



Oxford Scholar and Global Faith Network Awarded Hofstra's 2024 Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize

By a **Staff Writer** - April 14, 2025

\$50,000 Honor Recognizes Champions of Peace, Dialogue, and Religious Unity

HEMPSTEAD, NY – Hofstra University, in partnership with the Sardarni Kuljit Kaur Bindra Charitable Foundation, has announced the recipients of the 2024 Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize: Dr. Thea Gomelauri, founder of the Oxford Interfaith Forum, and the United Religions Initiative (URI), the world's largest grassroots interfaith network. The \$50,000 biennial prize will be shared equally by the two honorees.

The award ceremony is scheduled to take place on April 22, 2025, at the Crest Hollow Country Club in Woodbury, New York.

Continuing a Legacy of Interfaith Understanding



"This prize was founded by our parents to promote greater understanding among people of various faiths," said T.J. Bindra of the Bindra Family. "Guru Nanak preached equality of all human beings, regardless of religion, caste, color, creed, or sex. We are very pleased with the selection of these two very deserving awardees for the 2024 Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize."

Dr. Eva Badowska, dean of Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, added, "At a time when peaceful collaboration, civil discourse, and cultural awareness are essential to addressing profound global challenges, this prize honors principles that resonate deeply with the university's mission. It reminds us that education is not just about knowledge—it's about inspiring action and shaping a better future."



Dr. Thea Gomelauri, a biblical scholar at the University of Oxford and director of the Oxford Interfaith Forum, has been recognized for uniting global academics in the study of sacred texts through an inclusive interfaith lens. Her research on Georgian Jewry, the world's oldest surviving Jewish diaspora, has gained international acclaim. The Forum itself was recently honored with the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Award by King Abdullah II of Jordan.

"This prestigious award in the name of Guru Nanak Dev Ji inspires us to continue the promotion of universal peace through interreligious education at this critical time in our history," Dr. Gomelauri said.

Carrying Forward Guru Nanak's Teachings

Founded in 2006 by Sardar Isha Singh Bindra and family, the Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize honors the 15th-century Sikh spiritual leader's teachings of service, equality, and unity. Previous recipients of the prize include the 14th Dalai Lama and Dr. Eboo Patel of Interfaith America.