

DR SHIRAZ KABANI

PROFILE

Entrepreneurially-minded senior executive with 25+ years of leadership experience in the USA and UK, mostly in the non-profit and higher-education sector. Proficient strategic planner and goal-oriented leader of multi-cultural teams, specialising in operational aspects of complex non-profit organisations. Confident bilingual public speaker with proven abilities as a public intellectual. Successful development specialist with international fundraising and donor relations experience. Experienced leader of charities and non-profit organisations. Published author and scholar in the field of organisational leadership and ethics, with academic background in management and engineering.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

THE INSTITUTE OF ISMAILI STUDIES

Various Senior Management Roles

September 1999 – Present

A London-based research and higher education institution, chaired by His Highness the Aga Khan, that promotes scholarship and learning of Muslim cultures and societies and a better understanding of their relationship with other societies and faiths. The Institute employs more than 145 staff and has a budget exceeding UK£18M.

Head of Communications & Development (2024-Present) – Three direct reports | 7 staff | £650k annual budget

This department oversees the IIS' external and internal communications strategy, which includes media relations, website and brand management, social media channels, public engagements, events, crisis communications and internal relations activities. The department is also responsible for overseeing donor relations and implementing fundraising and annual giving programmes, as directed by the IIS' Board of Governors.

Key Achievements

- ◆ Led the development of a 10-year Strategic Plan in collaboration with governors and senior management
- ◆ Conceptualised and implemented a comprehensive communications strategy for the Institute
- ◆ Developed a donor relations strategy to revive links with past donors and engage a new generation of donors
- ◆ Led the establishment of IIS' presence on several social media platforms and expanded its global reach

Head of Community Relations (2013-2024) – Six direct reports | 15 staff | £1.1m annual budget

This department implements a number of certificate and diploma-level human resource development (HRD) and executive education courses in the fields of Muslim cultures and civilisations, ethics, teacher education, and leadership for diverse constituencies across five continents.

Key Achievements

- ◆ Conceptualised and delivered international HRD programmes enhancing partner institutions' competencies
- ◆ Designed and delivered executive education workshops in 20 countries enhancing leadership competencies
- ◆ Established an alumni relations programme engaging 98% of alumni to support their career development
- ◆ Grew department from 5 to 15 staff to expand scope of initiatives and enhanced access by 100%+

Head of Operations (2005-2013), **Head of Communications** (2000-2005), **Executive Officer** (1999-2000)

Key Achievements

- ◆ Brought coherence to the Institute's initiatives through development of a 15-year Strategic Plan
- ◆ Negotiated lease, managed £2.5m refurbishment of facilities and relocation of the Institute
- ◆ Negotiated publishing contract with a leading UK university press, yielding net surplus on publications

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALISTS (EDMS) INC.

Managing Director

September 1998 – September 1999

EDMS is a US consulting firm providing technical services in the field of output and document management to numerous Fortune 500 companies. In 1999, it had annual revenues of US\$1M+ and employed 10 consultants.

Key Achievements

- ◆ Transformed a one-man consultancy firm into a business with proper infrastructure to attract business
- ◆ Contributed to enhancing company revenues by more than 200% within one year

HIS HIGHNESS PRINCE AGA KHAN COUNCIL FOR THE USA - ITREB

Executive Officer

July 1987 – September 1998

A not-for-profit educational organisation that caters to the religious formation needs of a community through 60 education centers. In 1998, it employed 12 staff and had an annual operational budget of US\$2M+.

Key Achievements

- ◆ Established all systems, processes and infrastructure to professionalise services of the board
- ◆ Led the development of a long-term strategic plan to bring coherence and financial efficiency

VOLUNTARY WORK AND AFFILIATIONS

- ◆ Vice President, His Highness the Aga Khan Ismaili Council for the United Kingdom (2009-2015)
- ◆ Chairman of the Board of Trustees, CFR(UK), registered charity (2009-2015)
- ◆ Member, International Leadership Association (2016-2025)
- ◆ Member, Society for Business Ethics (2016-2025)
- ◆ Member, International Society for Third Sector Research (2016-2025)
- ◆ Governor (Vice Chair), Local Advisory Board, Park Hill Junior School (2018-2021)

OTHER SKILLS AND INTERESTS

- ◆ Extensive international public speaking and presentation experience on a wide range of themes
- ◆ Professional knowledge of Microsoft Office® and numerous communications and data management packages
- ◆ Work-based international travel to over 40 countries across five continents

LANGUAGES

English, Urdu, Gujarati, Persian (intermediate), French (beginners)

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ Doctor of Management in Organisational Leadership (GPA: 3.96) Nov 2017 University of Phoenix, USA
Dissertation: *Linking Ethics and Leadership: A Qualitative Hermeneutic Phenomenological Study*
- ◆ Master of Business Administration (GPA: 3.42) May 1997 University of Houston, USA
- ◆ B.Sc., Electrical Engineering (GPA: 3.29) May 1987 University of Houston, USA

PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ Book: *Ismaili Festivals: Stories of Celebration*. London: The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2021.
- ◆ Book Chapter: “The Ismailis: History, Doctrines and Ritual Practices”. In Oliver Leaman (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Islamic Ritual and Practice*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 152-166 (June 2022).
- ◆ Book Chapter: “Shoaib Sultan Khan: Leading to Ignite the Spirit of Enterprise”. In Brooks, M., & Ezzani, M. (eds.), *Great Muslim Leaders: Lessons for Education*. Information Age Publishing. (March 2023).

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

- ◆ Titles of Honour from His Highness the Aga Khan for services to the community (1994, 2009, 2022)
- ◆ Fellow, Royal Society of Arts (2013-2025)

PERSONAL

Nationality: United Kingdom and United States of America

Interests: Community service and modern literature

REFERENCES

Available upon request