

# OCUFA

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations  
Union des associations des professeurs des universités de l'Ontario

**2022-2023**  
**OCUFA Henry Mandelbaum Graduate  
Fellowship for Excellence in Social  
Sciences, Humanities, or Arts**

**Citation for Mohit Dudeja**

**Read by:**  
**Nigmendra Narain, OCUFA President**

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations is delighted to present Mohit Dudeja with the 2022-2023 Henry Mandelbaum Graduate Fellowship for Excellence in Social Sciences, Humanities, or Arts at the Doctoral level.

After earning his Master of Arts at Azim Premji University in New Delhi in 2021, Mohit enrolled as a PhD candidate in Education Studies at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, on the traditional lands of the Fort William First Nation on lands covered by the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850.

He is working towards the completion of his doctoral degree in 2025, and during his studies, he continues his deep commitment to improving the lives of queer community members in Thunder Bay and India, and thus, truly exemplifies the dedication to social justice leadership.

Mohit's inspiring community leadership is exemplified through ongoing volunteering in Thunder Bay as a counsellor and peer mentor for queer youth. In India, Mohit founded the Mendlife Foundation, a volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing quality education and sustainable livelihoods to marginalized children and youth. He also led SAATHI, a student-led queer space at the university, and worked as a trained peer supporter. Continuing his advocacy and support work for the queer community, Mohit works as the Assistant Coordinator of Pride Central, governed by the Lakehead University Student Union. As noted by one of his referees, Mohit "is deeply committed to supporting young people in his community and guiding them to make positive choices for self-awareness, healthy relationships, and goal-setting."

Within the academy, Mohit is just as dedicated to making spaces for marginalized voices. In 2020, he started a program under the Mendlife Foundation called Queer Academia that seeks to create a space for amplifying queer voices in the Indian academic discourse. Connecting his experiences across continents, Mohit's unique doctoral research investigates the experiences of Indian queer international students in small Canadian cities. His research will explore the challenges faced by these students

in navigating the intersections of their sexual and cultural identities in unfamiliar social contexts. A true community leader, the findings of Mohit's research will inform the development of inclusive policies and support systems for this population.

Academic excellence in his course work in addition to an extensive list of publications and conference presentations. As noted by one of Mohit's references: "evidence of his scholarly excellence is his score of 84.2 per cent in his MA, overall, which earned him the very prestigious Lakehead University President's International Scholarship for four years. Only two recipients are chosen annually for the award."

This brief illustration of Mohit's academic achievements, research, and community involvement, makes him a worthy recipient of this fellowship. For these reasons and many more, the committee is honored to present Mohit Dudeja with the 2022-2023 Henry Mandelbaum Fellowship at the Doctoral level.

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**Established in 2011 to honour former OCUFA Executive Director Henry Mandelbaum, the fellowship is awarded to two full-time graduate students (one master's, one doctoral) at publicly funded Ontario universities. Recipients have demonstrated academic excellence, provided significant community service, and shown exceptional academic promise in their university careers.**