commitment to strengthening Mississauga's competitiveness and global connectivity – and the strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific. The City's recently approved economic development strategy, Path to Prosperity, prioritizes diversifying Mississauga's trade and investment relationships to support a competitive, resilient economy and sustained job growth.



Introduced by Kasi Rao, Managing Director, Fairfax Consulting Services India, the roundtable keynote address from Vina Nadjibulla, Vice-President, Research & Strategy, APFC, outlined Canada's 'moment of opportunity' in the Indo-Pacific. In recognition of a changing world order, the current Government of Canada has prioritized outreach and relationship-building to non-US markets, including in the Indo-Pacific. Over the past year, Canada has completed, launched, or accelerated negotiations on agreements and partnerships with Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and the broader Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN.

Noting that the region includes 40 jurisdictions, Vina provided insights into sub-regional dynamics driving economic opportunities in key markets, including China, India, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, and Australia, and key industries including defence, AI, cybersecurity, quantum, renewable and nuclear energy, aerospace, automotive, life sciences, education, agri-business, mining and critical minerals. Attendees were encouraged to align their export strategies with these market opportunities, particularly those opportunities that advance Government of Canada's national priorities.

Roundtable Discussion: Key Insights

Following the keynote address, roundtable participants engaged in a lively discussion focused on strategies to address challenges and advance opportunities in specific sectors and cross-sector issues, such as accessing talent.

Three key insights emerged:

1. Start in Canada:

"Take advantage of the entire ecosystem that Canada has, to build [your] Asia-Pacific competency"

Participants highlighted a range of approaches and resources in Canada that can help organizations build their Indo-Pacific competency (expertise, experience, and exposure) and position themselves for successful market entry. Examples of resources included trade agreements (for example, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, CPTPP), trade support service and market intelligence providers (such as Export Development Canada and Trade Commissioners), and Indo-Pacific Canadian Business Councils. If effectively engaged, Mississauga's diverse base of businesses and entrepreneurs across sectors, many with experience operating in South Asian, Filipino, and Southeast Asian markets, was identified as a unique local advantage.

2. Scale Opportunities Through Collaboration



“Put a joint working group together with government, academic, industry, down to SMEs and then go after this as a region ... so we are bigger all together, because the sum is greater than its parts”

Participants noted that organizations entering the Indo-Pacific alone may lack the scale required to gain visibility and secure regional market opportunities. Working with government, academic, and industry partners on joint initiatives, such as participating in a larger trade delegation or a broader sector-based growth approach, was suggested as an effective way to scale engagement and improve success rates. Japan’s Aircraft Development Corporation model was cited as one example of this approach.

3. Being Present & Persistent

“Before you can do any business, you have to show up. I would be hard pressed to identify a single jurisdiction in Asia where personal relationships, presence, and persistence don’t pay off.”

Participants noted that strengthening Indo-Pacific awareness of Canada and deepening economic relationships with Canadian organizations and businesses will require a consistent, in-person presence over time. Proactive engagement and presence will be critical to keeping Canada’s current ‘window of opportunity’ in region open.

Looking Ahead

Roundtable participants expressed strong interest in continued convening to discuss and advance Indo-Pacific opportunities. Several near-term opportunities and milestones were identified as areas for further collaboration, including the Canada Investment Summit (September 2026) and the potential 2026 completion of a Canada–India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

List of Attendees

Industry Representatives

- Alex Tsoulis, MHI Canada Aerospace
- Angel Wei, Solara Path
- Angela Zhao, Sustainability Communications Advisory
- Anthea Vicky Sampath, zeb
- Dany Abousaab, Farm Credit Canada
- David Wojcik, Mississauga Board of Trade
- Divya Gopinthan, zeb
- John Broderick, Magna International
- Kasi Rao, Fairfax Consulting Services India
- Kenward Mah, Lynch Fluid Controls
- Kimura Naruo, Hino Motors Canada
- Shahrzad Farzinpak, Sheridan College
- Sherif El Tawil, University of Toronto Mississauga



- Tabrez Ahmad, Dell Technologies
- Thiveya Muthu, Tru-Tech Precision Inc.

Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

- Vina Nadjibulla
- Aditi Malhotra

City of Mississauga

- Matt Mahoney, Deputy Mayor
- Christina Kakaflikas
- Stephanie Dunbar
- John Barber
- Celia Coculuzzi
- Francis De Los Santos
- Saujanya Acharya
- Zaryab Ahmad