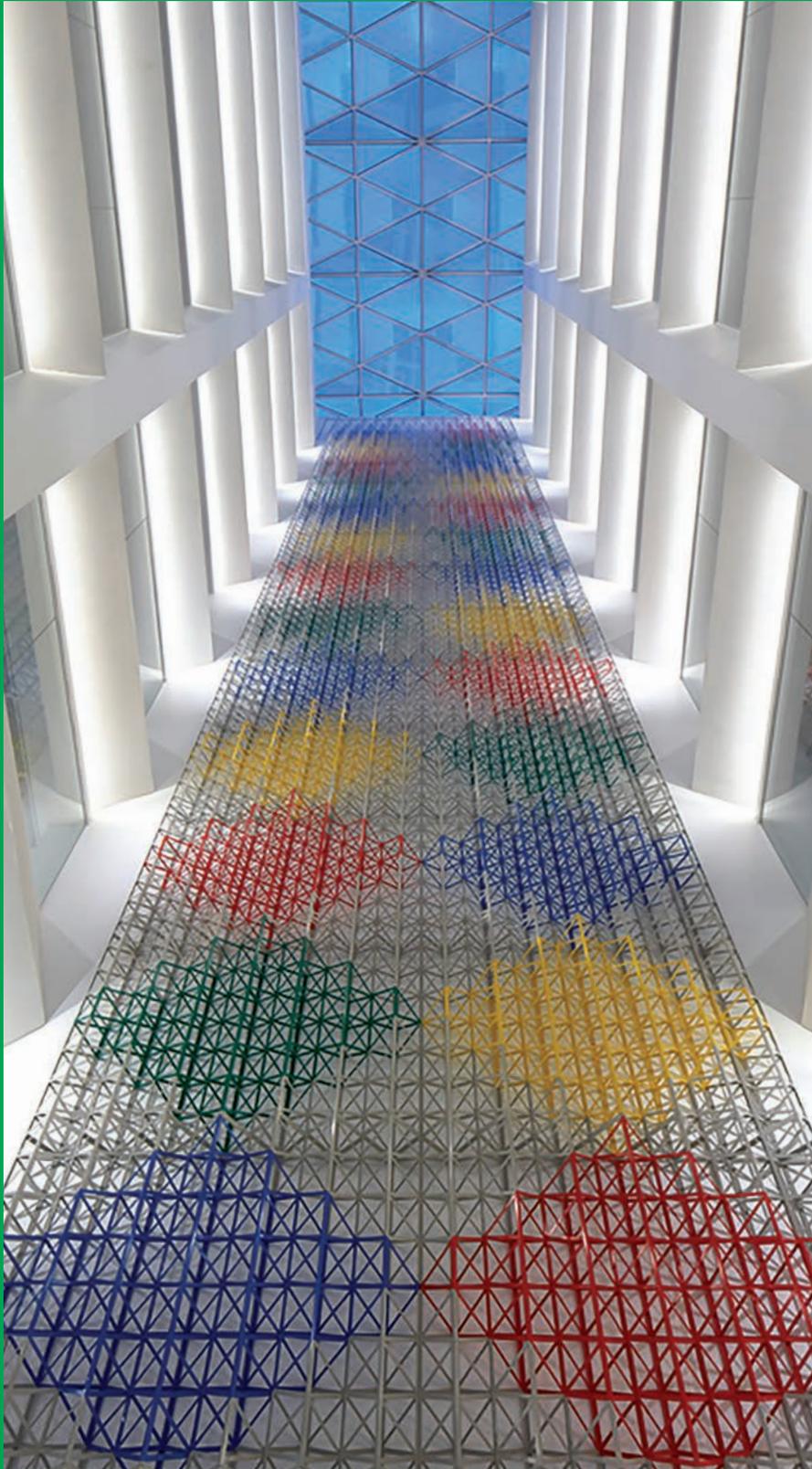
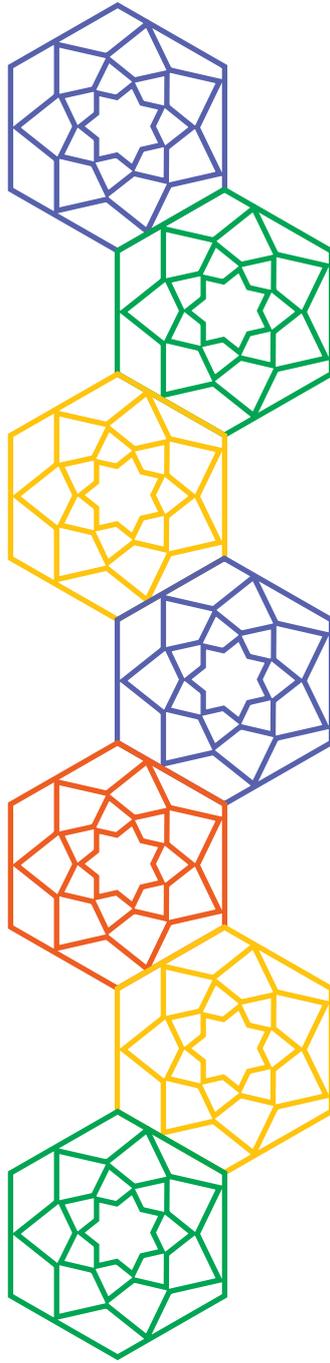


2023



The Institute of Ismaili Studies

Main Cover: Rhapsody in Four Colours by Rasheed Araeen
Photo credit: Edmund Sumner



The Institute of Ismaili Studies

Photo Credit: AKDN



His Highness
THE AGA KHAN

Chairman of the Board of Trustees,
The Institute of Ismaili Studies,

“What some describe as a clash of civilisations in our modern world is, in my view a clash of ignorances. This is why education about religious and cultural heritage is so critically important – and why we will continue to invest in these institutions. We deeply believe that scholarship, publication and instruction – of high quality and generous breadth – can provide important pathways toward a more pluralistic and peaceful world.”

London, UK 3 July 2008

Welcome



Professor

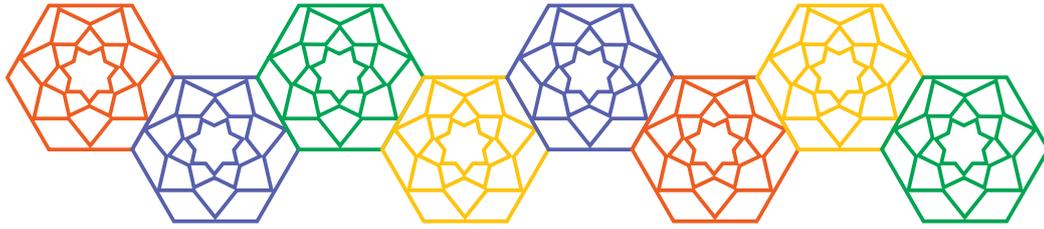
ZAYN KASSAM

Director of The Institute of Ismaili Studies

At its heart, The Institute of Ismaili Studies (IIS) aims to promote the study of Muslim cultures and societies and to foster a greater understanding of their relationships with other societies and faiths. Our programmes promote scholarship in areas of the study of Islam that have traditionally been marginalised, with an emphasis on Ismaili traditions.

The complex history of the Ismailis dates back over a millennium and has seen multiple migrations of people across continents. Since 1977, when IIS was established, we have played a key role in the scholarship of that history and of the Ismaili intellectual, cultural and literary traditions that have until recently been little known outside of the community. We have led on research and publications in the field and have made our extensive collection of Ismaili manuscripts available to scholars.

At our home in the Aga Khan Centre, we host conferences that showcase the evolving landscape of knowledge in Ismaili and broader Islamic studies. These events bring in scholars to present on history, literature and philosophy as well as on contemporary issues and the many ways in which Islam is lived and experienced in the world. We also invite the Ismaili community to educational events and book launches where they can engage with our research and publications as well as tour the building with its gardens, terraces and courtyards inspired by Muslim cultures and societies.



The Aga Khan Library at the Aga Khan Centre is a central repository and resource for Ismaili and Islamic studies, shared with the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations. It houses over 55,000 volumes, including more than 5,000 rare items including out of print books, manuscripts, photographs, and artefacts. The Library occupies state-of-the-art facilities that offer a conducive research space as well as several collections of unique resources, precious manuscripts, and rare books, many of them donated by acclaimed scholars in the field of Islamic studies.

Our programmes serve the Ismaili community, who live in over 25 countries around the world. Their diverse educational needs led us to develop our educational curricula from pre-school to secondary level in multiple languages, and these are available in print and online. We approach the study of Islam and the Shia Ismaili tradition from humanistic, civilisational and normative perspectives drawing on modern principles of education.

Since the early 1980s we have hosted a teacher training programme in Islamic studies in collaboration with the University of London's Institute of Education. In 2007 we began the Secondary Teacher Education Programme, training students from all over the world who go on to teach secondary-age children across 21 jurisdictions once they graduate. In 1994 we launched the Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities (GPISH) and each year a new cohort of Ismaili students from around the world begin on our pioneering interdisciplinary course of study. The three-year programme provides training in the intellectual tools of the humanities and social sciences, acting as both preparation for a research degree and as a stepping-stone to a variety of career opportunities around the world.

More than 700 alumni of IIS are dispersed around the world, working in diverse sectors from academia and development to media, education, government and arts and culture. Many of them continue to engage with the Institute in various ways: supporting curriculum development, presenting on our short courses, participating in our continuing professional development programmes or through mentoring their younger colleagues. Others volunteer on projects or assignments within Ismaili Imam institutions and external organisations.

In 1977, when the IIS was inaugurated, His Highness the Aga Khan sent a message to the global Ismaili community that included the line: "It is my hope that from its modest beginnings the Institute will grow into an internationally recognised academic centre, and that this day will be recalled with pride by Ismailis many years from now."

In 1979, His Highness the Aga Khan signed the guest book of IIS (a photograph of this entry is on page six), stating: "This was a most happy visit to a new institution whose importance will, I believe, grow from day to day, month to month and year to year. It is my profound hope that my elation of today will be justified by outstanding achievement in the future."

In the 46 years since its opening, IIS has indeed made great strides in scholarship, in teaching, and in expanding the intellectual capacity in the Ismaili community worldwide. While we still have much to accomplish, I believe that the outstanding achievements we have made to date will indeed continue in years to come.

Saturday, 1st September, 1979.

This was a most happy visit to a new institution whose importance will,

I believe, grow from day to day, month to month and year to year. It is my profound hope that my elation of today will be justified by outstanding achievement in the future.

Aga Khan.



Photo Credit: John Sturrock

Philosophy

The Institute of Ismaili Studies (IIS), established in 1977, promotes scholarship and learning on Muslim cultures and societies, historical as well as contemporary, and encourages a better understanding of their relationship with other societies and faiths.



His Highness the Aga Khan IV signing a guestbook
at The Institute of Ismaili Studies, circa 1981
Part of the IIS Special Collections

Driven by a basic and continuing re-assessment of existing scholarly endeavours in this field, the Institute seeks to draw on the most effective tools developed over the past 50 years in producing academic scholarship on Islam. Simultaneously, in actively seeking to bring the fruits of such scholarship to bear on the conditions and aspirations of Muslim societies today (including present-day Ismaili communities) the Institute's programmes reflect a normative purposiveness, though one wholly open and attuned to the principles of objective inquiry and research, which is essential to a modern academic institution.

This overarching objective implies certain general principles meant to guide the Institute's scholarly programmes of research, teaching, and academic and educational publications:

An interconnected study of past and present

Islamic history is thus studied with an eye to such resonances it may offer, directly or indirectly, to an analytic understanding of current realities and purposes in Muslim societies. Current realities, on their part stand to gain from attention to their relationship, where appropriate to the continued influence of traditions intrinsic to the intellectual and cultural history of Islam.

Expanding beyond theological and religio-legal traditions

These traditions, though important, evolved alongside philosophical, literary and more general artistic components. The totality of these traditions is liable to be neglected in narrowly theological and legalistic approaches to Islam that are apt to miss both the breadth and plurality present in the Islamic world as well as the lived experiences of Muslims. The Institute's programmes are designed in an acknowledgement of these features, that is, the manifoldness and pluralism of the historical and contemporary Islamic world which, suitably understood, remain of continued interest and relevance to Muslim societies today and beyond.

Incorporating the wide range of cultures, ethnicities and linguistic groups of Muslims worldwide

Of these, Arabic language and Arabic nationalities, though of special significance due to the decisive role in Muslim history of the Qur'anic revelation, are otherwise only a part of the classical, medieval, and contemporary profile of Muslims worldwide. Accordingly, the Institute's programmes, while devoting significant attention to research in Qur'anic studies including instruction in the Arabic language, nonetheless engage with the study of areas beyond the Arabic-speaking world as it may be equipped, at any given time to undertake, such as the Persianate, Indic and Central Asian regions and cultures.

The above principles are obviously general. However, the practical capacities of an academic institution are inevitably limited in scope. IIS programmes are largely defined by the needs and purposes, so far as they draw on scholarship in Islam and related fields, of the Ismaili communities domiciled in various parts of the world today. For this reason, a good part of the research and publication activities of the Institute, and in particular of its educational publications and programmes, are at present focused on regions in which the Ismaili Jamats (communities) are to be found; and, secondarily, on the complex of Shi'i traditions within Islam, of which the Ismaili traditions are a part. This special focus of the Institute's programmes does not negate, however, the importance of the overarching principles stated above.

Additionally, the field of ethics, which straddles the modern divide between religious and secular cultures as well as the humanities, social sciences, and sciences, presents special challenges today due to developments in modern biomedical technologies. It represents the normative aspiration, in human societies, for material and spiritual wellbeing, and will continue to be featured in the Institute's programmes of research, teaching and publication.

Research

Research at IIS seeks to contribute to the field of Islamic studies in general, with a particular focus on Shi'i and Ismaili studies. Reflecting the general principles that guide scholarship at the Institute, the approach to research is interdisciplinary and civilisational, with a keen awareness of the range and diversity of societies and cultures in which Islam is practised today.

IIS seeks to promote research in hitherto marginalised areas of the study of Islam and its various interpretations, while also accentuating the plurality of the heritages that Muslim communities enfold. In addition to the scholars we have on staff, doctoral scholarships in these areas – including the intellectual and literary expressions of Shi'i Islam in general and Ismaili traditions in particular – have become an important pathway in fostering future capacity for realising the Institute's research mandate.



Photo Credit: None

The Institute's research focuses on five specific areas

Ismaili and Shi'i Studies

The promotion of modern scholarship on the Ismailis and their intellectual and cultural heritages is a key part of the Institute's mandate. Historically, the Ismailis have almost exclusively been studied through secondary sources compiled outside the community. In recent decades, the field of Ismaili studies has been revolutionised by the recovery and study of Ismaili primary sources, from diverse literary and intellectual traditions, written in Arabic, Persian and various Indic languages.

Through its research, the Institute contributes towards a more representative understanding of Shi'i communities, situating them with the wider context of Islam. Scholars and research fellows also explore the traditions of Shi'i Islam, considering the origins and early developments of various Shi'i communities, as well as the intellectual and spiritual traditions of Shi'i Muslims. These include topics related to theology, philosophy, law, hadith (prophetic traditions), tafsirs (commentaries and interpretations of the Qur'an), as well as Shi'i contributions to arts and humanities.

Qur'anic Studies

A research unit specifically focusing on Qur'anic Studies was established at IIS in 2000, with the aim of promoting scholarship on the plurality of interpretations inspired by the Qur'an. Research and teaching about these diverse traditions of interpretation of the Qur'an advance our knowledge of the entire spectrum of sources and interpretations of Qur'anic tafsirs throughout Muslim history, while also shedding light on the various contexts and methodologies that have shaped them.

Constituency Studies

The Constituency Studies Unit engages in textual, historical, sociological and anthropological research, considering the diverse global contexts within which Ismaili communities live. It explores the history, oral history and traditions of Ismaili communities and their heterogeneous contemporary realities, informing the educational programmes of IIS.

Central Asian Studies

The Central Asian Studies Unit examines the history, culture, and traditions of the Ismaili and wider Shi'i communities within the broader context of Muslim societies in Central Asia. The geographic scope of this research domain includes Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Northern Pakistan, Western China, and the Russian Federation.

South Asian Studies

The South Asian Studies Unit examines the deeply interwoven religious traditions and literature of Ismailis and the surrounding religious communities in South Asia. Research includes communities centred in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, as well as diasporic communities in East Africa, Southeast Asia, Europe, and North America.

Publications

IIS publishes a wealth of original academic works in keeping with the five themes of its research mandate. A large portion of this scholarship is produced by faculty and researchers at the Institute, some in collaboration with external scholars.

IIS publications are produced in partnership with leading academic publishers. Most books are first published in English, as well as critical editions in Arabic and Persian. A growing number of IIS publications are also translated into other key languages.



Photo Credit: Jonathan Goldberg



IIS academic publications fall into several distinct and interrelated categories

Occasional papers address broad themes on the relationship between religion and society.

Monographs explore specific aspects of Islamic faith and culture and activities of key Muslim figures.

Editions and translations of primary and secondary texts.

Translations of literary texts illustrate the rich heritage of spiritual, devotional, and symbolic expressions in Muslim history.

Studies on Ismaili history and thought explore the relationships of the Ismailis and other traditions, communities, and schools of thought in Islam as well as other faiths.

Proceedings of conferences and seminars capture new research and discourse within academia.

Bibliographical works and manuscript catalogues document manuscripts, printed text and other source material.

The Institute publishes a range of series as well as non-series books

Accessible texts are designed to convey broad ideas to general audiences. They span topics from Muslim history and culture to Ismaili practices and identity.

World of Islam is aimed at general audiences seeking to learn about Islam as expressed across today's global community. The diverse themes, ranging from historical narratives and geographic explorations to famous figures and cultural heritages, are united in their aim of linking past and present, to celebrate and elucidate the cosmopolitan world of Islam.

Living Ismaili Traditions seeks to shed light on the diverse cultural practices of the Ismaili community around the world. With a focus on personal expression and identity, this series share stories and traditions across linguistic and social boundaries.

Read and Reflect is a new series of shorter publications focussing on topics of interest to the global Ismaili community.

IIS's heritage series help to illustrate the rich history of Muslims through their written works and cultural practices, as well as through art

Ismaili Heritage Series presents the results of modern scholarship on the Ismailis and their rich intellectual and cultural heritages, as well as exploring aspects of their more recent history.

Shi'i Heritage Series covers a variety of Shi'i interpretations while also facilitating a better understanding of the history, doctrines, and practices of Shi'i Muslims from medieval to present-day manifestations. Utilising an interdisciplinary approach, the series aims to publish the most significant contemporary studies on Shi'i Islam whilst encouraging further research in the field.

Muslim Heritage Series explores themes that are central to Muslim civilisations, including the nature of religious authority, ethics and law, social justice and civil society, the arts and sciences, and the interplay of spiritual and secular life. In keeping with the Institute's overarching principles, the series is navigated by the plurality of communities and interpretations of Islam, covering both modern and traditional worldviews.

Central Asian Studies Series will extend the existing publishing programme of the Central Asian Studies Unit. This new series will address various themes linked to the diverse Islamic heritage of Central Asia, such as the relation between culture and society, formation of civil society, identity, gender, climate change and its impact on communal heritage and preservation.

South Asian Studies Series. South Asia is home to the largest Muslim population within a single region, yet academia has not paid due attention to its major historical engagement with Islam. Presenting fresh new research on the history, culture and practices of South Asian Ismaili communities, including diasporic studies, this series will help to define new ways of looking at South Asian Islam.

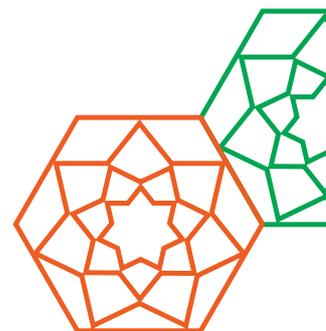
The Institute also publishes critical editions, translations, and commentaries of significant texts relevant to Muslim history and thought

Qur'anic Studies Series features commentaries and interpretations arising from intellectual and spiritual reflections on the Qur'an. For Muslims, the Qur'an has been the subject of contending ideas and interpretations. The Qur'anic Studies Series adopts a balanced editorial position on the richness of approaches to the Qur'an both in the past and in contemporary times.

Ismaili Texts and Translations Series. Recent progress in Ismaili Studies has been based on the recovery of hundreds of Ismaili manuscripts. A good portion of such texts, in Arabic, Persian and Indic languages, are preserved in the Ismaili Special Collections Unit of IIS. The Ismaili Texts and Translations Series aims to produce critical editions of these hitherto unexplored or relatively inaccessible texts, together with English translations and contextualising introductions that are essential for deepening the understanding in the field.

Epistles of the Brethren of Purity consists of a multi-authored Arabic critical edition and annotated English translation of the *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa'*, an encyclopaedic work comprising fifty-two epistles that were originally composed during the tenth century in Iraq by an anonymous group of Muslim scholars.

Muslim Esotericism. A wave of captivating new scholarship is driving the nascent field of modern academic study of Muslim esotericism. With countless relevant texts awaiting serious study, this series will seek to become a premier vehicle for modern research into the wider esoteric aspects of Islam, with a focus on Sufism.



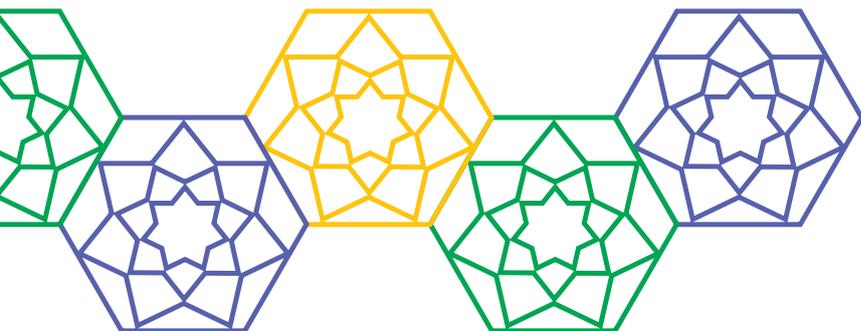
We also publish encyclopaedias for general reference and to further the field of Islamic studies

Encyclopaedia Islamica is a 16-volume encyclopaedia under the general editorship of Dr Farhad Daftary, representing an abridged and edited translation of the Persian *Da'irat al-Ma'arif-i Buzurg-i Islami* (The Great Islamic Encyclopaedia), one of the most comprehensive works of reference on Islam and the Muslim world.

Encyclopedia of the Ismailis, the first work of reference of its kind, will be an Open Access work, with a limited number of printed copies, to be published in 2025 by Brill. Comprising over 200 articles contributed by around 40 scholars in the field of Ismaili studies, it aims to provide an exhaustive and accessible overview of Ismaili history and thought. It will include comprehensive biographies, outline philosophical concepts such as Ismaili Neoplatonism, and cover key institutions such as *da'wa* and the AKDN.



Photo Credit: Rehana Virani



Graduate Education



Photo Credit: Rehana Virani

IIS offers two master's level programmes

Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities (GPISH)

culminating in a double master's degree

Secondary Teacher Education Programme (STEP)

*culminating in a master's degree
and postgraduate diploma*

Both programmes seek to explore the relationship of religious ideas within the wider contexts of society and culture, encouraging a perspective that is not confined to the theological heritages of Islam. The diverse student body at IIS brings together a range of cultural and social backgrounds, creating a thriving environment for learning, both inside and outside the classroom. The Institute's primary aim with regards to its students is to stimulate the development of a civilisational and critically oriented understanding and appreciation of Muslim cultures. At the same time, we equip students to pursue successful and sustainable career pathways, both within academia and education, as well as in other professional settings where their knowledge and skills can be deployed for the benefit of local and global Ismaili communities.

Our alumni are ambassadors, representing the values, principles and work of IIS in their professions. Dispersed over 30 countries around the world, many IIS alumni continue to pursue academic research while others have taken up professional careers primarily in academic, educational, arts and culture and international development organisations.

IIS holds robust partnerships with other institutions of higher education, which includes Memorandum of Agreements with the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and University College London's (UCL) Institute of Education. SOAS validates and awards the MA degrees for IIS's graduate programmes. UCL delivers and awards the Postgraduate Diploma for STEP. The programmes draw on faculty from IIS, as well as visiting scholars from leading national and international academic institutions. In keeping with UK higher education regulations and quality assurance processes, IIS is registered with the Office for Students.

Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities (GPISH)

GPISH is a three-year innovative, interdisciplinary programme offered by IIS and validated by SOAS University of London. The first two years are spent at IIS, followed by a third year at a university of the student's choice in the UK. Students will receive a master's degree in Islamic Studies and Humanities, awarded by SOAS for the first two years of the programme and a second master's degree will be conferred after the completion of their third year by a UK degree-granting university of their choice, in a subject area that resonates with the aims of the graduate programme.

Small cohorts of students mean that lecturers and tutors are well placed to engage students in the in-depth discussion and critical exploration of topics. Subjects range from material history from antiquity to the early Islamic period and topics in religion, literature, arts and identity in a range of global contexts both historical and contemporary. GPISH students are supported by a team to help them work on engaging and innovative subjects and fulfil their academic and personal potential in a stimulation learning environment.

Past graduates of GPISH are contributing to society at large as scholars, professionals and change agents through careers and research in fields as diverse as Islamic studies, law, governance, education, public health, ethnomusicology, art history, media studies and development. They are in demand in competitive professional environments because of their strong analytical and communication skills, as well as their versatility and global perspective.



Photo Credit: Rehana Virani

Secondary Teacher Education Programme (STEP)

STEP is for practising and prospective teachers wishing to embark upon a career in teaching within the wider Aga Khan network of institutions, with a particular focus on teaching IIS's Secondary Curriculum to students aged 11-16. STEP works to develop the skills of exceptional graduates, shaping them into teachers and mentors who can inspire and teach. The master's level teacher preparation aspect of STEP is being undertaken through two pioneering collaborations, one with UCL Institute of Education, and the other with SOAS University of London. Upon successful completion, STEP students receive an IIS-taught Master of Arts in Muslim Societies and Civilisations from SOAS and a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Reflective Practice from UCL.

As part of their training, the teaching practice component provides students with the opportunity to develop their classroom skills and become self-directed managers of learning. STEP offers a career path in teaching within the context of both religious and secular education systems.

Alumni

IIS facilitates the continuing intellectual and professional development of alumni through programmes exclusively for IIS graduates, including access to research grants and membership of the IIS Alumni Association, which holds annual meetings and academic seminars in three regions of the world.



Photo Credit: Jonathan Goldberg

Scholarships, Fellowships, and Grants

The Institute offers several scholarships and fellowship programmes for applicants interested in contributing to scholarship in Islamic studies.



Photo Credit: Rehana Virani

| Scholarships

The **Dissertation Writing Scholarship** is awarded to promising doctoral candidates to assist them in completing their dissertations.

The Institute awards the **Farhad Daftary Doctoral Scholarship** each year to suitable candidates. Special attention is given to proposals in any field or discipline on the Ismailis or their contributions to Islamic civilisations, teacher education and curriculum studies. The scholarships are also awarded for a variety of disciplines within the humanities, such as art and material culture, anthropology, philosophy and sociology. Dr Daftary is the former co-Director of IIS and is now Director Emeritus and a member the IIS Board of Governors Board of Governors.

The late **Professor Mohammad Arkoun** (1928–2010) was a Senior Research Fellow at IIS and a member of the Institute's Board of Governors. This scholarship recognises the contributions Professor Arkoun made to Islamic studies. The doctoral scholarship is awarded to a graduate student pursuing research of relevance to the work of Professor Arkoun.

| Fellowships

The **Professor Annemarie Schimmel** (1922–2003) **Fellowship**, established in 2004, commemorates the scholarly achievements of the late Harvard professor and IIS faculty member. It is awarded to a scholar working in the fields of interest to the late Professor Schimmel, such as Islamic mysticism and the literary and artistic expressions of Muslim devotional traditions. The award is intended to assist the recipient to complete research leading to the publication of a book.

Post-Doctoral Fellowships are awarded to graduates the IIS doctoral scholarship programme doctoral scholarship programme, or to other doctoral graduates, for the duration of one academic year to allow the recipients to prepare their dissertation for publication through IIS.

Honorary Senior Research Fellowships are awarded to scholars with a long and distinguished academic career. Their affiliation to IIS is designed to be an opportunity for further research and the publication of works reflecting the interests of the Institute. Such instead visiting fellowships are intended for academics undertaking research projects in fields of interest to the Institute, enabling them to complete their research at IIS.

The **Zahid Ali Fellowship** was established in 1997 in the name of Professor Zahid Ali (1888–1958), a pioneer of modern Ismaili studies. This fellowship is awarded to a renowned scholar working in the field of classical Arabic literature.

| Alumni Memorial Research Grants

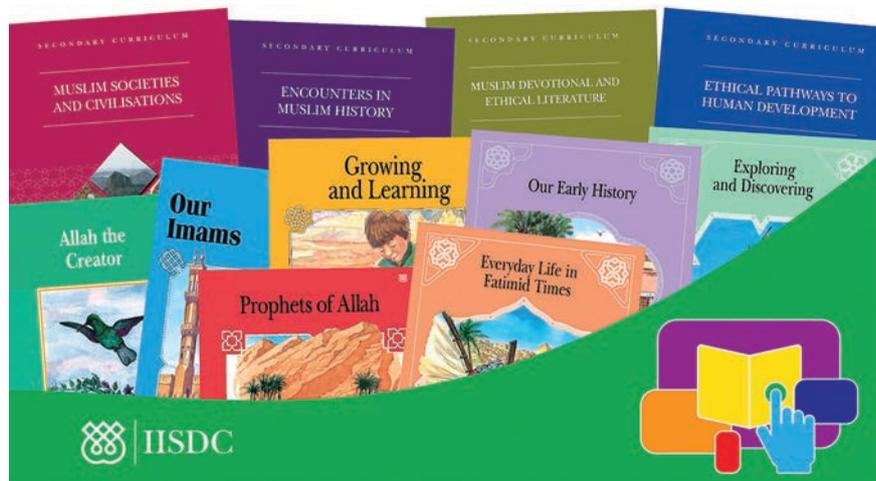
IIS has dedicated a special research grant to the memory of our two departed graduate students: Mumtaz Mehboob (STEP Cohort 10) and Nabila Walji (GPISH class of 2022). The Memorial Research Grants are awarded to IIS alumni who wish to pursue research in the fields to which Mumtaz and Nabila dedicated so much of their lives. Preference is given to proposed research in the field of religious education through creative arts or heritage and migration.

Curriculum Development



A core part of the educational mandate of the Institute is the development of an international religious education (Ta'lim) curriculum for the global Ismaili community, covering pre-school to secondary.

Photo Credit: John Sturrock



IIS produces a range of educational materials and resources on Islam, approached from interdisciplinary perspectives, for use by teachers, parents and students located in over twenty-five countries. The curriculum adopts a multilingual approach, with the materials published in Arabic, Dari, English, French, Gujarati, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Tajik and Urdu with planned translations into German. Printed materials, including books, activities and photocards, are distributed around the world. The curriculum materials are also increasingly available online to extend accessibility.

The pre-school, primary and secondary Ta'lim curricula form the basis of religious and cultural education programmes organised by the Ismaili community globally. The educational materials examine Islam as both faith and civilisation, historically and in contemporary times.

The curriculum approaches the study of Islam in general, and the Shi'i Ismaili tradition specifically, from humanistic, civilisational and normative perspectives. Its overall aim is to promote personal development, learning and moral responsibility through instructional approaches that encourage creativity and reflection.

The Secondary Curriculum presents a modular programme in religious education and the humanities. Among the subjects covered are civilisation and society, encounters in Muslim history, Muslims in the contemporary world, ethics and human development, faith and practice, the Qur'an and its interpretations, and the literature of Muslim societies. Further volumes covering faith, arts and culture, and intellectual traditions are planned. In presenting these subjects, the curriculum aims to address themes of relevance to youth and their communities in different regions of the world.

The curriculum applies pedagogical approaches consonant with its philosophical framework. It calls for a profile of teachers with a broad set of abilities that reflect an understanding of a range of interdisciplinary subjects and contexts. For this purpose, the Secondary Curriculum is taught by professionally qualified teachers who are graduates of the STEP.

As students and teachers progress through the curriculum, they acquire a perspective on their own faith which is grounded in an informed understanding and intellectual appreciation of Islamic civilisation, together with respect for the beliefs of other communities. This course of study equips students with the tools necessary to assume their proper place in the emerging civil and global societies of the twenty-first century.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

The Institute provides human resource development and continuing education opportunities for various constituency segments within the Ismaili community, with a view to enriching the intellectual and leadership capacity of the community in various parts of the world.



Photo Credit: Rehana Virani

Key programmes offered by IIS include

| Community Leadership

The **International Training Programme** is a human resource development programme for educators who support the delivery of the religious, ethical and cultural education of Ismaili communities globally. The programme is based on a blended learning model consisting of distance learning, fieldwork, research and three residential components of two to three weeks each. Over the past decade, this programme has contributed to the educational endeavours of the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Boards (ITREBs), across twenty-eight countries. The programme is offered in English and Persian.

Leadership Development Programmes for institutional leaders from the global Ismaili community include themes relevant to Muslim cultures and civilisations, education, organisational behaviour, and leadership qualities. The residential component of this programme is arranged at a variety of locations, from the Far East to North America, and the training and development of leaders is bolstered via webinars delivered periodically by IIS faculty.

| Educator Support

The **Professional Teacher Educators Development Programme**, implemented in collaboration with Cambridge International, is an 18-month programme designed to train teacher educators from the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Boards. Based on a blended-learning model, learning takes place through both face-to-face residential sessions and a virtual learning environment platform. The training culminates in an award of the Cambridge International Diploma in Teaching & Learning from Cambridge Assessment International Education and a Certificate in Primary-level Religious Education from the Institute of Ismaili Studies.

All teachers require continuous education, practice and support after they graduate and enter the profession. To that end, IIS has conceptualised a three-year **Mentors Development Programme** for secondary Ta'lim teachers whose sole purpose is to provide on-going and bespoke support structures for their junior colleagues. This programme comprises an annual face-to-face workshop at IIS, field visits, access to a virtual learning environment platform and a professional learning community of mentors globally, enabling dialogue and the sharing of best practices.

Continuing Professional Development Workshops are organised annually for secondary teachers from 28 countries who have graduated from STEP.

A blended learning programme is implemented to assist the ongoing development of primary-level teacher educators who support volunteer teachers who deliver IIS's Ta'lim curriculum for primary students. The programme includes short residential workshops followed by a series of webinars. Similar programmes are also offered for other educators who support the educational endeavours of the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Boards.

| Continuing Education

We offer **IIS Short Courses** on a wide range of themes taught by prominent academics from IIS, AKU-ISMC and other institutions. Participants, comprising leaders and educators from the Ismaili community from across the world, are introduced to a social, cultural and civilisational approach to the study of Islam and Muslim societies, situating Ismailis within the broader intellectual and historical development of Islam and reflecting upon the contemporary challenges faced by Muslim communities.

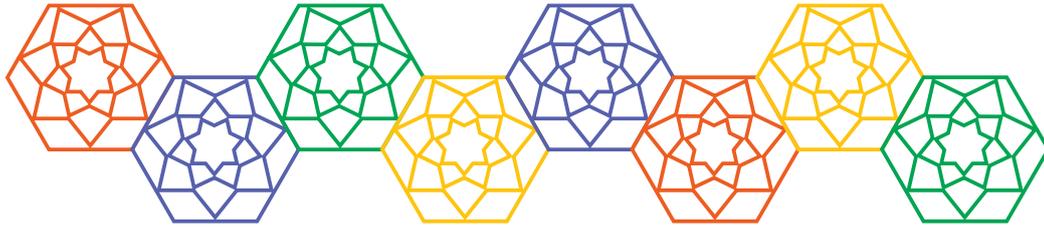
Designed to enhance the capacity of academic staff at the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Boards worldwide, the **Post Graduate Research Fellowship** provides GPISH graduates with specific knowledge, analytical tools and skills to contribute more effectively to the needs of the ITREB and the communities they serve. Following successful completion of GPISH, candidates embark on a three-month residential episode in London that builds upon the GPISH curriculum, followed by a nine-month paid professional internship at their sponsoring ITREBs, during which time they conduct a field research assignment. Participants return to IIS twice, for two- to four-week residential episodes, enabling them to consolidate their learnings and field experiences before graduating from the programme.

Aga Khan Library London

Inspired by the tradition of libraries throughout Muslim history, the Aga Khan Library serves as the repository of a unique collection, and as a locus for the active production of knowledge through research, analysis, debate and discussion.



Photo Credit: John Sturrock



The Aga Khan Library, London, formerly known as IIS-ISMIC Library, is the result of a merger between the library of the Institute of Ismaili Studies and the library of the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations, Aga Khan University. The Aga Khan Library's primary objective is to support the teaching and research of both institutions. It is also committed to fostering knowledge on Islam, past and present, and to facilitating access for external researchers and students to resources on the history, faiths and cultures that comprise global Muslim communities.

| Collections

Among the collection's significant printed Ismaili works are rare materials and unpublished theses. At the heart of the Library's rare books collection is a set of post-Tanzimat Ottoman publications, as well as items from the personal collections of scholars, such as the late Annemarie Schimmel (1922–2003), the late Peter Avery (1923–2008) and the late Mohammed Arkoun (1928–2010). In addition, in 2017, the Library was fortunate to have been gifted invaluable items from Farhad Daftary's personal collection.

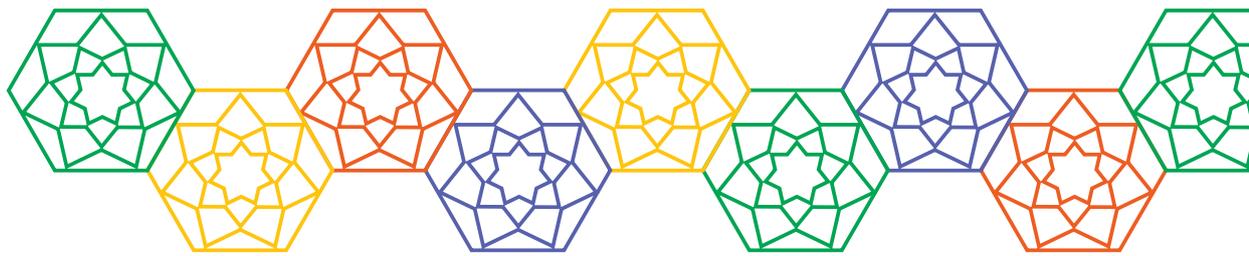
Besides its rare books, the Library has core collections in Islamic studies and Muslim civilisations. Whereas the Ismaili holdings provide a specialised focus, the general collection has been planned based on need – reflecting the academic, research and teaching programmes of the two Institutes. We currently hold 55,000 volumes including 5,000 reference titles and more than 1,000 rare books, mostly from the 18th and 19th centuries. As our reputation grows in our new home at the Aga Khan Centre, we anticipate that more donors and scholars will consider gifting their library collections to us for posterity. To supplement the core printed materials, the Library provides access to some additional 97,000 titles in electronic format. Covering a wide range of areas, these titles include monographs, academic journals, magazines, conference proceedings and reports.

The Aga Khan Library has also embarked upon digitising its rare books and special collections to preserve these gems and make them more accessible. With the support of generous donors, the Library is digitising the Ottoman books collection, dating from the late 18th to the early 20th century – which includes works of literature from the Tanzimat (1839–1876) and post-Tanzimat period. The digitised books are available on the Aga Khan Library Digital Collection platform – a collaborative partnership with Bloomsbury Digital Resources.

The Library has also created a collection of audio-visual materials that illustrate the cultures and traditions of Muslims, covering a wide range of themes and regions, including Afghanistan, Iran, Egypt, Central Asia, Morocco and Tunisia, as well as Muslim diaspora communities in Europe and North America. In addition to this, qawwali (devotional music) from the Indian subcontinent, Sufi music from Iran and Turkey, as well as gnawa (religious folk music) from North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, are also available.

The Library is grateful for the generous contributions of its donors, who support the mission of building a significant collection of rare and early printed books, private papers, records and documents, as well as other printed items with an emphasis on Islamic studies.

Photo Credit: John Sturrock





| People

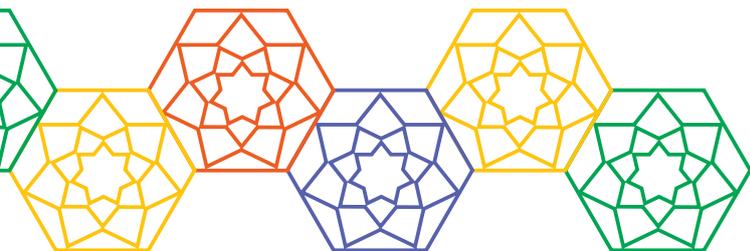
Our primary stakeholders are students, researchers and faculty members from IIS and AKU-ISMC, and also staff from the Aga Khan Foundation UK and the Aga Khan Development Network more generally. We seek to be a resource for researchers, fellows and scholars from universities and libraries from around the world. Additionally, we also serve the academic needs of the Ismaili community globally.

| Space

The Library is a conducive space for knowledge acquisition and includes a variety of study spaces, an enclosed group reading room, several individual carrels, a conference room, a project room, three individual study rooms and nine study cabins. There is an abundance of natural light which extends into the outdoor Terrace of Learning. Inspired by the cloisters of Spain, the Maghreb and Egypt, the Terrace of Learning provides a beautiful quiet space for outdoor study and contemplation.

| Outreach and Engagement

The Aga Khan Library, London has expanded its outreach and engagement programme through a series of workshops, reading groups, lectures and exhibitions. These fora enable the Library to share knowledge and materials with wider academic audiences; contribute towards building the capacity of those engaged in manuscript studies and Islamic studies; and build a richer, deeper and more nuanced understanding of Muslim cultures and societies. The Library is also developing an accredited Islamic Studies librarianship course which will be designed with the Library and Information Association in the UK.



Heritage Stewardship

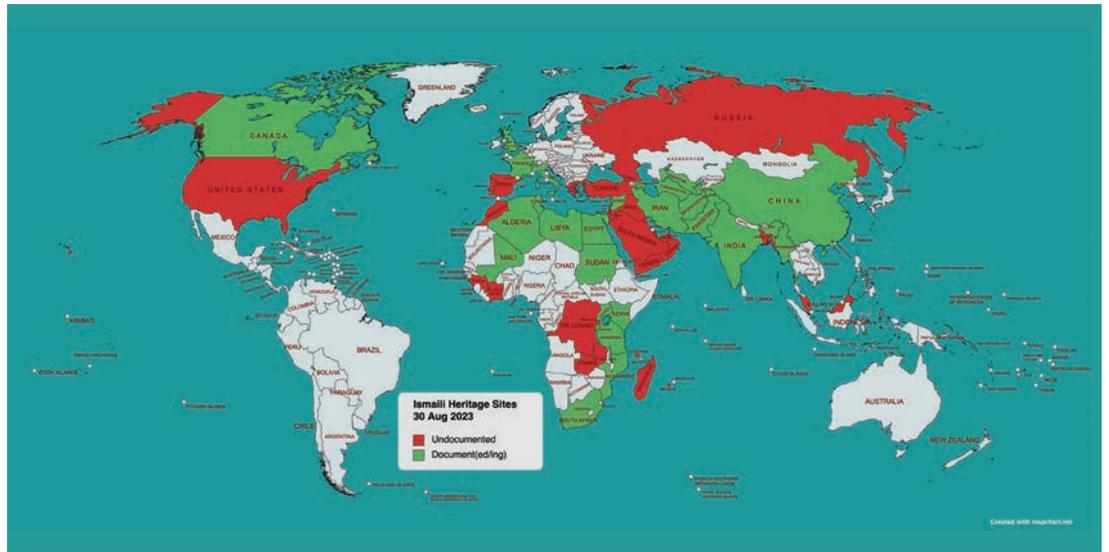
An integral part of IIS's work is the preservation and study of materials that elucidate the literary heritage of Ismaili communities. The Ismaili Special Collections Unit has a mandate that includes facilitating research projects based on items within the collection, as well as managing, preserving and facilitating access to this unique collection of Ismaili heritage materials.



Qur'an manuscript copied in Kashmir in 1298/1881, part of the Ismaili Special Collections
Photo Credit: Rahim Kara

Map showing progress of documentation of Ismaili Heritage Project sites, 30 August 2023. Note that the density of sites per country does not necessarily correspond to its size.

Credit: Ismaili Heritage Project, IIS. Created with mapchart.net



| Ismaili Special Collections

The Institute’s Ismaili Special Collections Unit (ISCU) presides over more than 3,000 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Indic languages, including illustrated manuscripts of the Qur’an. Other rare materials include printed works related to Ismaili studies and more general aspects of Islamic history and thought. The special collections also hold over 2,000 coins.... Ismaili Imamats, and artefacts such as Jubilee memorabilia, archival materials, photographs and audio-visual content.

ISCU is working diligently to make these materials more accessible to academics and to wider audiences. Using the latest conservation practices, ISCU is digitising its collection of manuscripts with high-quality imaging and detailed contextual metadata. Through their video series, ISCU and IIS scholars can both share the historical significance of key manuscripts and artefacts, and also show them in high detail.

Ismaili Oral History Project

ISCU’s Oral History project seeks to preserve the history of significant events and social changes, as well as the intangible cultural heritage – such as oral traditions, devotional literature, languages, performing arts, rituals, festivals, and indigenous arts and crafts – of the diverse Ismaili communities around the world. The main goal is to capture and present the geographical, linguistic, and historical heritage and diversity of these communities.



Photo Credit: Shah Saleem Sadaat, Ismaili Special Collections Unit

Ismaili Heritage Project

Researchers in the Ismaili Heritage Project at IIS, in collaboration with other Imamats institutions such as the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, highlight Ismaili heritage sites from around the world. Some sites are old, beloved, and familiar, while others are new, surprising, and unexpected, but all enable us to learn more about our history, take pride in our heritage, and understand Ismaili contributions to the wider societies within which we live. These sites are studied and documented in photos and detailed descriptions. The primary goal of the Ismaili Heritage Project is to preserve these historically significant spaces, while also sharing them with the community.

Aga Khan Centre



Photo Credit: Rehana Virani



Photo Credit: Rehana Virani

As home to IIS, Aga Khan Foundation UK (AKF UK), and the Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (AKU-ISMC), the Aga Khan Centre is a vibrant hub for education, knowledge and cultural exchange. Located within London's Knowledge Quarter, the design of the Centre, as well as its programme of activities, represents the principles valued by the three organisations: openness, dialogue and pluralism.

Six outdoor spaces are sculpted in the building in the form of gardens, courtyards and terraces, providing spaces for reflection and relaxation, each in the design language of a different Islamic region.

The Gallery

The Aga Khan Centre Gallery is home to a changing programme of exhibitions and events that aim to create a better understanding of Islam and Muslim cultures, past and present. The gallery programme connects with the work of IIS, AKF UK, and AKU-ISMC. The Aga Khan Centre Gallery's exhibitions contribute to the cultural offerings across London and afford a rich experience to local, national and international visitors.

Victoria Hall

A stone's throw away from the Aga Khan Centre stands Victoria Hall, the student halls of residence for IIS and AKU-ISMC students. The residence was conceived with ergonomics, nature, and wellbeing at the forefront of the design. Both Victoria Hall and the Aga Khan Centre are symbolically connected by a ribbon pathway of gardens – known as the Islamic Gardens at King's Cross – that have all been inspired by the history, landscape and the diverse cultures found in Muslim societies across the globe.

The Garden of Light by Nelson Byrd Woltz
Photo Credit: Huston+Crow Photography



The Garden of Tranquility by Maki & Associates
Photo Credit: Paul Carstairs/Arup

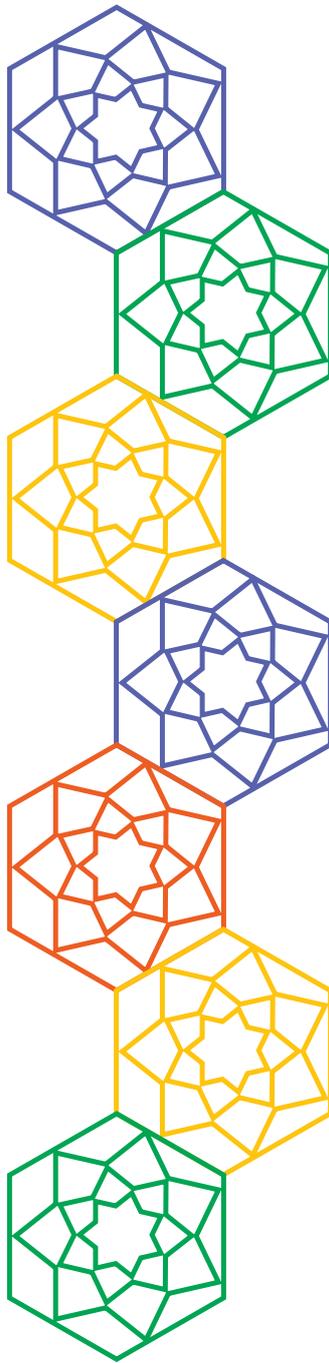


| Working with Us

In common with many other higher education institutions worldwide, IIS adopts an inclusive approach to the management of its human resources. IIS is fully compliant with all aspects of UK employment legislation and is committed to the regular review of the performance of its people as well as their personal and professional development. IIS is a member of the main professional bodies in higher education including Universities HR and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, and takes advantage of many of the development opportunities offered by these organisations on behalf of its people.

| Governance

The governance structure of IIS includes a Board of Trustees, a Board of Governors and other formal committees that oversee academic and administrative matters. IIS is registered with the Office for Students (OfS) and complies with the regulatory framework of the OfS, the independent regulator of higher education institutions in England. IIS holds a Tier 4 licence for the enrolment of non-EEA (European Economic Area) students and is required to comply with the UK Visa and Immigration requirements set out in the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance. IIS is incorporated in England as a company limited by guarantee, as well as being registered with the Charity Commission since 2018.



Contact us

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Tours of the Aga Khan Centre can be booked online at
www.agakhancentre.org.uk/tours.