



**LUMS**  
A Not-for-Profit University

# CAMPUS STORIES

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# Message from the Communications Team

This issue of Campus Stories brings together the many different ways life at LUMS continues to unfold. We look at Pakistan's EV future beyond the headlines, step into the new LUMS Law Clinic where students are turning legal learning into service, and reflect on Dr. Azra Raza's powerful message about science, poetry, resilience, and the need to reduce human suffering.

There are lighter moments too: a guide to the quiet campus corners that help us reset, and the story of HamSukhan, a book club built around conversation, connection, and a sense of home. Alongside these are stories of research, student achievement, alumni, culture, and community that capture the energy of LUMS in all its forms.

We hope you enjoy reading these stories and discovering a few new sides of the LUMS community along the way.

Happy reading!

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# Beyond the Hype: Why Pakistan's EV Revolution Needs a Reality Check





Pakistan stands at a crossroads in its energy transition journey. While electric vehicles promise a cleaner, more sustainable future, the gap between policy ambition and ground reality remains stark. Can local innovation bridge this divide, or are we chasing a revolution that doesn't fit our roads?

In this dual-perspective feature, we explore Pakistan's EV landscape through two distinct lenses: the research lab and the driver's seat. Dr. Naveed Arshad, faculty at LUMS, reveals the technical and policy challenges of building Pakistan's battery ecosystem from the ground up—from pioneering local battery pack manufacturing to navigating a tax system that paradoxically penalises domestic innovation. Meanwhile, Suneel Sarfraz Munj, car enthusiast, and one of the country's leading voices in the

automobile industry, dismantles popular myths about charging infrastructure and consumer readiness, arguing that Pakistan's true electric revolution won't come from luxury sedans in Lahore's cantonment areas, but from the millions of motorcycles and rickshaws that form the backbone of urban mobility.

Together, these interviews offer a clear, unfiltered view of Pakistan's EV landscape—far beyond headlines and policy texts. Dr. Arshad highlights the systemic barriers holding back local research and manufacturing, while Suneel's on-ground experience shows why consumer behaviour, trust, and cultural norms matter more than charging stations.

## DID YOU KNOW?

LUMS and USAID launched an E-Mobility Research and Development Centre under the US-Pakistan Green Alliance framework, taking an exciting step towards affordable electric vehicle innovation and cleaner transport in Pakistan. US Consul General Lahore Kirsten Hawkins marked the occasion by joining the Centre's launch at LUMS.

**What emerges is clear: Pakistan's EV revolution will be won or lost not in showrooms selling imported luxury cars, but in university labs developing affordable battery solutions and on streets filled with electric rickshaws—if we can get the policy, pricing, and priorities right.**

As Pakistan moves towards cleaner mobility and renewable energy adoption, battery technology stands at the centre of this transformation. To understand how local innovation is shaping the country's electric vehicle (EV) and energy storage landscape, we spoke with **Dr. Naveed Arshad, Director of the LUMS Energy Institute (LEI)**.

From pioneering research and spin-off start-ups to policy advocacy, Dr. Arshad and his team are helping chart Pakistan's path toward energy independence and sustainability.



**Q1. Could you share an overview of your work on EV battery development and how it contributes to Pakistan's EV landscape?**

The LUMS Energy Institute has been working on EV batteries for quite some time—actually, even before the Institute's formal establishment. LUMS already had a strong foundation in battery research, and since the creation of the Institute, batteries have become one of our core focus areas.

The reason is simple: batteries are the toughest challenge in the EV and renewable energy revolution. Whether it's electric vehicles or renewable energy systems, storage is the key component, and that's where battery innovation is crucial.

Our work spans multiple areas: cell integration, battery pack development, testing, and battery analytics. We have not only built a strong development team but also established one of the finest battery testing facilities in the country at our E-Mobility Research

and Development Centre.

From this work, we've also spun out two companies focused on battery pack manufacturing: BarqBox, specialising in stationary batteries and Neuwat, focusing on mobility batteries. Both companies serve distinct market segments, as their technical requirements and customer needs differ.

In addition, we are contributing to battery standards and policy development at the national level. We are working closely with government stakeholders to shape policies related to battery use and manufacturing. Overall, our work spans technology development, policy formulation, and entrepreneurship, making it one of the most comprehensive battery research efforts in Pakistan.

**Q2. What are the main challenges in producing EV batteries locally—technical, financial, or policy-related?**

All three—technical, financial,

**"If you import a battery, you pay less tax. If you make it locally, you pay more. That has to change."**

and policy—pose significant challenges.

Technically, we rely heavily on importing battery cells from China, Korea, or Japan, as these countries dominate global cell production. Currently, no company in Pakistan manufactures battery cells, largely because setting up such a facility requires massive investment.

While cell manufacturing is still out of reach, battery pack assembly and component integration can be and are being done locally. However, testing capabilities remain limited. At LUMS, we have established a strong testing facility, but it cannot cover all types of tests, such as destruction or saltwater immersion tests, which require highly specialised and expensive infrastructure. These could only realistically be set up by the government or large-scale industry players, ideally through government-to-government

**"Batteries are the hardest nut to crack in the EV and renewable energy revolution."**

collaborations with international labs such as TUV in Germany or Thailand.

Financially, the landscape is also challenging. There's a strange situation where importing batteries incurs lower taxes than producing them locally. This discourages local manufacturing. Although the government has promised to fix this discrepancy, progress has been slow.

Moreover, banks do not yet recognise batteries as an asset class, which limits financing options for battery-related businesses and consumers. For example, there are no loan products available for purchasing stationary storage systems, which could otherwise help expand battery adoption.

Policy-wise, batteries are central to the transformation of the energy sector—not only for EVs but also for power storage, off-grid electrification, and even industrial use. Yet, government attention to this area remains limited.

Globally, battery costs have dropped dramatically—from about \$131 per kWh in 2022 to around \$31 per kWh in 2025—making energy storage far more affordable and opening up countless new applications. Pakistan needs a coherent battery policy that encourages local innovation, manufacturing, and adoption, and ultimately enables exports.

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**“Universities must move beyond research papers to real-world impact.”**

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### **Q3. How can universities and research institutions**



## **DID YOU KNOW?**

The LUMS Energy Institute (LEI) took part in the First Punjab Transport Expo 2025 at the Expo Centre Lahore on September 4–5, 2025, where it showcased its innovative swappable battery three-wheeler technology—a breakthrough step toward sustainable, efficient, and localised transport solutions for Pakistan.

## **contribute to building capacity in this area?**

Battery and EV research is an expensive field, and funding is one of the main constraints. Developing a comprehensive battery research and development setup requires substantial investment—well beyond the scope of typical government grants.

However, the long-term payoff is immense. This field has the potential to solve many of Pakistan's energy challenges, but it requires upfront investment in research, infrastructure, and human capital.

Universities can play a crucial role—not just in research, but also in commercialisation. Academic research should lead to real-world products and services that can support start-ups, industry, and national energy goals.

Another key challenge is the

shortage of skilled professionals in battery development. From mechanical and electrical engineers to computer scientists, there's limited awareness and training in this field. Many students gravitate towards data science and AI, unaware that these skills are also valuable in areas like battery analytics and management systems.

To address this, universities should develop specialised training programmes—certificates, diplomas, and technical apprenticeships in battery design, development, and maintenance. Partnerships with technical and vocational institutions (such as TEVTA) could also help train technicians and mechanics who can support the growing battery ecosystem.

With the right funding and direction, universities can drive both technological innovation and human capacity development in Pakistan's energy transition.



## The Real Electric Revolution in Pakistan Will Come from Two and Three-Wheelers

Electric vehicles (EVs) are often hailed as the future of transport — but what does that future really look like for Pakistan? While global conversations revolve around Teslas and sleek electric SUVs, **Suneel Sarfraz Munj, co-founder and CEO of PakWheels**, believes Pakistan's electric revolution will roll in on much smaller wheels.

A LUMS alum (BSc 2002, MBA 2005), Suneel is an entrepreneur, car enthusiast, and one of the country's most influential voices in the mobility space. Since founding PakWheels in 2003, he has built it into Pakistan's largest automotive marketplace and community.

In this candid conversation, he unpacks why electric cars may not be Pakistan's answer, from policy blind spots to consumer behaviour, and explains where the real opportunity for transformation lies.

**"Everyone talks about cars but Pakistan's**

**real electric revolution will start with bikes and rickshaws."**

### The Reality of Electric Cars in Pakistan -

Whenever we talk about EVs, there's excitement — people imagine an electric revolution. But most of that discussion focuses on cars and jeeps. In reality, Pakistan's automotive sector is dominated by two-wheelers and three-wheelers, and that's where I believe true change will come from.

Let's look at the numbers. Until last year, Pakistan had only around 2,500 electric cars. Almost all of these were high-end models — Audi e-Tron, Porsche Taycan, and others — bought not out of environmental concern, but because they were cheaper than their gasoline counterparts.

For instance, an Audi e-Tron cost about Rs. 1.5–2 crore, while a comparable Q7 cost nearly Rs. 8 crore. So, buyers were motivated by price, not sustainability. And among these 2,500 vehicles, not one belonged to the economy segment.

Revolutions don't come as a few drops of water — they come as rivers. Without mass adoption, there can be no electric revolution.

**"In Pakistan, a car isn't an expense — it's a savings account on wheels."**

**Why There Has Been No Mass Adoption** - The barriers to EV

adoption in Pakistan are both economic and cultural.

While the government reduced import duties, the benefits went mostly to higher-end vehicles. Take the MGs, for example: the electric version (ZS EV) cost Rs. 6.5 million, compared to Rs. 4.5 million for the petrol model. Naturally, most buyers chose petrol.

In Pakistan, people see cars as investments, not expenses. A car is viewed as a store of value — something you can sell when you need money for school fees or a family emergency. EVs, on the other hand, depreciate like smartphones — by 20–25% annually — making them less appealing to most buyers.

For the wealthy, EVs are luxury toys, parked next to six other cars, often powered by their own solar sheds. But revolutions don't start in garages; they start on the streets.

**"The charging network isn't the real problem; it's our mindset and lifestyle."**

### The Charging Network

**Misconception** - Many people argue that Pakistan's lack of charging stations is a key hurdle. I completely disagree.

I've been driving EVs for five years, several different models, and I've never once used a public charger. I charge exclusively at home.

There are about 35 public charging stations in major cities, compared to 12,000 in India. But that doesn't matter. Charging an EV is a lifestyle change, much like charging your phone. No one

wants to leave their car plugged in at a public station for hours.

Public chargers here are also unreliable — voltage fluctuations, malfunctioning equipment, downtime, and highway chargers often don't work at all.

**Why Highways Don't Work for EVs** - EVs aren't suited for long-haul travel in Pakistan. The economics fall apart.

Electricity at home costs around Rs. 50 per unit, but on highways, it jumps to Rs. 150 per unit — three times more. Energy consumption also rises from 16 kWh/100 km in the city to 25–30 kWh/100 km on highways.

Add to that frequent load-shedding, even in central areas like Gulberg, and EV charging becomes unreliable. The real problem isn't the lack of chargers — it's the lack of dependable power and infrastructure.

**Cultural & Economic Barriers** - Our car culture is spontaneous — we often decide at the last minute to take a drive or trip. EVs require planning — checking range, charging availability, and travel distance.

There's also a trust deficit. Consumers worry about repair costs once warranties expire, and with good reason. Some Audi EV owners, for example, have reported paying Rs. 2–3 million in repair costs after warranty. These stories spread quickly and make others hesitate.

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**“Our EV policy is inconsistent — and inconsistency kills trust.”**

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#### **Policy & Governance Gaps**

- The government's 2021 EV policy made bold promises — tax waivers, toll exemptions, registration incentives — but implementation has been weak.

Registration fees vary drastically: Rs. 1 million in Islamabad, Rs. 600,000 in Lahore, and Rs. 20,000 in Sindh. There's no national uniformity.

Incentives like tax holidays or standardised registration processes are missing. Even basic classification is flawed; electric cars are still registered by engine capacity (CC), which makes no sense.

Most importantly, there's a trust gap between citizens and policymakers. The government's inconsistent stance — for example, promoting solar adoption and later penalising solar users — makes people wary that EV incentives could also be reversed.

#### **The Future of Electric Mobility in Pakistan**

- Over the next five to ten years, I don't see a large-scale shift toward electric cars. But I see enormous potential in two-wheelers and three-wheelers — motorcycles and rickshaws — which make up the majority of Pakistan's daily mobility.

These segments are where the real electric revolution

can happen. But it requires standardisation and regulation. Currently, there are over 70 EV assemblers importing varying-quality products, mostly from China.

Without quality control, fake mileage claims, and unsafe batteries could flood the market, damaging consumer confidence before the sector even takes off. Early bad experiences can kill a good idea — we can't afford that.

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**“The future isn't fully electric; it's hybrid.”**

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**A Global Perspective** - Globally, I don't believe fully electric vehicles are the long-term solution. The future lies in plug-in hybrids and range-extended EVs (REVs).

These vehicles offer flexibility — electric driving for short city commutes, and fuel for long trips. I drive a plug-in hybrid myself; it covers my daily 100 km entirely on electric power and switches to fuel only when needed.

This model makes far more sense for Pakistan — and even for large countries like the US, Australia, and Canada, where long-distance travel is the norm. Even globally, full EV sales are slowing, and hybrids are regaining momentum.



# CAMPUS SPOTS FOR A LITTLE MOMENT OF ZEN

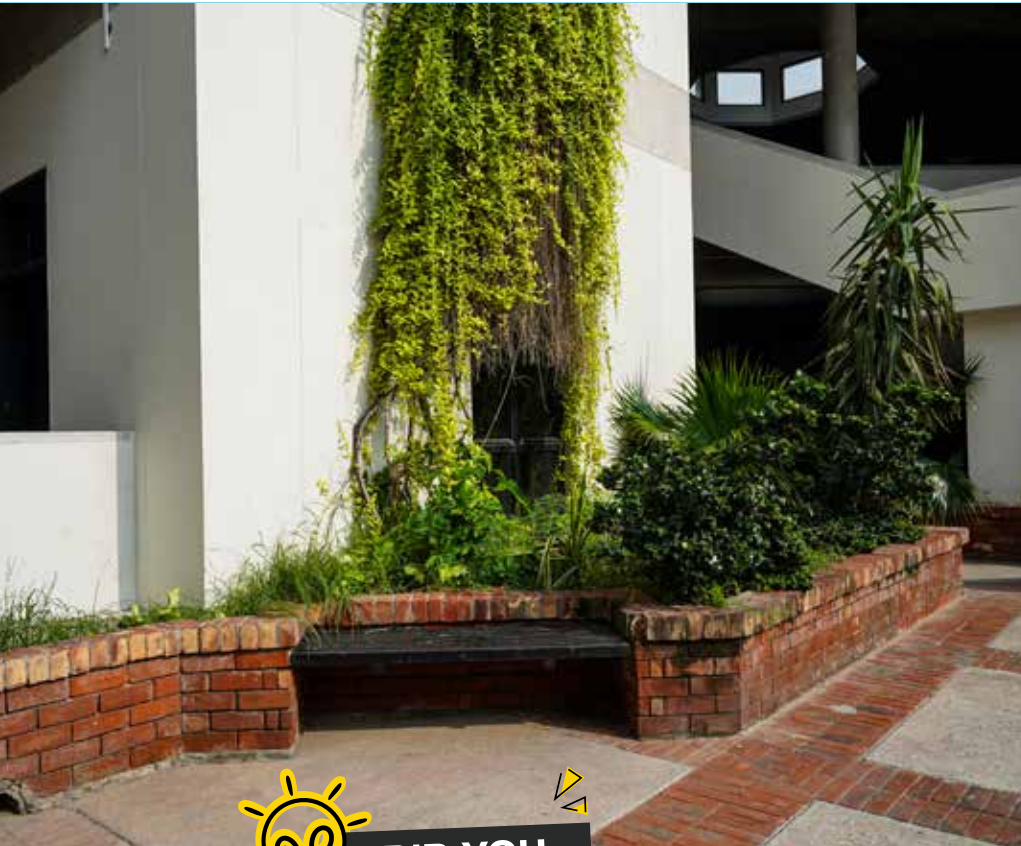
by **Sameen Mohsin**  
Lead Marketing and Communications  
LUMS Centre for Entrepreneurship

One of the most addictive parts of working at LUMS is the campus itself. Workdays can get hectic, overwhelming, and sometimes life just happens. In those moments, you really need a breath of fresh air\* and a quick grounding moment.  
(\*Figure of speech, considering Lahore's AQI, but you get the point.)

During times like these, I feel grateful that this 100-acre campus has been intentionally designed with so many different spaces that can provide you with the peace and solitude to get your bearings. I've listed some of my favourites, and would love to hear about yours too!

## The Little Nooks at the Academic Block

These benches, tucked away in the corners of the academic block, offer the most privacy. If you have just come out of a tense meeting or are having a chaotic day, this is the perfect place to retreat, specifically from people and noise. Sit down, unclench your jaw, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and let yourself reset.



**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

## Rhodes Scholar-Elect 2026

SBASSE student Syed Asad Asif has been selected as one of Pakistan's two Rhodes Scholars for 2026. He will pursue a DPhil in Theoretical Physics at the University of Oxford, joining one of the world's most prestigious academic communities.



## The Masjid

This one is an obvious choice. The LUMS masjid is beautifully designed and has a warm, welcoming atmosphere. It is always open, and the peaceful silence inside helps ground both your spirit and your thoughts.

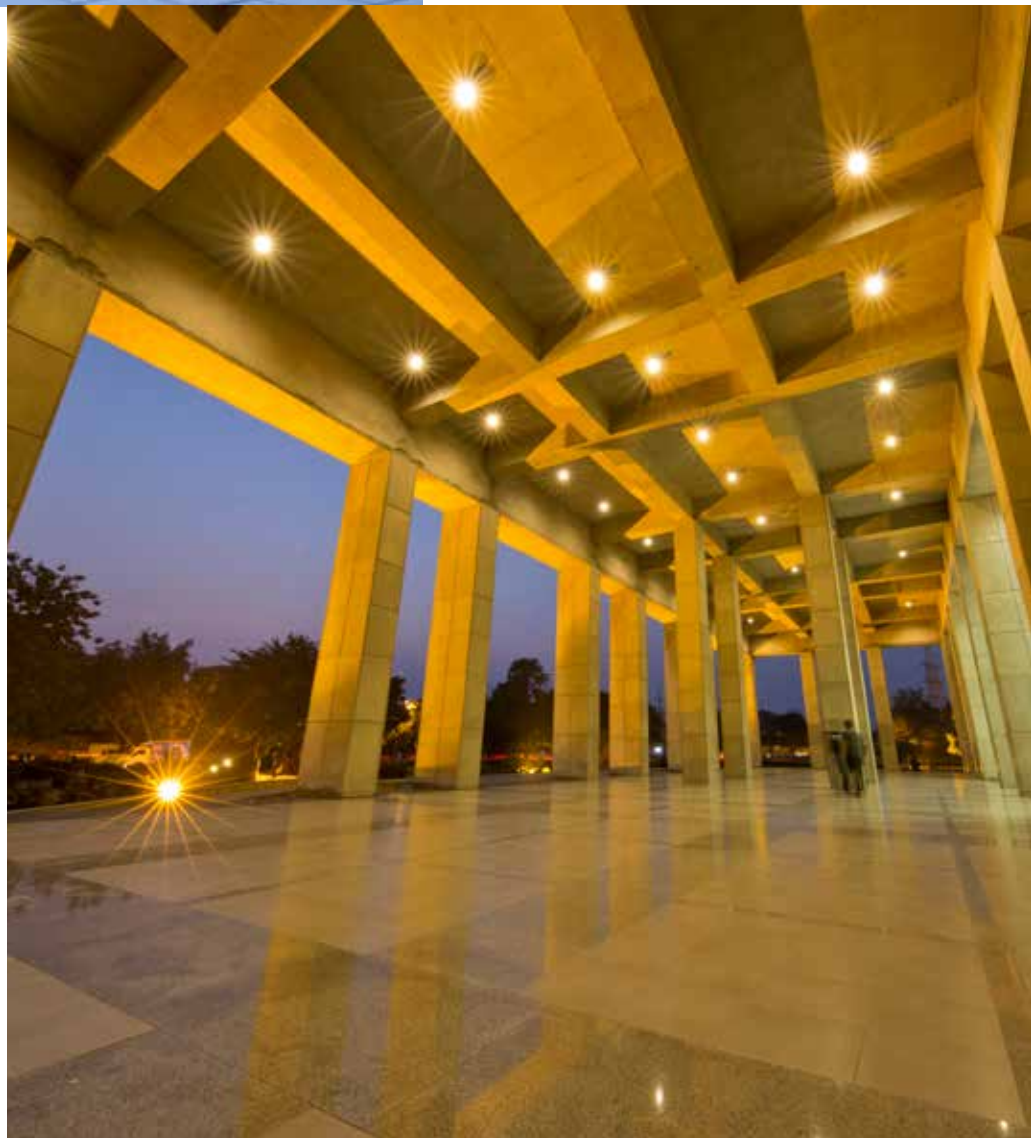


## The Khoka

On days when the weather is pleasant and the area is not too crowded, the tables outside the Khoka make for great little outdoor workspaces. They give you a break from the office environment, and with a set of good headphones, you're all set. Put on your favourite playlist, work on your deadlines, and occasionally take in the movement and energy around you.

## The SBASSE Foyer

The entrance to the Syed Babar Ali School of Science and Engineering (SBASSE) has a grand structure that almost feels like a *baradari*. It is open and airy, with a sense of lightness. Although there is usually a steady flow of people, you can find a quiet spot near one of the side pillars - sit there for a few minutes and observe the world going by. The view of the trees and the lawn offers a moment of visual calm as you give yourself a breather.





## **The Cricket Ground (at sunset)**

The cricket ground is naturally a hub of a lot of activity, but if you venture over there before the sun sets and find a bench for yourself, it's a gorgeous view. The serene orange hues across the expanse of lush green grounds can help melt the day's worries and exhaustion, and provide a bit of calm before the evening's activities.

## **Special mention for the cats on campus**

If you are a cat person (slight judgment if you are not), the cats at LUMS are some of the friendliest and most pettable in Lahore. Walk up to whichever one seems in the mood for some affection, and within minutes, the purring and cuddles will have you feeling completely relaxed. It is scientifically proven, I promise.



# Leadership, Scholarship, and Activism: Dr. Ghazal Mir Zulfiqar Takes the Helm at *Organization*

We're proud to share that Dr. Ghazal Mir Zulfiqar, a faculty member at LUMS, has been appointed Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Organization*—a globally renowned journal at the forefront of critical management and organisation studies. In this conversation, she shares what excites her most about this new role, the journal's powerful legacy as a movement in scholarship, and her vision for shaping inclusive, justice-oriented academic spaces. From supporting scholars in the Global South to integrating critical perspectives in the classroom, Dr. Zulfiqar reflects on the future of management research, teaching, and community-building.



**Congratulations, Dr. Ghazal Mir Zulfiqar! What excites you most about becoming Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Organization*, and what impact do you hope**

**to make through this position?**

Thank you very much! *Organization* is a very unique journal. In fact, it's much more

than a journal—it is also a movement in management and organisation studies (MOS), as well as a tightly knit community. When it was launched in the mid-1990s, it became a rallying cry for critical MOS theory.

The journal openly questions neoliberal and Eurocentric mainstream MOS scholarship. What began as a fringe movement became an established research domain through the launch of the journal, its support of critical scholarship, and alternative ways of imagining organisations and organising. As *Organization* came into its own and achieved a high rank in journal rankings, more mainstream journals began to open up to critical theory. Now we have some of the top journals in the field publishing research that once could only be published in *Organization*. *Organization*, however, remains the leader in critical MOS scholarship and continues to take the lead in charting a new course for management and organisation theory and praxis.

My association with the journal began as a PhD student when a professor at my university introduced me to it and asked me to review for it. A few years later, when my article was accepted for publication in *Organization*, I was thrilled to bits. In the past few years, I have served the journal as an Editorial Board Member and then as an Associate Editor. Critical scholars look to *Organization* to open new frontiers of scholarship in the field. We recently published an editorial in the journal titled “Organization Manifesto” where we lay out our vision and a future call to action. This includes fostering the growth of critical scholars and the renewal of our community, enacting caring practices of scholarship and journal-making, encouraging critical and alternative methods and writing, and supporting scholarly activism. This is a shared vision and a shared call to action—for at *Organization*, we believe that the community should lead the journal. We

held extensive discussions with our Associate Editors, Editorial Board Members, and readers before we penned the manifesto. It is an open-access piece and you can read it here: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/13505084241310542>

### **Organization addresses significant developments in organisation studies—how do you plan to bring fresh perspectives or shape discourse in this field?**

A major priority at *Organization* has been to open doors for those historically excluded from mainstream scholarship, such as academics from the Global South and early-career researchers. *Organization* does this by reaching out to scholars from marginalised regions such as Africa. The journal also annually sponsors a host of awards at the American Academy of Management’s Critical Management Studies Division, including the Best Critical Dissertation Award, Best Critical Early-Career Paper Award, Best Critical Postcolonial Paper Award, and several others. Last year, we hosted a workshop for these early-career award winners to help them turn their dissertations into publishable research. Another platform *Organization* sponsors is the ‘CMS In Touch’ platform, where everyone is welcome to attend virtual workshops—free of cost—on different aspects of critical scholarship. Many of these workshops have hosted editors of various journals who help early-career scholars understand what it takes to publish. In short, *Organization* is more than a journal—it plays the role of a nurturing leader for the critical management studies community.

### **How do you see this role contributing to your teaching and research at LUMS? As someone deeply committed to student engagement and holistic education, how will this new role influence your approach to teaching and mentorship?**

I aim for the same ethos in teaching, research, and mentorship at LUMS as I’ve mentioned above. As professors and academics, I see our role as nurturers and renewers—enabling students to view the world from different vantage points, to build solidarity networks, to question the status quo, and to believe that change is worth working for.

### **Looking ahead, what are your broader career aspirations and goals for the academic community you’re part of?**

I believe the community of critical management scholars is extremely important—not just for business schools, but for business and society as a whole. This is because this community of scholars is deeply concerned with questions of ethics, justice, and sustainability. For too long, business has been viewed through the narrow lens of shareholder primacy and profit maximisation. My aspiration, like that of other critical management scholars, is to put human beings, our planet, and all earthly (and unearthly) life front and centre.

# Healing with Science and Verse: Dr. Azra Raza's Vision for Change

LUMS had the distinct honour of hosting Dr. Azra Raza, a globally renowned oncologist, author of *The First Cell*, and Professor at Columbia University, for a series of captivating talks. Dr. Raza, a pioneer in cancer research and patient care, shared her revolutionary approach to early cancer detection, the human cost of the disease, and the role of art and poetry in healing both body and soul.

Her visit moved the LUMS community, including students and faculty members alike, as they reflected on the intersection of science, art, and the human experience. Over the course of three days, Dr. Raza provided fresh perspectives on cancer treatment, challenged the traditional “slash, poison, burn” model, and called for a shift toward a proactive, patient-centred approach. In her talks, she emphasised the importance of early detection—specifically detecting cancer at its earliest stage,



the “first cell”—which could revolutionise how we approach cancer care and save millions of lives.

Dr. Raza’s philosophy continues to extend far beyond medicine. Through her poetic reflections, she bridged both art and science and encouraged the audience to embrace Urdu literature, highlighting its ability to reconnect us with our cultural roots and provide comfort during times of crisis. Quoting literary giants like Mirza Ghalib, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, and Emily Dickinson, she highlighted her belief that poetry,

particularly in the age of climate change and existential crisis, is an essential tool for maintaining our humanity.

Throughout her talks, Dr. Raza emphasised the critical importance of collaboration in science and society. She echoed the sentiment that while art is often an individual pursuit, science is a collective endeavour that requires the combined efforts of many disciplines to drive meaningful and impactful change. This call for interdisciplinary collaboration extended into her reflections on resilience

and community, reminding the audience that collective action is the only path forward in addressing global challenges like cancer and climate change.

Dr. Raza’s visit was a profound reminder of the capacity for empathy, resilience, and hope that resides within all of us. Her passion for empowering the next generation to confront the world’s most pressing issues with integrity and determination left an indelible mark on all who attended.

## Here are some thought-provoking highlights from the series:

“  
*No one is winning the war on cancer. Either you die of cancer, or you die of the treatment. Why are these the only two choices?*”

“  
*Poetry is essential in dark times because it can show us new ways of seeing the world, to reframe our challenges, to find light in darkness.*”

“  
*You have to be authentic; you have to be sincere to your purpose. Don't expect any reward or return.*”

“  
*No matter how bleak the situation, it cannot bring life to a halt. Inaction is sacrilege. Action is the answer. Immobility is death. Movement is life. Age has no meaning.*”

“  
*There is only one purpose in life for all of us, and that is to reduce the suffering of mankind in every way we can.*”



# SBASSE Faculty Gain Global Recognition for Pioneering Research

At the Syed Babar Ali School of Science and Engineering (SBASSE) at LUMS, faculty members are leading the charge in transformative research, earning international acclaim for their contributions to pressing global challenges. From innovative strides in climate science to trailblazing work in polymer chemistry, our researchers are setting new standards in their fields.



## Making History with the Gordon Bell Prize in Climate Modelling

Dr. Zubair Khalid, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering at SBASSE, has achieved a historic milestone as the first Pakistani to receive the prestigious Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Gordon Bell Prize for Climate Modelling. This award celebrates groundbreaking advancements in high-performance computing applied to critical climate issues. Dr. Khalid was part of a collaborative, multi-institutional team that developed the *ExaScale Climate Emulator*, a game-changing innovation that utilises AI and advanced computing to transform climate simulations. The emulator's ability to predict extreme weather events with unprecedented accuracy is a significant leap toward better understanding and addressing climate change.

## Recognition as a 2025 Polymer Chemistry Pioneering Investigator



Dr. Basit Yameen, Associate Professor at SBASSE, has been named one of the 2025 Polymer Chemistry Pioneering Investigators by the Royal Society of Chemistry. This prestigious honour recognises Dr. Yameen's trailblazing work in polymer chemistry, particularly his development of smart materials with applications spanning biomedical, energy, and environmental sectors. With over two decades of expertise, Dr. Yameen continues to push the frontiers of material science, focusing on nanomaterials, surface chemistry, and sustainable solutions to tackle some of the world's most urgent challenges.

## AI-Driven Breakthrough in Battery-less IoT Systems Featured at ACM SenSys 2025



Dr. Naveed Bhatti and his team at SBASSE have published their research at ACM SenSys 2025, a prestigious conference in IoT. Their work, *CheckMate*, uses large language models to optimise energy efficiency in battery-less devices, reducing power consumption by up to 60% with minimal impact on accuracy. The project originated in the CS 677 (Topics in IoT) course and was led by final-year student Abdur Rehman, with contributions from Abdullah Soomro, now at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Abdul Rafay, currently a Teaching Fellow at SBASSE.

## AI-Powered Healthcare Initiative Earns Global Recognition



Computer Science faculty member Dr. Maryam Mustafa is advancing digital health through AI-driven innovation. As Co-founder of *Awaaz-e-Sehat*, she has developed a voice-enabled platform that helps frontline health workers manage patient records and deliver diagnostic support in local languages.

Her work has earned international recognition, including the Gates Foundation Grand Challenges Award, the Google Award for Academic Research 2024, and The Patrick J. McGovern Award for inclusive AI innovation. She also played a key role in establishing Pakistan's first AI Hub, initially focused on maternal, newborn, and child health in partnership with Aga Khan University.

## Research Uncovering Privacy Flaw in Smartphones Presented at AsiaCCS 2025



Two SBASSE students have discovered a surprising way smartphones could be used to listen in on voice commands—without needing microphone access or user permission. Ahmed Najeef and Abdul Rafay, working with Dr. Naveed Bhatti and Dr. Muhammad Hamad Alizai, found that motion sensors in phones can be used to pick up speech by slightly shifting the timing between them. Their research, which began as a class project, was accepted to AsiaCCS 2025, one of the world's top cybersecurity conferences. The project not only raises serious questions about phone privacy but also highlights the creative and impactful work happening at SBASSE.



# A Book Club That Feels Like a Hug

"There wasn't some big dramatic moment," says Faaiz Gilani, BSc Economics, Class of 2022 and co-founder of *HamSukhan*, with a smile. "Just a quiet feeling that it should exist."

It began in a small flat in London, where weekend evenings slowly turned into online reading circles. No big plans, just people tuning in with books in hand and hearts open. Even across screens and

cities, something honest and warm began to grow. Those quiet evenings would become the heart of *HamSukhan*, a space created to bring people together through stories, conversation, and a sense of home.

When Faaiz moved back to Islamabad, a quiet conversation over tea turned into a gentle realisation. The city needed more soft spaces. Little literary

corners that felt welcoming and kind. Places where stories could be shared without rules or pressure. That thought stayed with him. With a few friends, a book to begin with, and a spot to sit together, something lovely started to grow. Slowly, a community began to take shape.

The gatherings happen in cafes, others in living rooms filled with cushions, quiet laughter, and



the soft clinks of teacups. In Lahore and Islamabad, there is BookCycle, a monthly book swap where everyone brings a favourite, picks something new to take home, and returns later to share thoughts over tea. No pressure. No rules. Just the joy of an interesting discussion.

Books are chosen with quiet care. From *Wuthering Heights* to

*Before the Coffee Gets Cold*, the selections stretch across genres, languages, and lives. Some stay close to the text. Others drift into poems, memories, and long-forgotten stories.

"The books matter," Faaiz says, "but it's the people who make it whole." Readers come back, again and again. Strangers become familiar. Even after long

pauses, someone always writes to ask when the next one might be.

In a fast-moving world, HamSukhan's book circles offer something rare. A slow evening. A shared story. A reminder that sometimes, the smallest spaces hold the most meaning.

# A New Chapter Begins: The LUMS Law Clinic



What happens when law students step outside the classroom and into real-world legal practice? At the Shaikh Ahmad Hassan School of Law (SAHSOL), this question is no longer theoretical.

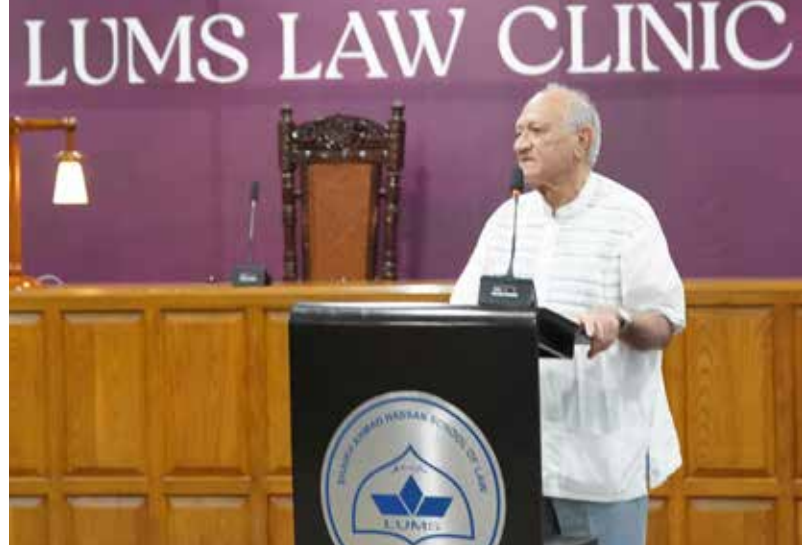
The inauguration of the new LUMS Law Clinic brought together faculty, professionals, and students for an inspiring afternoon. Dr. Sadaf Aziz, Dean, SAHSOL, and Dr. Ali Cheema, Vice Chancellor, LUMS, opened the programme with keynote remarks that framed the launch as both a pedagogical shift and a social

responsibility.

Other speakers included Ms. Angbeen Atif Mirza (Assistant Professor, SAHSOL) and Ms. Maira Mumtaz (Clinic Instructor, SAHSOL), who spoke about how the initiative is rooted in years of groundwork in clinical legal education. External perspectives also enriched the event. Ms. Kulsoom Saqib (Director General, Punjab Women Protection Authority), Dr. Qadeer Alam (AIG Judicial, Punjab Prisons), and Barrister Usama Malik (Director, Directorate of Legal Education,

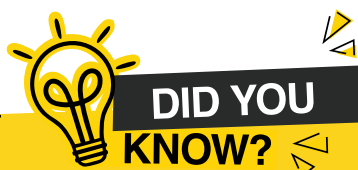
Pakistan Bar Council) shared insights on how such clinics can transform legal practice and policy.

The most memorable moments came from the students themselves. They shared their experiences of working in courts and prisons, offering candid stories full of both challenge and purpose. Their reflections showed what it means to translate abstract legal doctrines into meaningful action, especially for marginalised and underserved communities.



At its core, the clinic is about experiential learning. It is where classroom knowledge meets lived realities, and where aspiring lawyers learn not just to know the law but to use it in service of others.

The programme closed with reflections from Dr. Parvez Hassan, Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court and a founding member of LUMS. The evening ended in the law school garden with a networking session alive with conversations about the future of legal education in Pakistan.



## Humsaaye Exhibition 2025

Students from the LUMS School of Education collaborated with peers and young creative professionals from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka for the Humsaaye Exhibition 2025. Through films, podcasts, archival projects, and multimedia art, they explored shared histories, cultural memory, and what it means to imagine South Asia beyond borders.



# Convocation 2025: Celebrating Our Graduates



LUMS celebrated the achievements of its Class of 2025 through a series of memorable ceremonies held over two days. Degrees were conferred upon over 1,400 graduates across the University's five schools, as families, friends, and faculty gathered to mark this major milestone.

The convocation was attended by Pro Chancellor Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood, Vice Chancellor Dr. Ali Cheema, members of the Board of Trustees, Deans, and faculty, who together honoured the students' perseverance and accomplishments.

Dr. Cheema congratulated the graduates and urged them to face uncertainty with resilience, while valedictorians Aizaz Arif and Jovera Shakeel reflected on

their transformative journeys and the impact of their LUMS education.

Keynote speakers Ms. Kamila Shamsie and Mr. Aezaz Hussain inspired graduates to pursue their passions with courage and integrity—emphasising self-belief, purpose, and the importance of finding what truly fuels their motivation.





# HERITAGE AT LUMS

'Heritage at LUMS', an initiative dedicated to preserving, digitising, and reimagining Pakistan's cultural memory for future generations, reflects the conviction that to envision South Asia's future, it is essential to remain connected to its past.

The initiative underscores the university's commitment to advancing research and innovation in the humanities and digital scholarship. It seeks to create a space where technology,

**“Pakistan is the inheritor of an extraordinarily rich and unparalleled heritage,” said Dr. Ali Raza, Chair of the Humanities and Social Sciences department at LUMS. “And yet, we are at risk of losing these treasures.”**





history, and culture converge to document, interpret, and revitalise Pakistan's diverse heritage.

To mark the launch, LUMS hosted an event on September 26, 2025, which brought together faculty, students, and members of the wider community. The gathering celebrated ongoing work in heritage preservation and showcased interdisciplinary collaborations spanning history, art, architecture, computer science, and digital technology.

The event opened with an address by Dr. Ali Khan, Dean of the Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and featured detailed presentations on some of the work being done by the faculty, including Dr. Ali Raza, Dr. Ali Usman Qasmi, Dr. Nadhra S.N. Khan, Dr. Suleman Shahid and Dr. Murtaza Taj. They highlighted more than a decade of collaborative work across two schools at LUMS.

Projects ranged from digitising endangered monuments and archives to curating immersive exhibitions and sound collections. This multidisciplinary practice, uniting the humanities and computer science, has enabled faculty to preserve history, art and culture in new ways and to build capacity for high-level heritage projects. "Together, we are storytellers of heritage—making the past tangible, alive and meaningful," said Dr. Khan, Associate Professor of Art and Architectural History at LUMS.

The launch also unveiled *Icons of Devotion: Jain Artefacts in the Lahore Museum*, a beautifully curated catalogue bringing to light a little-seen collection. Developed through months of archival research, documentation and object study, the project involved students working alongside faculty and museum staff to trace origins, analyse inscriptions and curate narratives around the artefacts. In doing so, it reclaims a forgotten chapter of Pakistan's history and makes it accessible to wider audiences.



The presentation of the Jain catalogue to the Director of the Lahore Museum symbolised the collaborative spirit underpinning the initiative, while ongoing projects link LUMS faculty and students with national and international partners committed to heritage preservation and access.

Placing the initiative in a wider civic context, Vice Chancellor Dr. Ali Cheema noted,

**“The deeper mission for us is to bring heritage back not just as preservation of the past but as something central to our thinking in this society as it moves forward.”**



By giving voice to what has long been forgotten, Heritage at LUMS signals Pakistan's commitment to ensuring its fragile but rich heritage thrives in the digital age—serving as a bridge between past wisdom and future possibility, and positioning LUMS as a leader in cultural preservation and digital humanities across the region.



Various artefacts from the LUMS Digital Archive

# 2025 SOE Practicum Conference Highlights— Education Innovation



The Syed Ahsan Ali and Syed Maratib Ali School of Education (SOE) at LUMS held its fourth annual Practicum Showcase Conference on May 2, 2025, bringing together over 400 participants, including MPhil Education Leadership and Management students, faculty, partner organisations, and education sector experts. The event showcased student-led capstone projects developed over the past year in collaboration with schools and education-focused organisations, addressing real-world issues in pedagogy,

inclusive education, ed-tech, school leadership, and more. The conference opened with a keynote by Ms. Baela Raza Jamil, who emphasised the need for bold, locally rooted reforms and called for an education system that engages emotion, ethics, and evidence. Three expert panels explored timely challenges: the impact of sociocultural stressors

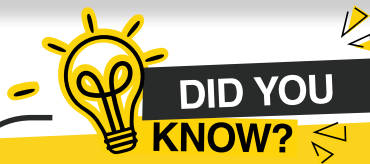
on minority students, the link between leadership and teacher retention, and the need for more accessible and practical professional development for educators. Speakers from LUMS, Aitchison College, Aga Khan University, The City School, and others stressed the importance of inclusive policies, better training, and collaborative solutions



tailored to Pakistan's context. Dean, SOE, Dr. Tayyaba Tamim closed the conference by celebrating the work of the

graduating class and calling for stronger partnerships between schools and universities. She urged all stakeholders to keep

teacher well-being at the centre of future reforms and to continue bridging academic research with practical impact.



## LUMS Delegation at SAESM

LUMS undergraduate economics students represented Pakistan at the 20<sup>th</sup> South Asian Economics Students' Meet in Kathmandu, Nepal. Competing against teams from across the region, the delegation earned top honours and highlighted the strength of economics education at LUMS.



# The Tabeer Project: Strengthening Incubation for a Thriving Start-up Ecosystem

**By Sameen Mohsin**

Lead Marketing & Communications,  
LUMS Centre for Entrepreneurship



The prevailing sentiment at the LUMS Centre for Entrepreneurship (LCE) is that true value and impact arise from initiatives that extend beyond the centre's walls and contribute to the broader Pakistani start-up ecosystem. This ethos is embodied in the Tabeer Project, a transformative venture that has created waves of positive change in the region.

Funded by the US Department of State, the 18-month Tabeer Project aimed to strengthen

business incubators across the Punjab region in Pakistan. With experience managing incubation centres in Lahore and Quetta, and an extensive university network, LCE was well-equipped to lead the charge.

Talking about the objectives of the project, Saba Shahid, Manager Partnerships and Projects at LCE, elaborates, "The Tabeer project sought to create a multiplier effect within Punjab's academic community. We wanted to spark not only a conversation

integrating entrepreneurial training opportunities into university campuses but also provide a blueprint for establishing and developing incubation centres where individuals could experiment, learn, and ultimately succeed."

Fifteen university incubators joined the project, each at different operational stages. Some, such as Fatima Jinnah Medical University, focused on specific disciplines, which posed a unique challenge for the LCE

Learning and Development team in designing tailored training. However, this was a challenge the team was well-prepared to tackle.

Minahil Zia, Lead of Learning and Development Programmes at LCE, explains, “The first three months after onboarding were dedicated to a comprehensive needs assessment. We held focus groups with the entire cohort to understand their existing facilities and services, as well as their operational gaps and resource needs. This helped us assess their baseline experience and shaped the training to ensure that everyone gained meaningful insights.”

Minahil further described the training, “It covered three key areas: entrepreneurial coaching to foster leadership and a mindset of innovation, Makers Lab training to establish prototyping facilities or offer access to such services, and operational guidance in fundraising and resource management for long-term sustainability.



It has been encouraging to see participants of the Tabeer Project absorb the lessons from each phase of the training and iteratively improve their operational plans. This has enabled them to enhance the performance of their incubators and build better processes to guide the start-ups they support.” A key highlight of the project was the exchange of insights through

collaborative discussions, even though the participants came from different universities and cities.



“The programme was incredibly engaging and well-organised, leaving me with a renewed sense of purpose. Connecting with 15 other business incubation centres across Punjab has helped us align our efforts toward shared goals.”

**Rizwana Bashir**  
Lahore Garrison  
University



For the LCE team, it was crucial that these trainings were not conducted in isolation and that other key stakeholders within each participating university were also aligned with the ideas and strategic plans being developed by the Business Incubator Centre (BIC) management. One way this was addressed was through on-site workshops, where BIC managers presented their plans to an audience that included university deans, the vice chancellor, and other relevant representatives.

As part of the project, participants embarked on a two-week professional

exchange trip to the United States, funded by the US Department of State. The trip offered a valuable opportunity to expand their networks and gain exposure to global best practices in entrepreneurship. It included visits to leading incubators, innovation hubs, and universities, alongside mentorship sessions and industry meetups.

As the project nears completion, the Tabeer digital dashboard ensures lasting impact. The platform allows participants to stay connected, troubleshoot challenges collaboratively, and expand the incubation network.

Muhammad Umer Bashir, Lead of Marketing and Technology at LCE, explains how the dashboard will operate, “All the training materials and course content will be uploaded to the portal, where participants can continue to use them as reference material. Any problems they face can be discussed with peers, enabling them to troubleshoot and collaborate. It will also serve as a knowledge hub, which we aim to expand across Pakistan. We’re working on building a directory that documents all universities, incubators, makers labs, technicians, and other relevant resources.”

Meeting startups, investors, and the Pakistani entrepreneurial community in the US was truly inspiring. The exposure turned my doubts into motivation after seeing so many innovative ideas in action.”

**Dr. Maria**  
**Lahore College for Women**  
**University**

The Tabeer Project has significantly strengthened university incubators across Punjab, equipping them with the skills, networks, and resources necessary to better support start-ups. Through training, collaboration, and global exposure, participants have refined their incubation models and established lasting connections. With the Tabeer digital dashboard, this impact will continue, fostering a more connected and resourceful incubation ecosystem.

“The Tabeer workshop was an insightful experience that helped us voice our needs more effectively and fostered a culture of collaboration grounded in our realities.”

**Qanita Mahmud**  
**Fatima Jinnah Medical**  
**University**

# LUMS IMM Students Take Equations and Posters to Italy for the Summer

In Summer 2025, the Department of Mathematics at LUMS launched the first-ever IMM Summer Internship, offering students of the International Mathematics Master (IMM) programme a remarkable opportunity to immerse themselves in research while experiencing international academic culture.

Five IMM students, Amtul Hadi Bint-e-Khalid, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mahrukh Nazir, Sobia Saeed, and Yousuf Bashir, travelled to the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, Italy. Over a fortnight, they attended seminars, mini-courses, poster sessions and presentations while also engaging with ICTP faculty, doctoral students, and alumni.

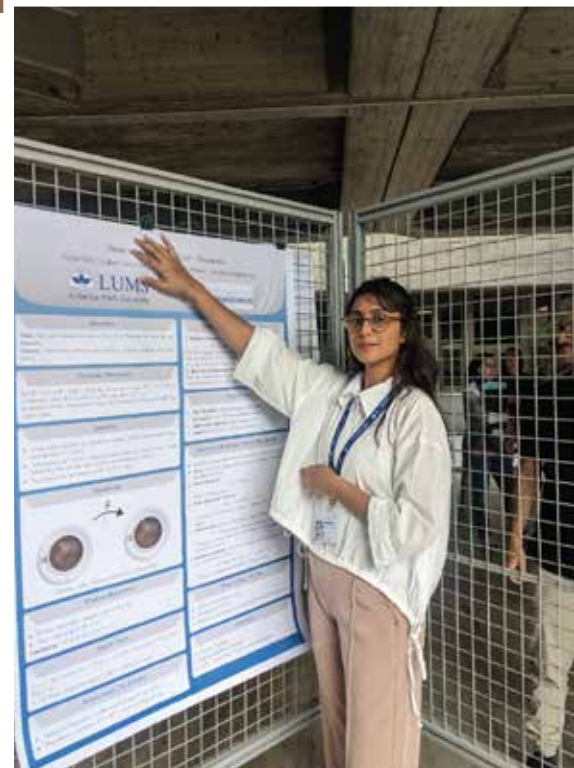
The internship included lectures on wide-ranging topics, such as Fourier Analysis and the Riemann Hypothesis, Determinism and Randomness in Mathematics, Algebraic Numbers, and the Statistical Mechanics of Neural Networks. Mini-courses on Adversarial Risk Analysis and Approximation Theorems in Complex Analysis

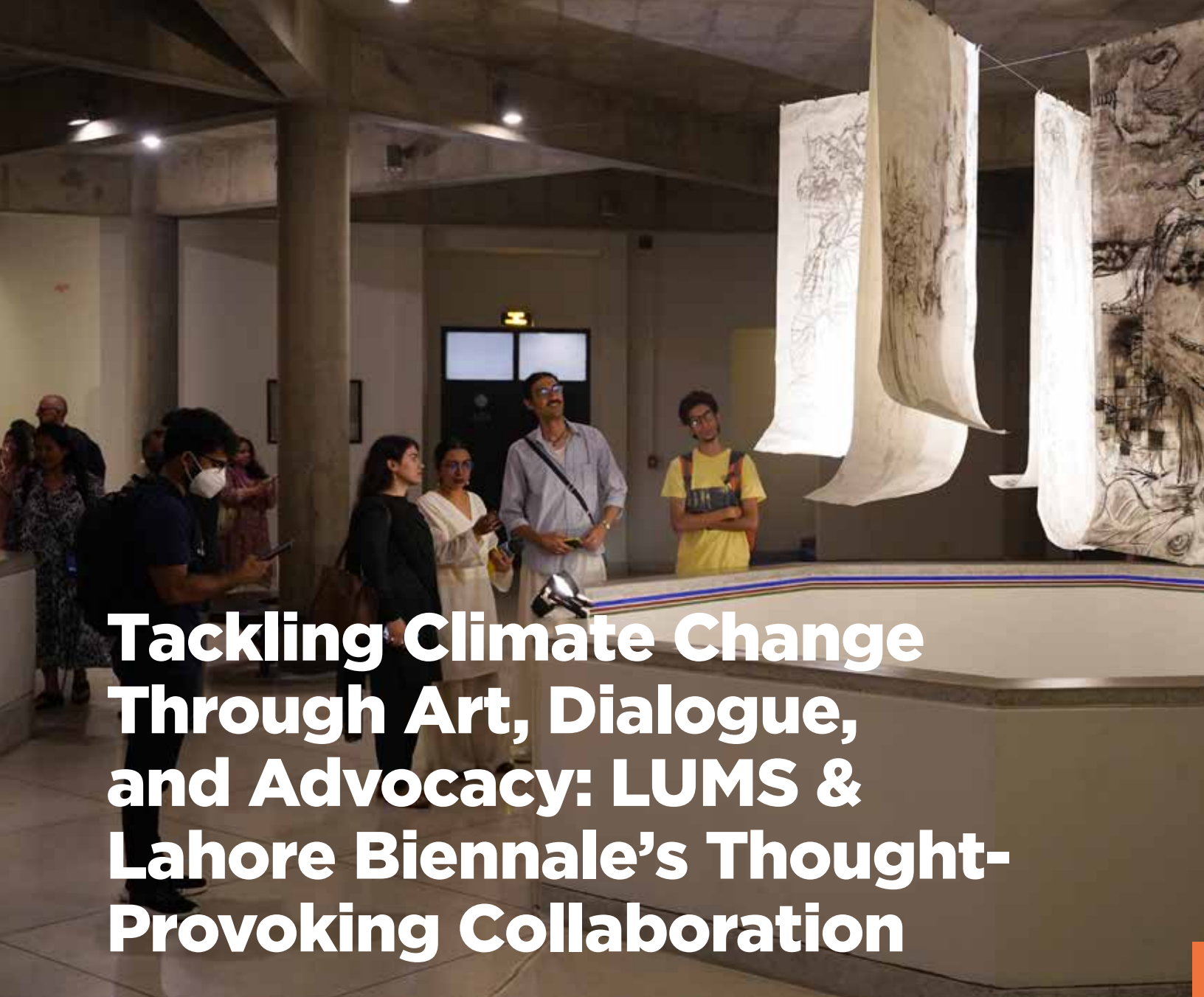
further broadened their exposure to advanced mathematical ideas.

More than just a listening exercise, the highlight was preparing and presenting their first research posters under the guidance of ICTP mentors, an experience that sharpened both their analytical abilities and science communication skills.

The experience extended far beyond the classroom. The students explored Venice, hiked scenic trails, took ferry rides to Sistiana, and visited Trieste's historic city centre. They also attended ICTP diploma thesis defences and visited the SciFabLab, gaining a wider perspective on the ways mathematics connects with other disciplines.

With the programme set to run for three years, future cohorts of IMM students will continue to carry their mathematics from LUMS to the global stage, returning with stories of learning and inspiration.





# Tackling Climate Change Through Art, Dialogue, and Advocacy: LUMS & Lahore Biennale's Thought-Provoking Collaboration

In response to the growing climate crisis, LUMS partnered with the Lahore Biennale's Climate Congress to host a series of impactful events aimed at addressing environmental challenges in Pakistan. Held from November 6-8, 2024, at the University, the series brought together a diverse group of artists, scholars, activists, and community members, all united by a shared commitment to explore climate issues through

interdisciplinary dialogue, creative expression, and collaborative action.

The aim of the event was to foster a deeper understanding of climate change, particularly in the context of the Global South, and to catalyse meaningful discourse on the role of storytelling, advocacy, and justice in driving positive change. Through a combination of panel discussions, art exhibitions, and interactive

engagements, the series explored how environmental challenges intersect with urban life, social structures, and governance.

One of the event's most compelling highlights was the opening of the art exhibition, 'Lamenting the Beloved City or Pledging Devotion Afresh?', a collateral event of Lahore Biennale 03. Featuring works by 19 artists, the exhibition focused on the environmental risks faced



by communities, especially those in the Global South. Its interactive component invited attendees to reflect on their own roles in the climate crisis, encouraging them to make personal pledges to take climate action. This fusion of art and action reinforced the event's commitment to collective responsibility and environmental stewardship.

Another notable session, 'Urban Ecologies: Infrastructures and Lived Realities', examined the complex relationships between urban environments and climate resilience, with a particular focus on the challenges posed by rapid urbanisation in cities like Lahore. The session drew on expertise from a wide range of fields to help build more sustainable and climate-conscious cities.

The series wrapped up with a powerful panel discussion titled 'Climate Narratives: Storytelling, Advocacy, and Environmental Justice'. This session focused on the profound impact of narratives—whether expressed



through literature, art, or policy—in shaping how we understand and respond to climate change. The discussion stressed the power of storytelling to challenge entrenched ideas, inspire advocacy, and ultimately drive systemic change in the pursuit of environmental justice.

Throughout the event, LUMS and the Lahore Biennale emphasised the crucial role of institutions in driving climate conversations and demonstrated how the humanities, arts, and social sciences can offer fresh perspectives on solving complex environmental problems. By providing a platform for open and candid dialogue, as well as creative exchanges, the series aimed to inspire a transformative shift in how we approach climate change—one that considers not only the present but also future generations.

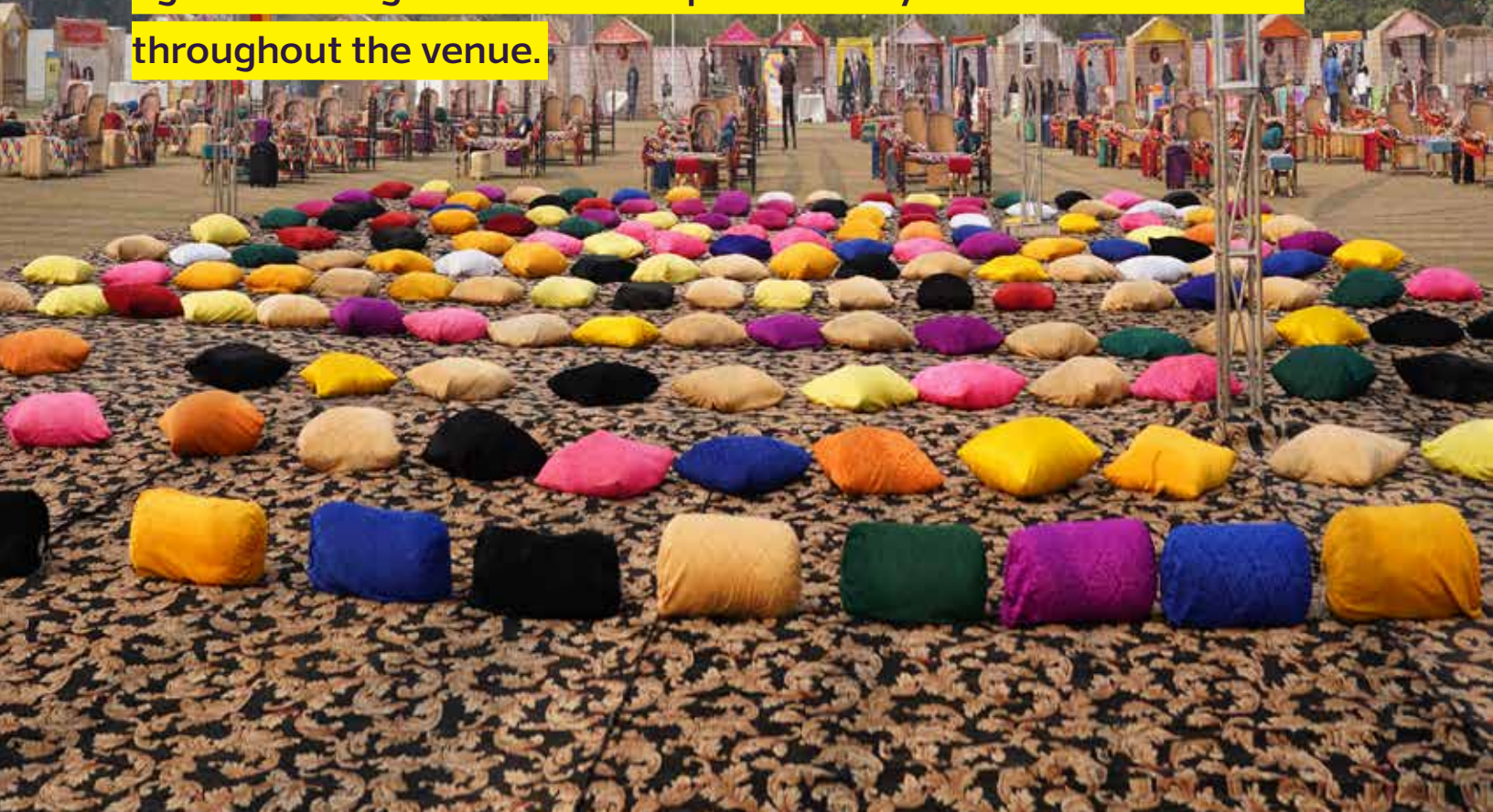
As the climate crisis intensifies, this collaboration serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of collective action. LUMS remains committed to fostering critical conversations and advancing solutions to address the pressing climate challenges of our time.



# LUMS *Carnival* 2025

## A Celebration of Punjab's Vibrant Culture

On January 31, 2025, the LUMS community gathered for the Carnival 2025: *Desi Mela Edition*, an unforgettable celebration of Punjab's vibrant culture. The day kicked off with an electrifying drum circle led by Drum Jam Global, where participants of all ages came together to create powerful rhythms that resonated throughout the venue.





The energy was infectious, setting the stage for an action-packed day filled with tradition, music, and festivities.

In the Kids' Zone, young ones immersed themselves in arts and crafts, explored interactive play zones, and enjoyed an exciting lineup of performances, including a delightful puppet show and an engaging magic show. Meanwhile, adults joined in the fun with a variety of games, including Ludo, carrom, snooker, and foosball, sparking friendly competition and plenty of enjoyment.

Visitors explored food stalls offering mouthwatering local Punjabi treats, while others immersed themselves in the lively rhythms of the dhol or joined impromptu bhangra sessions. The day also included incredible performances, from a mesmerising Sufi Dhamal act to a spellbinding live Punjabi concert,

where soulful melodies filled the air, evoking the timeless charm of Punjab's folk music.

As the day unfolded, the LUMS community embraced the spirit of Jashn-e-Punjab, celebrating

the richness of Punjab's cultural heritage. The event was not only a festival of music, food, and entertainment but also a powerful reminder of the unity and connection that make the LUMS community truly special.





**Fatima Kamran**  
Programme  
Coordination Specialist,  
Department of  
Economics

"The vibrant Punjab Mela organised by HR was a much-needed break after the crazy add-and-drop period. It truly captured the essence of Punjab's spirit, and I thoroughly enjoyed the whole vibe of the event, from the decorations to the activities. It was a great event!"



**Zainab Batool**  
Programme  
Coordination  
Associate, Department  
of Economics

"Punjab Fest was full of colours and cultural themes. It was an amazing experience with wonderful food and activities for all groups to enjoy."



**Safa Amjad**  
MGSHSS '27

"It was amazing—I absolutely loved it! It was my first time attending a Desi Mela-style carnival, and it brought back such happy memories. I really hope events like this happen more often."



**Aqsa Zeb**  
MGSHSS '28

"What an incredible event! The food was absolutely delicious, and the activities kept everyone engaged and entertained. I loved the vibe—the music, the cultural representation, and the decorations. It was an experience that really brought the LUMS community together in the best way possible!"



**Hajra Mazari**  
Head of Talent Management &  
Learning, Human Resources

"Jashn-e-Punjab was a vibrant and immersive celebration of culture, heritage, and community spirit. The event truly brought together our students, faculty, staff, and families, and reflected our commitment to fostering engagement and inclusivity. A heartfelt thank you to my dedicated team, whose hard work made this event possible, and to everyone who participated and enjoyed the celebrations!"



**Dr. Mohsin Bashir**  
Associate Professor,  
SDSB

"The event was truly incredible and grand. I loved the ambience, and it was wonderful to see so many of the LUMS junior staff and vendors bring their families along—it added such a warm and welcoming touch to the experience."

# WHAT'S NEW AT LUMS

## Padel Court

LUMS has unveiled its first-ever state-of-the-art Padel Court, an initiative designed to promote accessibility, inclusivity, and healthy social engagement. This milestone addition brings the popular game to campus completely free for the student body.



## Off-Side Café

As one of the final initiatives of the Student Council '24-'25, LUMS has introduced a brand-new eatery on campus, the Off-Side Café.

Inspired by its location beside the cricket ground, it adds a vibrant new spot for students to relax and enjoy campus life.



# Pathways to Development at LUMS: Advancing Research, Dialogue, and Action for Inclusive Growth

The Pathways to Development conferences at LUMS have become a vital forum for critical dialogue on inequality, governance, and inclusive growth. Bringing together leading academics, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from Pakistan and around the world, these conferences foster evidence-based discussions on the country's most pressing development challenges.

In 2024, the conference spotlighted inequality and social justice, inspiring cross-sectoral debate on poverty, health, education, gender, and economic reform. Building on that momentum, the 2025 edition—*Rethinking Governance in an Age of Crisis*—expanded the conversation to explore how institutions, tax systems, and gender-responsive policies can drive resilience amid rising inequality and climate-related challenges.

Together, these gatherings underscore LUMS' commitment to convening thought leaders and advancing policy-relevant research that informs equitable and sustainable development pathways for Pakistan and the region.

## Conference Organisers:

Chaudhry Nazar Muhammad  
Department of Economics and  
the Mahbub Ul Haq Research  
Centre (MHRC) at LUMS

## Collaborators:

Centre for Economic Research in  
Pakistan (CERP)

Institute of Development &  
Economic Alternatives (IDEAS)

Institute of Development Studies  
at the University of Sussex (IDS)

Consortium for Development  
Policy Research (CDPR)

International Growth Centre  
(IGC)

# 2024

With 20 engaging sessions and a stellar lineup of speakers, the event was a true celebration of ideas and innovation. Opening the conference, CERP President and CEO, Mr. Maroof A. Syed emphasised the need to “reimagine governance as a dynamic and participatory process.”

Keynote speakers brought deep insight into Pakistan's development challenges. Dr. Lant Pritchett from the London School of Economics challenged the use of low poverty thresholds and stressed the need for strong state capacity. Dr. Mazhar Waseem from the University of Manchester offered a critical analysis of Pakistan's tax system, exploring why an increase in tax filers has not translated into higher revenues.

Panel discussions spanned a wide range of issues—from electoral reform and market systems to gender dynamics and inclusive governance. As always, Path2Dev served as a powerful platform for dialogue, research, and action towards a more inclusive and sustainable Pakistan.



"Climate finance is the new climate justice. There must be global accountability, and I urge courts to recognise climate finance as a human right."

- Justice Mansoor Ali Shah,  
Supreme Court of Pakistan



"Good governance and inclusion are two sides of the same coin."

- Dr. Lant Pritchett,  
London School of Economics



"Technology is just a complement to [the tax filing] process. Technology is not going to be a substitute for enforcement efforts."

- Dr. Mazhar Waseem,  
University of Manchester



"The health governance panel really stood out to me. I loved the fact that it was an all-women panel. We've had some fantastic panel discussions as well as technical papers. It is an academic conference, but we want to make sure that there are panels where academics come together with practitioners and policymakers; we are always geared towards that combination."

- Dr. Hadia Majid,  
LUMS



"In today's session, for example, we had a behavioural economist, a political scientist, someone from a science background, and a sociologist. When you have discussions from different disciplines giving comments to each other, you get more nuanced and richer insights."

- Dr. Farah Said,  
MHRC



"It's pretty rare to see a conference where you mix policymakers and people who are in office with the natural experimentation approaches. I hope people are really inspired by all of the exciting work that is being done in Pakistan, relative to its size; it's a very under-explored context."

- Dr. Cory Smith,  
University of Maryland  
(Participant)



# 2025

## Organisers:

- Gender, Growth and Labour Markets in Low-Income Countries (G<sup>2</sup>LM|LIC) Programme
- Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD)
- IZA Institute of Labor Economics
- Chaudhry Nazar Muhammad Department of Economics, Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Mahbub ul Haq Research Centre, LUMS
- Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (IDS)
- Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS)
- International Growth Centre (IGC)
- Consortium for Development Policy Research (CDPR)
- Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan (CERP)

The session titled “Resilience and Fairness in Tax Systems in the Region” brought together leading policymakers, economists, and development experts to discuss strategies for building equitable and robust tax systems. Moderated by Shahrukh Wani, Senior Country Manager for Zambia at the International Growth Centre, the panel featured Sam Waldo, Development Director at the British High

Commission Islamabad; Dr. Hamid Ateeq Sarwar, Member (Inland Revenue - Operations), Pakistan’s Federal Board of Revenue; Dr. Ali Cheema, Vice Chancellor of LUMS and Lead Academic for IGC Pakistan; and Murtaza Jafferjee, Chairman of the Advocata Institute and CEO of JB’s Securities Sri Lanka. The session concluded with closing remarks by Roberta Gatti, Chief Economist for the MENA Region at the World Bank.



“Let’s rethink our common assumptions about how public institutions work. My research across multiple countries, including Pakistan, shows that many government employees are genuinely motivated to serve the public good. The notion of intrinsic corruption may not be entirely accurate — it’s perhaps more of an institutional story.”

[Dr. Sheheryar Banuri](#),  
University of East Anglia



“When designing social insurance, we need to think beyond individual interventions and move towards institutional approaches that build collective security. It’s better to target firms rather than workers. Although workers are more exposed, their skills allow them to remain more resilient.”

[Dr. Imran Rasul](#),  
University College London

The session titled “Maternal Health and Nutrition: Evidence, Policy, and Pathways for Impact” featured insightful discussions on improving maternal and child health outcomes through data-driven policies and innovative interventions. The session began with a keynote address and was moderated by Zoha Waqar Farooqi, Programme Manager for Health Research at CERP. The panel included Shaper Mirza, Associate Professor

at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS); Zeina Sifri, Health Specialist at the Gates Foundation; and Qurat ul Ain, Health Specialist for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health at UNICEF Punjab, Pakistan. The session concluded with closing remarks by Jishnu Das, Distinguished Professor of Public Policy at Georgetown University.



“The informal economy creates a vicious cycle, where barriers to formalisation (e.g., difficulties for start-ups and businesses deciding whether to operate in cash or formally) both result from and perpetuate weaknesses in the existing tax system. Expanding the tax base through fewer exemptions and loopholes, along with improving tax administration, can help address structural weaknesses. The roles of innovation and digitisation can be key enablers of reform.”

**Roberta Gatti,**  
Chief Economist for the MENA Region, World Bank



“Many clinics have ultrasound machines that are either non-functional or lack a sonographer. Our AI-enabled portable probe, which connects to a phone or tablet, helps non-specialists interpret results—improving access to essential prenatal care for pregnant women.”

**Zeina Sifri,**  
Health Specialist at the Gates Foundation



# Advancing Educational Equity for Transgender Students in Punjab



What makes schools effective in supporting transgender students? And what challenges do they face? A practicum project by MPhil Education Leadership and Management (ELM) 2024 graduates, Umme Rubab and Muhammad Usman, guided by faculty advisor, Dr. Tayyaba Tamim, explored how specialised schools in Punjab are working to meet the educational needs of transgender students.





“Education is a fundamental right, and every student, regardless of gender identity, deserves a safe and supportive learning environment to thrive.”

- Umme Rubab  
ELM '24

Partnering with the Education Strategy and Development Office (ESDO), they conducted a comparative case study of four schools to assess the effectiveness of these institutions in fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Key findings revealed that well-maintained school

infrastructure, flexible attendance policies, vocational training opportunities, and reliable financial support are essential in promoting student success. The study also highlighted the importance of strong student-teacher relationships and community engagement in creating a sense of belonging and improving educational outcomes.

By addressing the unique challenges faced by transgender students, the project contributes to the global conversation on inclusive education. This research offers valuable insights for policymakers and educators, emphasising the need for continued efforts to create more equitable educational practices across Pakistan.



# Our Students Make Their Mark



Wardah Mahmood, a PhD student at SBASSE and SABARA awardee, is recognised in SPIE's Women in Optics notebook for her research in quantum optics. Her work on quantum weak values and nanostructures pushes the boundaries of optical technology. As the first female president of the SPIE Student Chapter at LUMS, she advocates for mentorship and early involvement in professional bodies.



Jovera Shakeel, a BSc Economics and Mathematics student at LUMS, was named Rhodes Scholar-Elect 2025 for Pakistan, marking an incredible achievement in her academic journey.



Farah Ashraf, a PhD student at SBASSE, is currently researching anti-cancer compounds at the Institute of Cancer Research, London, through the HEC International Research Support Initiative. Her work focuses on chordoma-related projects, contributing to the advancement of cancer research.

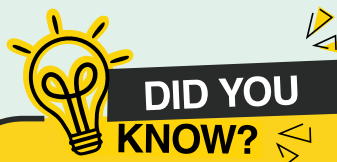


In a landmark achievement, Aizaz Arif (BA-LL.B '25), Sakina Zulfiqar (BA-LL.B '25), and Asfand Katchela (BA-LL.B '26) from SAHSOL became the first-ever Pakistani team to win the Jean-Pictet International Humanitarian Law Competition, held this year in Bali, Indonesia. Competing against 140 delegates from over 40 countries, the LUMS team stood out for their legal acumen, advocacy, and teamwork.



For the third consecutive year, the LUMS Model United Nations team earned the Outstanding Delegation award at Harvard National Model United Nations (HNMUN)—one of the competition's highest honours. This year's delegation—Mahnoor Gul, Anas Adeel Allawala, Umaimah Sajid, Laiba Abid, Hubaib Sheheryar, and Suhaima Jawwad—stood out for their resilience, preparation, and teamwork, bringing pride to LUMS and representing Pakistan on the global stage.

A team of senior Accounting and Finance students from SDSB, The Short Sellers, won the 17th Pakistan Final of the CFA Institute Research Challenge, earning the honour of representing Pakistan at the South Asia sub-regional final. The team, comprising Maria Salman, Junaid Abdul Hadi, Muhammad Ahmed Awan, Mahgul Ayesha, and Muhammad Affan Tariq (Class of 2025), stood out for their analytical and presentation skills in a competition that tests students on real-world financial analysis.



## LUMS Students at OxIMUN

LUMS students Muhammad Hamza Athar, Eman Ali, Muhammad Shazil Nadeem, and Mahnoor Gul became the first Pakistani team ever invited to chair at OxIMUN, Oxford's flagship Model UN conference. Their selection reflects LUMS' growing legacy in student diplomacy, debate, and global leadership.



# Celebrating the **PYL Poet Laureate Finalists** from LUMS

We are excited to celebrate the incredible achievements of our LUMS students and alumni who were recognised as finalists and runners-up in the inaugural Pakistan Youth Poet Laureate (PYL) competition in September 2024. After receiving over 1,400 submissions, four LUMS students and graduates were selected for their outstanding contributions to poetry. Here's a closer look at their impressive accomplishments:





**Zain ul Abidin Khan Alizai**  
**BSc (Hons) Political Science '24**  
**Runner-up, English Poetry**

Zain was recognised for his poem, 'Cradling the face of the world in my hands.' In this deeply reflective piece, Zain mediates on understanding the world through the language of desire. His poetry has been published in various local and international journals, including Savant-Garde, The Aleph Review, Counterclock Magazine, and Baudae-Sabaa. He has also performed at notable events such as the Delhi Poetry Festival and was selected for the 2020 Adroit Summer Mentorship Program for Poetry under José Olivarez.



**Sherdil Awais Rashid**  
**BA (Hons) History '27**  
**Runner-up, English Poetry**

Sherdil received runner-up recognition for his untitled poem, which explores the intimate relationship one develops with poetry. Through his writing, Sherdil encourages readers to engage deeply with the text and interpret it in their own way. His poetry has been featured in literary publications such as Kitab Ghar's essay collection *Dhalta Suraj*, Olomopolo Media's anthology *Uncollected*, and poet Chen-Chen's e-mag *Lickety Split*. Sherdil also received the Kitab Ghar grant for Pakistani poet Sadia Khatri's writing residency, Reading and Writing in the World.



**Rumaisa Maryam Samir**  
**BA (Hons) History '27**  
**Finalist, English Poetry**

Rumaisa was named a finalist for her poem, 'The Lights Ask Us to Fix the Country,' which poignantly explores the complex themes of intergenerational trauma, displacement, and identity. Born and raised in Karachi, Rumaisa's poetry explores cultural identity, mortality, and the concept of home. Her work has been published in journals like *The Incandescent Review*, *Backwards Trajectory*, and *The Stirling Review*.



**Ayesha Owais**  
**Participant, LUMS Young Writers Workshop**  
**Finalist, English Poetry**

Ayesha, a participant of the LUMS Young Writers Workshop, was also a finalist in the competition with her poem that explores themes of nostalgia, childhood, and the realisation of one's limitations. Ayesha's work reflects her reflective approach to poetry, where she highlights moments of personal insight and emotional depth.

These finalists are a testament to the incredible talent nurtured at LUMS, and we are incredibly proud of their achievements in this prestigious competition. Through their work, they continue to foster important conversations about identity, trauma, and human connection. Their poetry highlights the power of storytelling and the lasting impact of the written word.

# A Legacy of Impact: **LUMS Alumni** **Achievements**

Our alumni continue to shape the world through groundbreaking achievements in academia, entrepreneurship, public service, and social innovation. This year's highlights include global recognitions, prestigious appointments, and transformative initiatives that reflect the university's enduring commitment to excellence and impact.



Fatima Ahmed (BSc 2024) moderated a global panel on youth climate action at COP21, connecting with changemakers and exploring bold solutions. Ahsan Mashhood (BSc 2022) presented Oxford research on climate change and public health, while leading efforts to build a South Asian youth research network.



**Dr. Haris Aziz**  
BSc 2003

Dr. Aziz was promoted to Professor at the University of New South Wales, Australia, in recognition of his global influence in Game Theory and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Named Australia's national field leader in decision sciences and ranked among the top 2% of scientists worldwide, Dr. Aziz continues to advance ethical and equitable solutions in AI, healthcare, and robotics.



**Muhammad Mohad Zulfiqar**  
BA-LL.B 2024

Mohad was awarded the Stephen Blyth Scholarship by the Oxford Pakistan Programme (OPP) to pursue the prestigious Bachelor of Civil Laws (BCL) at the University of Oxford for the 2024-2025 academic year. This fully funded scholarship marks a remarkable milestone, as Mohad is among the few Pakistan-trained lawyers to gain admission to the BCL in nearly two decades.



**Malik Muhammad Danish**  
BA-LL.B 2017

Danish has made history as the first LUMS law graduate to be accepted into Stanford Law School's LL.M programme. A Fulbright Scholar and the author of *Honeyed Poison*, Danish blends his passion for diplomacy, languages, and international law to drive meaningful change. His accolades include success in the CSS and PPSC exams, as well as earning a Master of Science in Foreign Service (MSFS) from Georgetown University.



**Syed Muhammad Ismail**  
BSc 2021

Ismail, co-founder of Saraaf, made global headlines by securing a record-breaking \$5.4 million deal on Shark Tank Pakistan—the largest investment in the show's international history. From launching his first business at LUMS to transforming Saraaf into a leading B2B commodity sourcing platform, Ismail's entrepreneurial journey is redefining trade across Central and South Asia.



**Fariel Salahuddin**  
BSc 2005

Fariel was named a finalist for the Schwab Foundation's Social Innovation Awards 2025, recognising her pioneering work with UpTrade. Her initiative, Goats for Water, empowers off-grid farming communities by enabling them to trade livestock for essential equipment, such as solar-powered water pumps—transforming the lives of over 100,000 people and reshaping rural economies.



**Khadija Shahper Bakhtiar**  
BSc 2007

Khadija, Founder and CEO of Teach For Pakistan, was honoured with the 2024 Elise and Walter A. Haas International Award by UC Berkeley, becoming only the second Pakistani to receive this prestigious recognition after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Known for her groundbreaking work in transforming teacher recruitment and development across Pakistan, Khadija credits her time at LUMS as the foundation of her commitment to equitable education and lasting social impact.



**Dr. Bushra Anjum**  
MS 2007

Dr. Anjum was appointed Global Co-Chair of ACM-W, a leading international organisation promoting women's participation in computing. A data Science leader and Fulbright Scholar, Dr. Anjum is also a published author and advocate for global tech equity. She is now driving efforts to expand ACM-W's reach in emerging regions, inspiring the next generation of women in tech.



**Muhammad Awais Saeed**  
BSc 2016

Awais was appointed Country Lead at inDrive. With a robust background in ride-hailing and e-commerce, Awais will oversee inDrive's expansion and operations across Pakistan, focusing on customer satisfaction and rider safety. He attributes his success to LUMS, which provided him with the academic foundation and leadership skills that have shaped his dynamic career in the mobility sector.



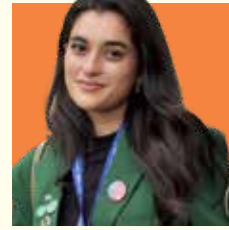
**Zulfiqar Hameed**  
MBA 2003

Zulfiqar was appointed Inspector General of Police for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A Grade 21 officer of the Police Service of Pakistan, Zulfiqar's appointment reflects a career marked by his dedication to public service, security, and reform.



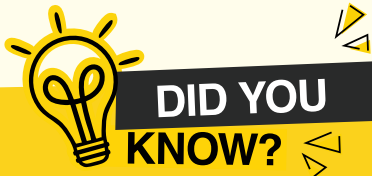
**Hamza Ashfaq**  
BSc 2020

Hamza was named a finalist for the prestigious McCall MacBain Scholarships at McGill University, one of 88 exceptional candidates selected from thousands worldwide. As Canada's largest leadership-based graduate award, the McCall MacBain Scholarship will support Hamza in his pursuit of graduate studies. Reflecting on his journey, Hamza credits LUMS for broadening his perspective and inspiring his path into impact investing.



**Zoha Waqas Aslam Malik**  
BSc 2024

Zoha was awarded the Diana Award 2024, one of the highest global honours a young changemaker can receive. Recognised as one of the top 2% of Pakistani youth to earn this accolade, Zoha has made a remarkable impact through SavePakistan, crypto and Tayaba.org, utilising blockchain technology to drive humanitarian aid and climate innovation. She was also named to the UNDP Youth4Climate Cohort 2024 and represented Pakistan globally in Turin, Italy.



Ayla Majid (MBA '00) has made history as the first South Asian and Muslim woman to lead the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)—a prestigious global organisation representing over 252,500 members and 526,000 future members across 180 countries.

Ayla is also the Founder and CEO of Planetive, a decarbonisation and sustainability advisory firm operating across Pakistan and the Middle East. With over 20 years of investment and advisory experience in energy, infrastructure, and digital innovation, she is recognised as a leading voice in clean energy finance and climate action in emerging markets.





## DID YOU KNOW?



### LUMS is building a greener tomorrow with smart energy solutions!

#### 1. Solar Energy Initiatives:

- o Phase 1 (2012): 42.24 kWp
- o Phase 2 (2015): 322 kWp
- o Phase 3 (2020): 400 kWp
- o Phase 4 (2025): 354 kWp (70% complete)
- o Phase 5 (Planning): Installation of 1500 kWp solar systems in open parking spaces

These solar energy projects have been instrumental in reducing LUMS' reliance on conventional energy sources, while significantly contributing to our green energy objectives. The amount of solar power generated is measured in kilowatts (kW), with each phase representing a significant increase in the total power produced by the solar panels.

**2. Energy Efficiency:** Through the implementation of energy-efficient practices and smart technologies, the university has successfully reduced its electrical load by about 800 kWp. A major contributor to this achievement is the installation of the Building Management System (BMS) for Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems. HVAC systems typically account for 55-60% of LUMS' overall energy consumption, and the BMS ensures these systems operate only when needed, optimising energy consumption while maintaining comfort levels across campus. Additionally, light timers have been installed throughout campus to automatically turn off lights when they are not in use, further reducing unnecessary energy consumption.

**3. Water Management & Wastewater Recycling:** Our commitment to sustainability extends to water conservation, with the introduction of a wastewater recycling system. This system treats wastewater, which is then repurposed for irrigating the university's green spaces. Not only does this reduce our overall water consumption, but it also supports our mission to create a greener, more sustainable campus.

# A Night to Remember: Alumni Homecoming 2025

On December 20, 2025, the University welcomed Luminites back to campus for an evening of nostalgia, celebration, and reconnection. Alumni from across Pakistan and around the world returned to relive old memories, reconnect with friends and faculty, and celebrate the bond that continues to tie them to their alma mater.

The evening featured warm remarks from university leadership, reflecting on LUMS' journey and the enduring role of its alumni community.



Founding Pro Chancellor, Syed Babar Ali, graced Homecoming 2025 with his presence. Despite being advised to avoid the cold, he couldn't miss welcoming alumni from around the world! "Stay connected to LUMS, keep giving to LUMS as it will serve the next generations," he said.



Pro Chancellor, Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood, reflected on LUMS' 40-year journey and praised alumni for the achievements and contributions that continue to shape the University's reputation around the world.



Vice Chancellor, Dr. Ali Cheema, called on the LUMS community to deepen its partnership with the University and help scale its impact in meaningful and transformational ways.



Vice Chancellor, Dr. Ali Cheema, shares a joyful moment with attendees



A highlight of the evening was the Alumni Achievement Awards ceremony, where outstanding alumni were recognised for their accomplishments across diverse fields. The celebration also included special reunion moments, including the MBA Class of 2010 coming together on stage for their fifteen-year reunion, a joyful reminder of friendships that have endured over time.



The winners of the 2025 Alumni Achievement Awards



As the night unfolded, Shae Gill brought a new energy to the celebration with a spectacular performance that lit up the evening. When her hit *Pasoori* filled the venue, the crowd rose to its feet, turning the night into a vibrant celebration of community, belonging, and shared joy.



The MBA Class of 2010

# LIFE *AT* LUMS



## *Office of Sports, Wellness and Recreation*

### **LUMS Wins National Tennis Title**

LUMS captured the men's title at the 45<sup>th</sup> HEC Intervarsity Tennis Championship 2024-25 in April 2025, held at the Syed Maratib Ali Sports Complex on campus. The team delivered a standout performance throughout the tournament, topping defending champions Government College University (GCU) in the semifinals before overpowering the University of Central Punjab (UCP) in the final. Star player Ashar Azfar Mir played a key role, winning his singles match and later sealing the doubles decider with partner Musa Haroon. The victory marked a significant milestone for LUMS Tennis and showcased the team's growing dominance on the national stage.



### **Ashar Azfar Mir: The Backbone of LUMS' Victory**

Top-seed Ashar Azfar Mir was instrumental in LUMS' championship run, bringing intensity and precision to every match. In the final against UCP, Mir crushed his singles opponent and then returned to court for the doubles with Musa Haroon, where they closed out the tie

in commanding fashion. His performance throughout the tournament earned widespread praise for leadership and skill. Teammate Ibrahim Salman Ghani and captain Muhammad Arham Khan also secured key wins during the campaign.

## LUMS Women's Team Shows Grit in Competitive Draw at the HEC Intervarsity Tennis Championship Hosted by LUMS

While the LUMS women's team didn't reach the finals, they showed resilience and determination, ultimately finishing fourth. In a closely contested third-place match, Fatima Kashif and Zoya Khan went up against Lahore College for Women University's (LCWU) Asia Amir and Anzal Ashfaq, who edged out the LUMS duo in straight sets. The championship was claimed by the University of Lahore (UoL), whose team dominated the final against the University of Punjab (UoP). Despite the tough competition, the LUMS women's team earned praise for their grit and sportsmanship.

## *Residential Life*

### ResLife Khokha Stall - Spring '25

Spring '25 kicked off with laughter, games, and sweet treats! The Khokha Stall brought en-

ergy to campus, helping everyone reconnect and feel right at home.

### Bonfire with Thrift Stalls



A magical evening under the stars! With a crackling bonfire and student-run stalls, residents

came together to share stories, support each other, and celebrate community.

### Residential Support Group - Developing Belongingness Session by CAPS

The Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS), in collaboration with the ResLife team, organised a heartfelt session where students opened up, found support, and felt seen. This session served as a reminder that no one is alone—and that community care truly matters.





## Galentine's Party

An evening of true sisterhood! Our Galentine's Party brought women together to celebrate each other and lift one another up—with treats, talks, and all-female vendors.

## The Amaltas Hour

A calm morning spent planting trees, sharing stories, and soaking in nature. What started as an eco-activity turned into a quiet moment of connection, with the earth and with each other.



## The Drum Therapy Session- CAPS x ResLife

A therapeutic session where students came together to unwind and reconnect through the healing power of drumming.

## Team from M6 Lifts Trophy!

An exciting cricket tournament brought together male residents, with M6 taking home the trophy and new friendships forming along the way.



## DIY Iftar in F6

Eight teams came together to prepare a delicious Iftar spread, sharing food, stories, and the

spirit of Ramadan in a fun and collaborative way.



## Mood Board Activity

Residents came together to express what “home” means to them, using drawings and words to create a shared canvas that strengthened bonds within the community.



## Androon Lahore Sehri Trip

Female freshmen explored the historic Walled City of Lahore, immersing themselves in its rich culture and enjoying a traditional Sehri meal together.



## Eid Mela

A vibrant post-Eid Mela with colourful stalls, mehndi, delicious food, and music, offered everyone a chance to unwind and celebrate the festive season.



**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

The LUMS Women's Swimming Team secured the Championship title at the HEC All Pakistan Intervarsity Swimming Championships 2025-26. Across the men's and women's events, LUMS swimmers brought home an impressive medal haul, showcasing discipline, teamwork, and athletic excellence.





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