



NextEra
Policy

INDIA-UK

Innovation & Intellectual Property Partnership

A Strategic Discussion Paper
for Businesses, Innovators,
Investors and Policymakers
Navigating the New
India-UK Innovation Ecosystem



STRONGER TRADE
& INVESTMENT



INNOVATION
COLLABORATION



INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY
PROTECTION



SHARED GROWTH
& PROSPERITY



NextEra Policy

An independent, research-driven industry association committed to advancing evidence-based policymaking, innovation ecosystems, stakeholder engagement and international collaboration through research, policy dialogue and strategic partnerships.

A New Chapter in India-UK Relations

Why this Discussion Paper?



The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), which entered into force on 15 July 2026, establishes a comprehensive framework for bilateral cooperation in trade, innovation, investment and intellectual property.



India and the United Kingdom already share strong political ties, growing trade, extensive academic collaboration and deep people-to-people connections. Today's global economy creates an opportunity to build on these foundations through a more ambitious innovation partnership.



The significance of CETA lies not merely in tariff reductions but in its ability to create an enabling environment for businesses, startups, universities, innovators and research institutions to collaborate with greater certainty and confidence.



This discussion paper explores how innovation and intellectual property can become the cornerstone of the next phase of India-UK cooperation and identifies opportunities where governments, industry, academia and independent institutions can work together to maximise the long-term benefits of the partnership.



WHY NOW?



Changing Global Economy

Shifting geopolitics and supply chains demand resilient, future-ready partnerships.



Technology-led Growth

Rapid advancements in technology are reshaping industries and creating new opportunities.



Strategic Partnership

India and the UK share democratic values and a vision for inclusive economic growth.



Innovation & IP Cooperation

Stronger IP protection and innovation collaboration unlock long-term, sustainable value.

CETA TIMELINE



£48 Billion

India-UK Bilateral Trade in Goods & Services (2025)

CETA AT A GLANCE



30 Chapters

A comprehensive legal framework governing bilateral trade and economic cooperation.



Chapter 13 – Intellectual Property Rights

Provides a dedicated framework for the protection, enforcement and cooperation relating to intellectual property.



Chapter 14 – Innovation

Promotes collaboration in research, innovation, technology commercialisation and emerging technologies.



STRATEGIC INSIGHT

CETA now provides an operational framework for strengthening innovation and intellectual property collaboration between India and the United Kingdom through dedicated legal provisions on Intellectual Property Rights and Innovation.

PARTNERSHIP DRIVERS



Government
Policy alignment and regulatory cooperation



Industry
Business collaboration and investment



Academia
Knowledge exchange and education



Research
Joint research and technology development



Innovation
Technology commercialisation and entrepreneurship



Investment
Capital flow and sustainable economic growth

India and the United Kingdom: Two Complementary Innovation Economies

The future of bilateral cooperation will increasingly depend on the ability of both countries to combine their respective strengths.

India and the United Kingdom bring distinct advantages to the table—creating immense potential for innovation-led growth, resilient supply chains, technology collaboration and global competitiveness.



INDIA 		 UNITED KINGDOM
One of the world's fastest-growing major economies		Global financial centre
Third-largest startup ecosystem		Mature venture capital ecosystem
Global technology and engineering talent		World-leading research universities
Digital Public Infrastructure		Strong innovation commercialisation ecosystem
Manufacturing capabilities		Advanced manufacturing and design excellence
Large domestic market		Global gateway for international investment
Artificial Intelligence talent		Leadership in AI governance and regulation
Pharmaceutical manufacturing		Life sciences and biotechnology research
Digital payments leadership		Financial technology innovation



KEY MESSAGE

India and the United Kingdom are not just natural partners but strategic complements. India brings scale, talent, digital leadership and a dynamic innovation ecosystem. The United Kingdom brings capital, research excellence, mature innovation systems and global connectedness.

Together, these strengths can build a future-ready partnership that drives innovation, creates jobs, strengthens competitiveness and delivers shared global impact.

Why CETA Matters?

The India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) establishes a comprehensive framework for bilateral cooperation in trade, innovation, investment and intellectual property.

Beyond improving market access, CETA establishes an institutional framework that enables businesses, innovators and governments to collaborate with greater certainty and reduced regulatory barriers.



The agreement provides for:

- ✓ Expand bilateral trade and investment.
- ✓ Reduce tariffs across a broad range of products.
- ✓ Improve access for professional and financial services.
- ✓ Provide for mobility for professionals and business visitors.
- ✓ Provide for strengthened cooperation on innovation and research.
- ✓ Enhance protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights.
- ✓ Provide for enhanced collaboration between businesses, universities and research institutions.
- ✓ Support the growth of startups, MSMEs and technology-driven enterprises.



Innovation Working Group

A dedicated mechanism under CETA to facilitate cooperation on research collaboration, emerging technologies, technology commercialisation and innovation policy.



Article 13.15 – Working Group on Intellectual Property Rights

A dedicated bilateral mechanism established under CETA to facilitate cooperation on intellectual property policy, implementation, information exchange and future collaboration between India and the United Kingdom.



Associated CETA Instruments Six Intellectual Property Side Letters

CETA is accompanied by six Intellectual Property-related side letters, forming part of the ten associated side letters, which support the implementation of bilateral cooperation and strengthen the agreement's intellectual property framework.



KEY MESSAGE

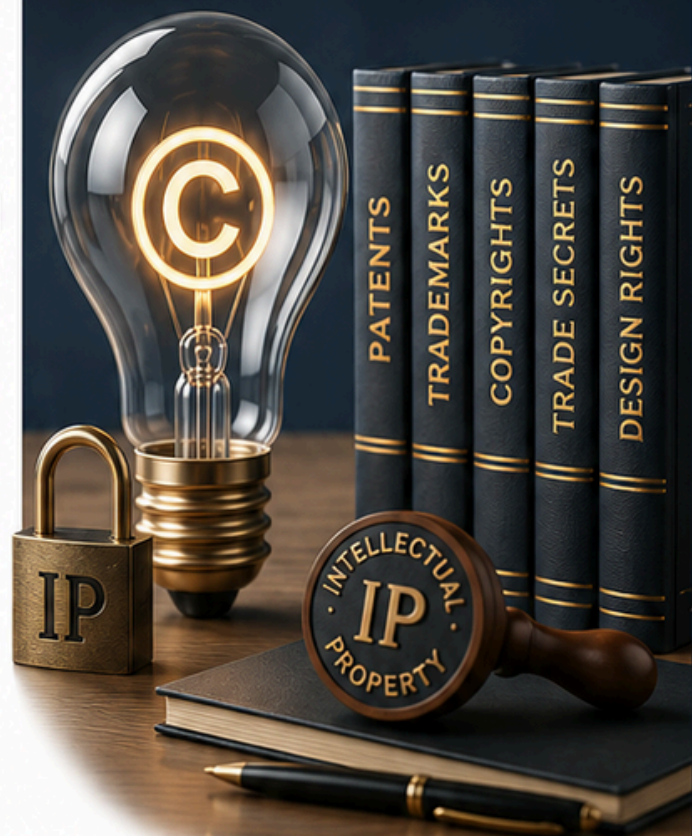
CETA transforms the India–UK relationship from a trade partnership into an innovation partnership.

Intellectual Property: The Engine Behind Innovation

Innovation creates ideas.

Intellectual property transforms those ideas into economic assets.

For knowledge-based economies, intellectual property is no longer merely a legal mechanism; it has become an essential component of economic competitiveness.



An effective IP ecosystem enables businesses to:

- attract investment
- commercialise research
- protect technological innovation
- license intellectual assets
- enter international markets with confidence
- strengthen investor confidence
- promote university–industry collaboration
- facilitate technology transfer

The Intellectual Property chapter under CETA reinforces these objectives by strengthening transparency, improving cooperation between IP institutions and supporting more predictable IP protection for innovators operating across both jurisdictions.

- | **For startups,** IP often represents their most valuable business asset.
- | **For universities,** it enables research commercialisation.
- | **For investors,** it provides confidence that innovation can generate sustainable returns.
- | **For governments,** it supports the development of high-value knowledge economies.



KEY MESSAGE

Intellectual Property is not merely about protecting innovation—it is about enabling innovation to create economic value.

Strengthening IP Awareness: Unlocking Untapped Potential

India has emerged as one of the world's most vibrant startup ecosystems. Thousands of startups, research institutions and MSMEs develop innovative products, technologies and creative solutions every year.

However, many innovations are never adequately protected, commercialised or licensed.

Limited awareness of intellectual property strategies continues to constrain the ability of businesses to maximise the value of their innovations.

Greater IP awareness can significantly enhance:

For Indian Businesses

- commercialisation of innovation
- international market expansion
- investment readiness
- licensing opportunities
- research collaborations
- competitiveness in global markets

For UK Businesses

- greater confidence in entering the Indian market
- stronger technology partnerships
- reduced commercial risks
- improved research collaboration
- increased opportunities for joint innovation

The benefits extend beyond businesses.

Universities, incubators, technology transfer offices, investors and public research organisations all play a critical role in strengthening the bilateral innovation ecosystem.

Developing stronger awareness programmes, practical guidance and institutional collaboration can help ensure that innovation generated in both countries translates into commercial and societal value.

Emerging Opportunities under the India–UK CETA

The next phase of India–UK cooperation presents opportunities across multiple sectors where innovation and intellectual property will play a defining role.



Artificial Intelligence

Collaborative research, AI governance, responsible AI, patenting AI-enabled technologies.



Clean Energy

Hydrogen technologies, battery innovation, offshore wind, sustainable manufacturing.



Life Sciences

Biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, vaccine research, precision medicine.



Digital Health

Telemedicine, medical devices, healthcare AI and digital diagnostics.



Financial Technology

Cross-border payment systems, digital finance, cybersecurity and blockchain innovation.



Advanced Manufacturing

Industry 4.0, robotics, additive manufacturing and supply chain resilience.



Creative Industries

Film, gaming, digital content, copyright-intensive industries and design innovation.



AgriTech

Precision agriculture, climate-resilient farming, food processing technologies.

Across these sectors, stronger intellectual property ecosystems will facilitate research collaboration, technology transfer, licensing and commercialisation.

From Innovation to Commercialisation: Building a Bilateral Innovation Ecosystem

For innovation partnerships to succeed, collaboration must extend beyond governments.

A comprehensive innovation ecosystem requires active participation from:



Government agencies



Businesses



Startups



Universities



Research institutions



Investors



Incubators



Industry associations



Intellectual property offices



CETA provides the policy framework.



Institutions must now build the ecosystem.

Potential collaborative initiatives include:



India-UK
Innovation
Dialogues



Joint research
programmes



University-industry
partnerships



Startup exchange
initiatives



Technology
transfer
programmes



IP awareness
workshops



Innovation policy
research



Sector-specific
roundtables



Commercialisation
forums

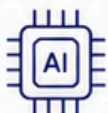


Sustained institutional engagement will be essential to translating policy commitments into **measurable economic outcomes**.

Potential Areas for Bilateral Institutional Collaboration

The India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement creates opportunities for deeper collaboration across government, industry, academia and innovation–support institutions.

The matrix below illustrates selected areas where continued engagement could support innovation, intellectual property development and long-term economic cooperation.

Strategic Area	Government	Industry	Academia & Research	IP Institutions	Facilitating Institutions
 Artificial Intelligence	Regulatory dialogue	Product innovation	Joint research	IP guidance	Policy dialogues
 Clean Energy	Green policy	Technology deployment	Collaborative R&D	Patent awareness	Industry forums
 Life Sciences	Health policy	Drug development	Clinical research	Technology transfer	Strategic roundtables
 Startup Ecosystem	Startup initiatives	Scale-up partnerships	Incubation	IP awareness	Innovation networks
 Universities	Academic exchange	Commercial partnerships	Research collaboration	Commercialisation support	Knowledge platforms

Strategic Observation

Innovation ecosystems are strengthened through sustained interaction between policymakers, businesses, research institutions, investors and intellectual property organisations.

The opportunities identified above illustrate how different stakeholders can engage across sectors where innovation and intellectual property increasingly intersect.



Strategic Insight

Intellectual property provides a common framework that supports research collaboration, technology transfer, commercialisation and long-term innovation partnerships across multiple sectors.

Strengthening the India-UK Innovation Partnership

Deepening cooperation across policy, research, industry and institutions can unlock the full potential of innovation and intellectual property, creating shared value for both nations.



STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE

CETA provides an operational framework for strengthening innovation ecosystems through sustained collaboration, effective intellectual property frameworks and long-term institutional engagement.

As both countries continue to deepen their strategic partnership, innovation and intellectual property serve as enduring pillars of bilateral growth.

About NextEra Policy



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NextEra Policy is an independent, research-driven industry association committed to strengthening evidence-based policymaking through research, stakeholder engagement, policy dialogue and institutional collaboration. The organisation works across government, industry, academia and international partners to facilitate informed discussions on emerging policy issues and advance innovation-led economic development.



International Affairs Vertical

The International Affairs Vertical serves as NextEra Policy's dedicated platform for advancing international engagement, strategic partnerships and policy dialogue. The Vertical undertakes research, develops strategic publications, convenes discussions and facilitates collaboration with governments, international organisations, industry, academia and other stakeholders to strengthen international cooperation and policy exchange.

LEADERSHIP

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About This Publication

This Strategic Discussion Paper has been prepared by the International Affairs Vertical of NextEra Policy to encourage informed dialogue on strengthening innovation and intellectual property cooperation between India and the United Kingdom under the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

The publication is intended to serve as a foundation for future policy discussions, institutional collaboration and research initiatives, and reflects NextEra Policy's commitment to promoting evidence-based dialogue on issues of strategic national and international importance.

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STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER



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