

KAICIID

Thursday 14th – Friday 15th October 2021

Participant Biographies



Arzoo Ahmed

Arzoo Ahmed is Ethics Lead for newborns at Genomics England and publication manager of Al-Muhaddithat, a 43-volume biographical encyclopedia on the history of Muslim female scholars. Prior to this, she was a researcher at the Nuffield Council on Bioethics; public dialogue project lead for the 'genome editing in farmed animals' inquiry; and contributed to the Council's active response programme and diversity and inclusion agenda. Her research included briefings on equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and meat alternatives. She is also a research associate on the Qatar National Research Funded project: Genomics, Islamic ethics, and public engagement.

Arzoo has previously served as director at the Centre for Islam and Medicine and worked as a research associate at the Office for Public Management. She is completing an MA in philosophy at King's College London, and graduated with a BA in Physics and an MPhil in Medieval Arabic Thought from the University of Oxford. Arzoo has an 'Alimiyyah' degree in traditional Islamic studies from Al-Salam Institute. She was a participant in the University of Cambridge's Senior Faith in Leadership Programme at St George's House in Windsor, and has over 15 years of community grassroots service and engagement experience.



Ruth Akujuaobi

Ruth is a campus chaplain at the University of Surrey for the Chosen Christian society. She provides pastoral support to both African (International) students and staff within and around the University community.

Ruth is an ordained minister and co-pastor at the RCCG Winners place Guildford church and a certified project management specialist working within the NHS. She is also a singer, writer and a recording artist, she sings inspirational songs that bring hope and lifts spirits.

Ruth supports the University's religious life and belief centre structure and activities by offering students pastoral care, listening to their needs/concerns, offer advice or signpost and leads the University Pentecostal Sunday morning prayer services. She is happy to speak with students and staff of different faith helping them connect with their faith irrespective of their background.

She develops HOPE projects and runs a HOPE broadcast on the University facebook platform. She initiated the University HOPE concert project and works collaboratively with students, welfare and wellbeing staff and University Chaplains.



Hashim Bhatti

Hashim has a background in corporate law with a Master's in Economics, Politics, Philosophy and Law alongside a degree in Politics with International Relations. He is currently the CEO for several businesses in the property and tech sector having previously specialised in private equity and corporate finance. He is currently the National Chairman of the Conservative Muslim Forum. Alongside this, at the international level, Hashim is currently working with the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC) in his capacity as an expert young leader helping them counter violent extremist narratives. Hashim recently ran a campaign called 'EliminHate' to raise awareness around hate crime in the UK. Hashim also sits on the advisory board for Step Up Youth, a social enterprise which seeks to empower young people to become responsible future leaders with a focus on diversity and inclusion. He previously sat on the advisory board of RLC Ventures and is a Patron of the British Pakistan Foundation.

At the European level, Hashim has worked with the intergovernmental Organisation for Security & Co-operation (OSCE/ODIHR) on creating a coalition building manual on tolerance and non-discrimination. Hashim has a keen interest in foreign policy relations having led several international delegations as a trusted adviser to governments and NGO's. Between 2015-2019 he was an elected local government official in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead for four years. At the time, he was the first British Pakistani to be selected by the Conservative party in Windsor and was one of the youngest to win. Hashim regularly hosts events in Parliament to empower young people to raise their aspirations and to increase participation within politics. As a pioneer, Hashim founded London's first Interfaith Summit in 2015-16 as well as the Conservative party's first interfaith fringe reception at conference. In 2018, he was selected as one of a handful of UK representatives for the Commonwealth Youth Forum held in London. In 2019, he was invited to the One Young World Summit as a UK delegate, now Ambassador. Finally, he was recently named as one of the 21 young leaders in the 21st Century (an initiative backed by 10 Downing Street) for his ground-breaking work in building bridges between faith communities.



Sharon Booth

Sharon has an MA from Cambridge University in Theology and Religious Studies. Following her graduation, she taught English at Amideast in Tunisia and then went on to work in Amman, Jordan as a Productions Manager for a publishing company with programmes for young people aiming to promote reading in the Arab World. In Sharon's final year in Jordan, she was employed as PA to the Defence Attaché at the British Embassy, then returned to the UK and began work in Israeli-Palestinian conflict resolution, founding the Solutions Not Sides Education Programme in 2010. Sharon speaks Arabic and French and has studied ancient Hebrew. In January 2016, she was awarded a master's degree with distinction from King's College London, specialising in nationalism and religion.



Katharine Crew

Katharine is Campus Leadership Manager at the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ). She created and runs CCJ's Campus Leadership Programme which empowers university students to set up their own interfaith projects. Through the Alumni Network Katharine supports young professionals to be active in interfaith. Katharine also runs CCJ's Faith and Identity Project which works to make faith and interfaith spaces more inclusive. Katharine is a Local Preacher and Conference Representative in the Methodist Church and a volunteer with Prison Fellowship. In her spare time she can be found dancing, acting and singing in various amateur theatre groups.



Josephine Davidoff

Project Coordinator and Communications Professional passionate about empowering faith and belief communities to strengthen social cohesion and understanding. Specialised in youth and community grassroots and stakeholder led community engagement, in particular working with Jewish communities to increase engagement.

Jewish Society President (Coventry University, 2015-18), Council of Christians and Jews Student Leader (2019), Co-Founder of Faiths United Youth Network (2020 - Faiths Forum for London). 21421 Laureate (20/21).



Lauren Keiles

Lauren is the Communities Manager at The Board of Deputies of British Jews, the representative body for the UK Jewish Community. She is a Trustee for René Cassin, the Jewish Human Rights Charity and is a fellow on the United Nations EDIN project, seeking to use social media to counter extremist narratives and to promote social cohesion. Lauren is a Coordinator for the Inter-Religious Commonwealth Youth Alliance and an ambassador for the Chief Rabbis' Ben Azzai programme, focused on promoting outward looking social responsibility in the Jewish community.



Ryad Khodabocus

Ryad is the Head of Community Development and Relations for Luton Council of Faiths. He is a laureate of the 21 for 21 Leaders for Peace and Reconciliation across faiths communities. He has 14 years of experience in community development and Inter-faith work.

Ryad has also a passion in health and personal development. He researched in Emotional Intelligence and holds a master's degree in Psychology of Health and Management. He further trained as an accredited Functional Medicine Health Coach. He is also a Trauma-sensitive Mind-Body Medicine practitioner helping people with chronic pain, psychosomatic pain, sleep problems, stress and teaches emotion regulation. During his journey Ryad trained as a Mental Health First Aid Trainer and Mental Fitness coach. He also teaches as Qigong Instructor. He is a public speaker and a licensed sport coach specialising in Archery.

With his wealth of knowledge in various fields, Ryad serves his community in Luton. He pioneered work across faiths communities to come together for the common good. This ranges from Environment and Ecology, building Peace Gardens, Fairtrade, Youth leadership programme, Schools for Peace Building Programme, Conferences for High Schools, Community Archery Sport, and Mental Health training for young people to Annual Peace Walks for the International Peace Day.

He has been a multiple award winner in recognition of his work in his town and county. His work has been further recognised nationally by Faith leaders, Government Ministers and Secretary of States. Ryad's work around mental health particularly caught the eyes of Their Royal Highnesses Prince William and Duchess Kate Middleton in 2016 where he hosted them with his organisation for a private meeting.

In 2019 he was awarded Young Sacred activist of the year by St Ethelburga Centre of Peace and Reconciliation in London. In the same year he was summoned by Her Majesty the Queen in recognition of his work at Buckingham Palace and had the privilege to meet with her. This year, Ryad took his organisation and volunteers to win the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS) celebrating 25 years of his organisation's existence and the only one to win in 2021 in the county of Bedfordshire. Four of his organisation's volunteers across four different faiths communities were given a special recognition for their work during the COVID pandemic.



Phil Rosenberg

Phil is Director of Public Affairs at the Board of Deputies of British Jews, where he leads on the Board's policy, strategic relations, advocacy and communications, as well as its eight-person Public Affairs Team. He is also Co-Chair of the Camden Faith Leaders' Forum. Previously Phil was Executive Director of the Faiths Forum for London and the Fayre Share Foundation, and served as a Local Councillor for the West Hampstead ward of the London Borough of Camden. He studied Spanish, Hebrew and Arabic at Oxford University and he loves travel, playing football, running, reading and his wife Frances.



Kevin Shang

Kevin is an analyst in Wood Mackenzie. He is the board member on Operation Noah, an ecumenical Christian charity that campaigns exclusively on climate change. Before taking the analyst role, Kevin worked as a presenter and researcher on BBC Radio Manchester, reporting China-related matters. Kevin is an interfaither. He took part in Parliamentors, an UN award-winning leadership programme organised by the Faith & Belief Forum. He also won the UK 21421 interfaith award.

Faculty Biographies



Justin Cohen

Justin is the news editor and co-publisher of the Jewish News, which was recently named as Free Weekly Newspaper of the Year by the Society of Editors. Having joined the paper on work experience putting Maccabi football scores into the website, he has interviewed the last five prime ministers, three Archbishops of Canterbury and two Chief Rabbi and conducted the only Jewish media interview with Jeremy Corbyn. He also leads on the paper's special projects including the recent Duchess of Cambridge Holocaust survivors' photography project and the successful campaign to get a Royal Mail stamp honouring Sir Nicholas Winton. He conceived the world's first interfaith media collaboration bringing together Jewish News, Church Times and British Muslim TV and is executive producer on a new film about the Abraham Accords. He is the co-founder of the Asian-Jewish Business Network



Andrew Gilbert

Andrew is currently working in Luxury Products. Administered 21421 process and chaired judging meeting. during Pandemic and now in recovery focused on interfaith through being Co-Chair of London Jewish Forum who are an anchor institution for the London Recovery Missions



Rabbi Alex Goldberg

Rabbi Goldberg the Dean of Religious Life and Belief and Coordinating Chaplain at the University of Surrey. He is the only rabbi within this role in Europe. In addition, he works on both international and UK-based community relations and community development projects. Alex is a contributor to BBC Radio 2's Pause For Thought.

Rabbi Alex chairs the Football Association's Faith Network and founded the human rights group René Cassin.

He was founding chair of Faiths Forum for London and developed the Mayor of London's Faith Conference. He led a delegation to the UN Human Rights Council for over a decade where he successfully changed international law in relation to group access to justice. In 2012, he was an Olympic and Paralympic Chaplain.



Michael Wakelin

He formerly worked for the BBC for 23 years producing programmes on all BBC TV and Radio networks eventually becoming Head of Religion and Ethics in 2006. He continues his broadcasting through his work with TBI Media as Exec Producer of Pause for Thought on Radio Two and other projects on Radio 4. He is co-founding partner of the Religious Literacy Partnership which delivers religious literacy training to organisations in the public and private sector including the likes of Tesco and the Houses of Parliament. He also delivers media training to various religious organisations. Michael studied Theology at Birmingham University.

Dragons Biographies



Muddassar Ahmed

Muddassar is an entrepreneur, philanthropist and former Independent Advisor to the UK government on Muslim communities. He leads Unitas Communications a reputation management consultancy specialising in the communications interface between the Islamic and Western worlds, The Concordia Forum a global network of cross-sector Muslim leaders, and is a Patron of the Faiths Forum for London. Muddassar has been listed as amongst the 500 most influential Muslims globally and amongst the 1000 most influential Londoners.



Dr Neil Harbury

Neil a geologist turned entrepreneur and philanthropist. His early career was as an academic in the University of London. In 1998 he founded the company Nautilus which delivered geoscience training to the Energy Industries and became the premier training business operating worldwide. He sold Nautilus in 2011. He currently has diverse business interests ranging from fruit, hospitality, software, geoscience and professional training. He sits on numerous boards where he advises companies on strategy. He has recently turned his expertise to the application of geoscience to achieve a net-zero energy system and is advising GeoLogica to provide skills that enable geoscientists and engineers to drive technologies that significantly reduce carbon emissions. Charity work is becoming increasingly important to him and he supports numerous charities and is a Patron of the Prince's Trust. His father was English with Jewish ancestry and his mother was from Prague and he enjoys his Czech and Jewish heritage.



Christopher Kenna

Christopher is CEO and Founder of Brand Advance (BA), a Startups.co.uk top 100 company 2 years in a row, which connects brands with diverse audiences globally, through Insights, Media and Creative that more authentically engages these communities.

Chris is a member of the WFA Diversity Board, and as a mixed race, out gay father - he is a strong advocate for diversity and representations within media and advertising. He is also on the advisory board for the V&A Museums.

An award winning entrepreneur having received the Innovator of the Year Award at the second annual Ex-Forces in Business Awards and was recently named on EMPOWER's 100 Ethnic Minority Executives 2020 and OUTstanding top 100 LGBT Executives.

Guest Speakers



Dal Babu

Dal served for over 30 years in the Metropolitan Police and is the former borough commander of Harrow. He was the first chair of the National Association of Muslim Police which worked with Home Secretaries, Chief Constables and Community Leaders. In 2010 he was elected to the National Police Superintendent Association of England and Wales. He has extensive board level experience in policing, community safety, child and adult safeguarding.

In 2010 Dal was awarded an OBE for services to the police and communities. Other awards include: the London High Sheriff Award for work with young people (2011), and the London Peace Award for community engagement (2011).

Dal is a Non-Executive Director of School Academy chain and Camden and Islington NHS Trust, as well as a trustee for House of Illustration, Artichoke and Comedy School. Dal currently chairs the Seacole Group of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Non Executive Directors in the NHS. He volunteers for a number of charities in London and enjoys football, cycling, hiking, and cricket with his daughters in his spare time.



Francis Davis

Francis has been a ministerial advisor under three UK governments including the first ever Cabinet level faith advisor role. He is an award-winning serial social entrepreneur and Professorial Fellow in the Institute of Ageing Population at the University of Oxford. He has previously served as non-executive director and chair of finance for an NHS Trust and as external advisor on disability and carers to Ministers in central government. His current projects are focused on social inclusion and innovation in Rwanda, Nigeria and the UK. Francis has advised the English Benedictine Congregation, several Catholic Bishops Conferences, Caritas International, the FCDO and MHLCCG as well as international NGOs. He walks the South Downs and the Solent Way every year and his daughter is a proud Alumna of Guildford School of Acting. He is Fellow of the University of Surrey Religious Life and Belief Centre. A few years ago Francis swam a mile in every county, with support from the County Councils Network, to raise funds for the mental health charity Combat Stress.

Zoom Guests KAICIID Fellows



Rev. Jose Nandhikkara CMI

Fr Jose Nandhikkara CMI is Professor of Philosophy, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram and Christ University, Bangalore and the Editor-in-Chief of the International Quarterly, Journal of Dharma. He is also currently the Regional Director of Globethics.net India.

Fr Jose was formerly Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bangalore, Head of the Department of Philosophy and Theology at Christ University, Bangalore, and Director of the Centre for the Study of World Religions, Bangalore.

Fr Jose holds a BSc in Geology from Calicut University, Licentiate in Philosophy from Gregorian University, Rome (1997), MA in Philosophy and Theology from Oxford University (1999), and PhD in Philosophy (2004) from Warwick University, UK.

Fr Jose is a Wittgenstinian scholar who contributes to the fields of Philosophical Anthropology, Ethics, Inter-cultural and Inter-religious Dialogue, Philosophy of Language, and Philosophy of Religion. He has authored a book, edited six volumes, and contributed over seventy research articles in journals and edited volumes.

In his interreligious work, guided by the Vedic vision, "Let noble thoughts come from all sides" (Rgveda 1.89.1) and the ideal of "faith seeking the harmony of life," he promotes FIRE: Fellowship In Religious Experience.



Elder Justina Mike Ngwobia

Elder Justina is a peace building practitioner who has been working in the field of interfaith relations for over 15 years. She holds a Bachelors' degree in social work and administration. Her passion for Christian-Muslim harmony and dialogue grew when she moved to the northern part of Nigeria and discovered that the incessant crisis in that part of the world was the result of political manipulation: people were using the different religious groups for their own selfish gain, leading to violent conflicts. Her motivation grew when she visited people living in rural communities and saw how people were suffering and struggling to survive. Her major interest is focused on empowering communities through interfaith joint projects, adult education, peace clubs, Christian Muslim harmony, and the empowerment of women, which are all aimed at interfaith dialogue and sustainable development. She has travelled to different parts of the world sharing her experiences in interreligious dialogue. At present, she is the ecumenical coordinator of the Presbyterian church of Nigeria, Jos presbytery. She is also interested in promoting the participation of women in governance issues, peace and security. She considers her greatest milestone to be the establishment of the "Women Peace Builders Network" in Nigeria, which gives women the opportunity to add their voices to events in society through dialogue. Justina strongly believes that our world can only be better and more peaceful if people of diverse religions learn how to interact positively for mutual cooperation.



Alissa Wahid

Alissa, is a trained family psychologist, but is most recognised for her work in the social sector on multiculturalism, democracy and human rights and moderate Muslim movements in Indonesia. She currently focuses on leadership development for interreligious youth leaders.

She is the National Director of Gusdurian Network Indonesia (GNI), named after her late father, President Abdurrahman Wahid who is also known as Gus Dur. GNI hosts thousands of grassroots-level activists in more than 100 cities in Indonesia, working to promote interfaith dialogue and understanding, active citizenship, democracy and human rights. GNI is known for its work at the local level, for example the 2015 International Day for Tolerance that took place in 50 cities.

Alissa has a master's degree in psychology and is also active in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the biggest Muslim organisation with more than 50 million members, as General Secretary of its Family Welfare Agency. In this role, she aims to promote just, strong, and moderate Muslim families.

Wahid meets with and speaks to thousands of people annually through public events. She is a Civil Society Ambassador for Sustainable Development Goals in Indonesia, focusing on Goal 16: Peace, Good Governance and Access to Justice. She received Indonesia Shine-On Award in 2015 from *Good Housekeeping Indonesia* magazine. She was also awarded the Women Award 2016 from Indonesia Marketing Week.

Wahid dreams of a just and peaceful world. As a leader, she lives by the principle: 'without integrity, no one listens; without trust, no one follows.'