

# SSMAF

Sir Syed Mentoring and Assistance Fellowship

Annual e-Newsletter | Volume 1 | July 2023

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## INSIGHTS FROM THE DESK OF SSMAF FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT

**Seerin Ahmad**

SSMAF Founder & President | 2020-2023  
PhD Scholar in Electrical Engineering  
Texas A&M University, Kingsville, TX, USA



### ***.....carrying forward the legacy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan...***

As the Founder and President of SSMAF, I am thrilled to announce our remarkable progress and impact since our inception in December 2020. Our vision of *carrying forward the legacy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* and empowering AMU students and alumni with international exposure and opportunities has been at the forefront of our efforts. We have effectively *aided over 500*

*students in pursuing higher education at renowned global universities. By providing superior guidance and support, we have helped these deserving individuals overcome obstacles and secure admissions with full financial assistance.*

Although we have had a significant number of successful students and everything has been running smoothly, we have observed a problem in recent years. Despite our guidance and mentorship, students whom we have supported often fall short in their willingness to step forward and extend the

same level of assistance they once received. To address and resolve this issue, we established SSMAF with the vision of forming an excellent team of mentors and professionals who can inspire, guide, and support their juniors and colleagues. I believe this network can become the greatest asset for AMU students, as we have witnessed the significant impact that students studying abroad can make with minimal effort due to their networking and collaborations within their fields.

The cornerstone of our success lies in our dedicated team of AMU alumni currently studying in various countries across the globe. Establishing SSMAF was challenging, as we had to manage time for our studies, daily-life activities, and other commitments as a youngster. However, the remarkable SSMAF team has generously volunteered their time, expertise, and money to guide AMU students through the intricate process of studying abroad. In just the first year, SSMAF has already produced numerous scholars who have gained admission to prestigious universities worldwide.

Lastly, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your trust and support of SSMAF. Our journey has just begun, and I am confident that with your continued involvement and commitment, we will make a lasting impact on the lives of AMU students and alumni. I am eagerly looking forward to the future initiatives and opportunities SSMAF will embark upon. Together, we will continue to empower AMU students and alumni, opening new horizons and fostering a vibrant community that thrives on education and progress. Lastly, I encourage AMU students and alumni to take advantage of this opportunity whenever they become eligible and work towards turning their dreams into reality. Thank you for being part of this incredible community.

***....aided over ~500 students  
in pursuing higher education.***



## SSMAF INAUGURAL CEREMONY

### Marks the Beginning of a Transformative Journey

The official inaugural ceremony of the Sir Syed Mentoring and Assistance Fellowship (SSMAF) took place virtually on December 12, 2021, via the Microsoft Teams online platform. This momentous occasion marked the beginning of a transformative journey aimed at empowering and guiding AMU students from diverse backgrounds towards academic excellence and personal development.

The ceremony was graced by esteemed guests, mentors, fellows, and supporters of the SSMAF initiative. **Dr. Mohd Aslam Parvez**, former Vice Chancellor of MANU, Hyderabad,

honoured us as the chief guest. Additionally, we were privileged to have **Prof. M. M. Sufyan Beg**, Chairman of the Alumni Affairs Committee at AMU, as our special guest. **Prof. Rafiuddin**, a member of the AMU Executive Committee, and Mr. **Omar Peerzada**, the Public Relations Officer, were also distinguished guests. Their presence added immense significance to the ceremony, showcasing their support and admiration for this remarkable initiative.

The ceremony began with recitation of the Quran and a warm welcome address,

setting the tone for an engaging and informative session. Prof. Rafiuddin and Mr. Omar Peerzada expressed sincere gratitude and acknowledged the noble effort behind SSMAF.

Prof. Sufyan Beg delivered an inspiring speech, highlighting the role of AMU alumni in mentoring and assisting newer generation. He beautifully stated, *"Whosoever has eaten the salt of AMU, have a Sir Syed in him."* His thought-provoking words resonated with the audience, emphasizing alumni's responsibility to actively contribute to the progress and advancement of their alma mater.

Dr. Mohd Aslam Parvez, in his profound speech, emphasized the significance of mentorship programs like SSMAF in empowering students to achieve their academic and professional goals. He emphasized the role of society in shaping individuals and stressed our duty towards its advancement.

During the ceremony, Seerin Ahmad (President) shared the inspiration and idea behind SSMAF, unveiling its vision and highlighting the goal of providing financial support and highly personalized mentoring for AMU students aspiring to pursue admission in overseas universities. Altafur Rahman (Vice-President) presented a detailed

plan for the application process and student selection, demonstrating how SSMAF would pave the way for the success of AMU students.

The inaugural ceremony of SSMAF not only marked a significant milestone in the organization's journey but also served as a testament to the collective commitment towards nurturing and uplifting the AMU student community. The support and guidance received during this event are truly enlightening, providing a path-weaver for those from humble backgrounds. With such remarkable support and guidance, the future of SSMAF looks bright, promising numerous success stories and a positive impact on the lives of AMU students.



**Shoeb Azam Farooqui**

SSMAF-OIVR Division Team Lead  
Ph.D. Scholar, Electrical Engineering  
National Taiwan University of Science & Technology,  
TW

# List of SSMAF SUCCESSFUL AWARDEES 2022-23



## SIR SYED MENTORING & ASSISTANCE FELLOWSHIP



### Awardee List (Session 2022-23)

Name	Department
Aeyan Ashraf	Computer Engineering
Mohd Mamoon	Computer Engineering
Mahir Abdurahiman	Computer Engineering
Maha Khan	Electronics Engineering
Abdul Suboor	Electrical Engineering
Md Tahmid Hussain	Electrical Engineering
Shubh Singhal	Mechanical Engineering
Abid Hasan Zim	Mechanical Engineering
Mohammad Aqib	Civil Engineering
Mohd Shah Alam Ghazi	Civil Engineering
Rahman Ali Khan	Architecture
Mohd Arham Khan	Interdisciplinary Nanotechnology Centre
Juweiriya	Chemistry
Sadiya	Chemistry
Mohd Arham Shamim	Chemistry
Arqam Fahad	Chemistry
Imran Khan	Physics
Bushra Zia	Bio-Chemistry (Life Science)

### Executive and Management Team

Seerin Ahmad, PhD, USA  
Altafur Rahman, PhD, Hungary  
Rashid Ahmed Khan, PhD, UK

Md Asad Ahmad, PhD, USA  
Md Irfan Sarwar, MS, France  
Shoeb A Farooqui, PhD, Taiwan



Explore SSMAF!



[contact@ssmaf.org](mailto:contact@ssmaf.org)

[Awardee List – SSMAF](#)





## Engaging & Impactful **IN-PERSON OUTREACH EVENT** Ignites AMU Students Path to Global Academic Achievement

We are delighted to share the highlights of a highly impactful in-person outreach event organized by Altafur Rahman, former Vice-President of SSMAF, at the Mohd Habib Hall of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. This event served as a platform to introduce SSMAF, its mission, and long-term objectives to the audience, while promoting the organization's efforts in assisting AMU

students in their admissions to top universities abroad.

The event received exceptional support and endorsement from university leaders, thanks to the invaluable assistance of esteemed Provost **Prof. Rafiuddin** and Moderator Sahab Kausar. Prof. Rafiuddin, also a member of AMU's Executive Council, graced the occasion as the distinguished chief guest, symbolizing his unwavering commitment to

the cause of SSMAF since its inception. His presence added immense significance to the event.

Despite being organized with short notice, the event attracted a considerable number of eager listeners. The remarkable enthusiasm and active participation of the audience showcased their eagerness to learn about SSMAF and the opportunities it provides for AMU students.

During the event, Altafur Rahman delivered a comprehensive presentation, introducing SSMAF and providing insightful information about the application procedure. He emphasized the dedicated efforts of the SSMAF President, Secretary, and other team members in demonstrating the organization's unwavering commitment to assisting AMU students in their pursuit of higher education abroad. Their relentless hard work and determination to facilitate the admissions of AMU students to prestigious international universities were duly recognized and applauded.

A notable highlight of the event was the engaging Q&A session that followed Altafur Rahman's presentation. It provided an interactive platform for attendees to seek clarifications and further understand the process and benefits of SSMAF. The event's success was further evidenced by the

significant increase in applications received during the 2021–22 application cycle, despite it being SSMAF's inaugural cycle. This remarkable response serves as a testament to the effectiveness of the outreach efforts and the growing recognition of SSMAF as a valuable platform for AMU students aspiring to secure admissions to top universities abroad.

As SSMAF continues to forge ahead, we remain committed to empowering AMU students and providing them with the necessary resources and support to achieve their educational goals. The success of this in-person outreach event serves as a powerful testament to the positive impact SSMAF is making in the lives of aspiring students, and it motivates us to continue our endeavors with even greater zeal and determination.



**Md. Irfan Sarwar**

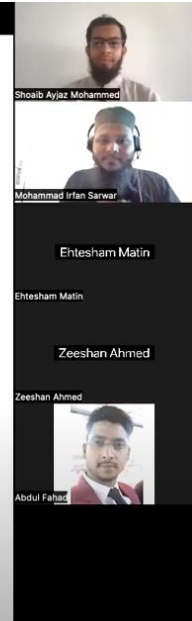
*SSMAF Event Management Division (Team Lead)  
M.Sc. (Smart Grids and Buildings), Grenoble ENSE<sup>3</sup>  
University Grenoble Alpes, France*



# Unlocking Research Excellence: MSCA Doctoral Fellowships

Shoaib Ayjaz Mohammed

Hosted by: Sir Syed Mentoring and Assistance Fellowship  
4<sup>th</sup> June 2023, Sunday



## SSMAF Webinar Unveils the Details of **MARIE CURIE PhD FELLOWSHIP** for AMU Students

The SSMAF Team meticulously organized a webinar on June 4, 2023, with the primary objective of acquainting students with the esteemed Marie Curie PhD Fellowship and its associated application process. The webinar catered to a diverse audience, including students from various faculties at AMU, such as Engineering, Science, Arts, Commerce, Management, Social Science, Law, and more.

The resource person for the webinar was Mr. Shoaib Ayjaz Mohammed, a Ph.D. Scholar and Marie Curie Fellowship Recipient currently studying at Institut Des Sciences De La Terre Universite Grenoble Alpes, France. He shared his personal journey and the impact the Marie Curie Fellowship had on his career. Mr. Mohammed highlighted the significance of the Marie Curie Fellowship program in fostering global academic partnerships. He provided a comprehensive overview of the

fellowship, its objectives, and eligibility criteria. The webinar was moderated by Mr. Mohammad Irfan Sarwar, who holds a Master's degree from Grenoble Inp École Nationale Supérieure De L'energie, L'eau Et L'environnement University Grenoble Alpes, France.

A detailed presentation on the Marie Curie Fellowship program was delivered, outlining its benefits, application process, and evaluation criteria. The webinar offered valuable insights into scientific research, emphasizing its purpose and significance. It delved into the advantages of conducting European research and introduced the MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions) Doctoral Fellowships, shedding light on their benefits. Furthermore, the webinar provided guidance on finding an ideal research proposal that aligns with individual interests. The selection process was explored through a case study, offering a comprehensive overview of the entire journey.

Following the enlightening presentations, a dynamic 20-minutes Q&A session was conducted, allowing participants to seek clarifications and delve deeper into the intricacies of the Marie Curie PhD Fellowship. Students from diverse academic backgrounds, including Science, Humanities, and

Engineering, posed numerous queries, showcasing their enthusiasm for higher education opportunities abroad.

Mr. Mohammed eloquently summarized the entire event and expressed gratitude for everyone's participation. The webinar recorded a cumulative turnout of over 50 participants, demonstrating the strong interest among AMU students in the Marie Curie PhD Fellowship and their eagerness to explore international research opportunities. The event proved to be an informative and engaging platform for students, equipping them with valuable knowledge and insights to pursue their academic and research aspirations.



**Altafur Rahman**

*SSMAF Finance Division (Team Lead)*

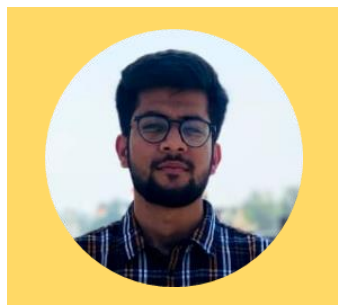
*Ph.D. Scholar, Plant Physiology*

*Hungarian University of Agriculture & Life Sciences,  
HUN*

## ACHIEVEMENT CHRONICLES

### Noteworthy Achievements and Recognitions in 2022-23

The following awardees received offers of admission for graduate programs with full scholarship so far:



**Mohammad Aqib**  
(2023)

**MS in Civil and  
Environmental  
Engineering at  
University of Alberta,  
Canada**

University at Buffalo, USA.



**Mohd. Arham Khan**  
(2023)

**Ph.D. in Chemical and  
Biomolecular  
Engineering  
(Nanomaterial) at  
University of  
Nebraska-Lincoln, USA**

University of  
Strathclyde, Scotland

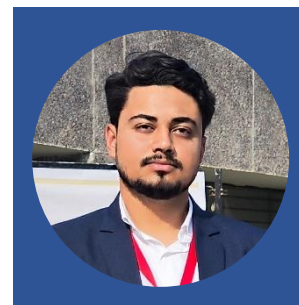


**Mohammad Arham  
Shamim** (2023)

**Ph.D. in Chemistry  
and Biochemistry at  
the University of  
Texas, Arlington  
USA**

Clemson University,  
USA|Michigan  
Technological  
University, USA|

Université paris Cite,  
France.



**Rahman Ali Khan**  
(2023)

**Master's in  
Architectural  
Engineering at  
University of Pecs,  
Hungary**

Szechenyi Istavan  
University, Hungary



PÉCSI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM  
UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS



**Shubh Singhal**  
(2023)

**Erasmus Mundus Joint  
Master Program in  
Marine and Maritime  
Intelligent Robotics**  
Carnegie Mellon  
University USA|  
Columbia University,  
USA|University of  
Amsterdam, Netherland.



**Md Tahmid Hussain**  
(2023)

**Master's in Electrical  
Engineering at  
University of Ulsan  
South Korea.**  
Middle East Technical  
University, Turkey  
|Swinburne Univrstity of  
Technology, Australia.



울산대학교 | 통합로그인  
UNIVERSITY OF ULSAN



**Sadiya Sayyed**  
(2023)

**M2 Master's  
Program in  
Chemistry at  
Universite paris  
Saclay, France.**

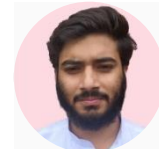


***OIVR (Overseas  
Internship and  
Visiting Research)***



**Fiza Fatima**  
(2023)

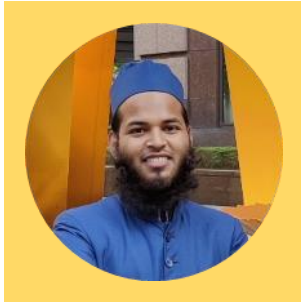
**MITACS Globalink  
Research  
Internship  
University of  
Waterloo, Canada**  

**Inayat Rasool**  
(2023)

**Summer Research  
Internship at  
University of  
Nebraska-  
Nebraska, USA**  

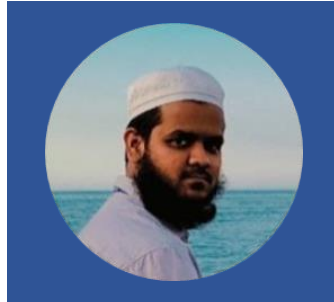

Furthermore, the SSMAF team has been guiding students from AMU and other institutions through the [AMSUO Facebook Group](#) platform in securing admissions abroad with full funding. Noteworthy recent success stories showcase the positive outcomes of their mentorship.



**Md Asad Ahmad**  
(2023)

**Ph.D. in Civil Engineering at Purdue University, USA**

Aalto University, Finland|University College Cork, Ireland| Lehigh University, USA |University of South Australia, Australia



**Rashid Ahmed Khan**  
(2023)

**Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering at University of Sheffield, UK**

Tasmania University, Australia |University of Dayton, USA| Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand| National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, Taiwan.



The University Of Sheffield.



**Shoeb Azam Farooqui**  
(2023)

**Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering at National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, Taiwan.**



國立臺灣科技大學  
NATIONAL TAIWAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



**Nadeem Akhtar**  
(2023)

**Master's program in Civil Engineering at National Taiwan University, Taiwan**  
Uppsala University, Sweden |Ecole Central de Lyon, Paris| Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand |Sapienza University of Rome, Italy



National Taiwan University





**Ataur Rehman**  
(2022)

**Ph.D. Geology**  
**Program** at KFUPM -  
King Fahd University of  
Petroleum & Minerals



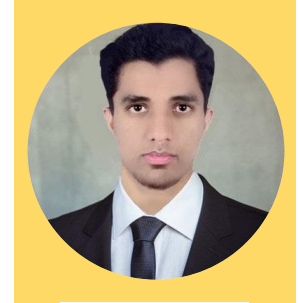
**Anam Fatima**  
(2022)

Master's Program in Plant  
Science/Botany at **King**  
**Abdullah University of**  
**Science and Technology**  
(KAUST).



**Anam Fatima**  
(2022)

M.Sc. in Public Health  
and M.Sc. in Social  
Work in Health at  
**University of**  
**Debrecen, Hungary**  
Taipei Medical  
University, Taiwan|  
National Yang Ming  
Chao University,  
Taiwan | Public Health  
at Nazarbayev  
University, Kazakhstan.



**Masood Ahmad**  
(2023)

PhD in Robotics  
Engineering,  
**University of College**  
**Cork, Ireland**



You can access the  
comprehensive  
collection of  
achievements and  
accomplishments  
at the provided  
link. [Successful  
Awardee-  
SSMAF](#)

## Brief glimpses into the **CHALLENGES FACED AND VICTORIES ACHIEVED**

### **A Voyage of Academic Excellence: From Ghazipur to the United Kingdom**

**Rashid Ahmed Khan**

*Vice President SSMAF*

*Ph.D. Scholar, Electrical Engineering  
University of Sheffield, United Kingdom*



Amidst the turmoil of the COVID-19 second wave, on April 28, 2021, I found myself at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) in New Delhi, prepared to board a flight to Taipei, Taiwan. Little did I know the unforeseen obstacles that lay ahead. As flights from India were cancelled due to the rising COVID-19 cases, the flight I was about to take represented the final chance, despite a 26-hour layover in Japan. However, I faced daunting challenges at the airport, with my RT-PCR report nearing expiration and lacking a transit visa for Japan due to the prolonged layover. Yet, with unwavering cooperation from the airline and Japanese officials, a special permit was granted, turning this disheartening situation into an enlightening lesson on resilience and determination. Now, let us embark on a reflective journey that began a decade ago. I am Rashid Ahmed Khan,

currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering at the esteemed University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom. My academic voyage has been an extraordinary rollercoaster of highs and lows, a testament to the power of perseverance. Throughout this transformative journey, I have been fortunate to receive unwavering support from SSMAF and my mentor, Mr. Seerin Ahmad.

Born in the humble town of Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, my educational odyssey commenced in the vibrant city of Kolkata, where I completed my high school education. In 2013, I was granted admission to the Diploma in Engineering program at Aligarh Muslim University, India, establishing the bedrock for my future studies.

Fuelled by an insatiable thirst for knowledge, I continued my educational pursuits at AMU, earning an undergraduate

degree in Electrical Engineering in 2020. Yet, my relentless drive to explore global opportunities and expand my horizons led me to set my sights on pursuing a Master's degree abroad. With unwavering determination, I secured admission to the prestigious National Taiwan University of Science and Technology in Taiwan, with the added blessing of full funding. This international voyage of discovery enriched not only my academic knowledge but also my cultural and personal understanding as I immersed myself in diverse perspectives and experiences. Along this voyage, I also had the privilege of gaining international exposure in Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Dubai, and Sri Lanka, broadening my horizons further.

Driven by an unyielding passion for research and a deep-rooted desire to leave an

indelible mark, I aspired to embark on a Ph.D. journey in Electrical Engineering. The University of Sheffield presented an exceptional opportunity, offering a funded position to pursue my doctoral studies. This remarkable milestone has been a true testament to the power of perseverance and the importance of having a supportive network. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who have been part of this transformative expedition, and I encourage you to join us in celebrating the triumphs of the talented SSMAF awardees who continue to shape the future of academia and innovation. Together, let us illuminate the path of knowledge and make lasting contributions that inspire generations to come.

## Unleashing Potential: The Inspiring Journey of an SSMAF Awardee in Pursuit of Knowledge

**Mohammad Aqib**

*SSMAF Awardee 2023*

*MS in Civil and Environmental Engineering  
University of Alberta, Canada*



I am thrilled to share the captivating story of my admission to a prestigious university in Canada and the United States. My name is Mohammad Aqib, and I am pursuing my master's degree at the University of Alberta. Having completed my undergraduate studies in Civil Engineering at Zakir Husain College of Engineering and Technology, Aligarh Muslim University, in 2022, I embarked on a journey to turn my passion for research into a fulfilling career. In my second year of undergraduate studies, I embarked on a journey to explore opportunities abroad. This involved preparing for the IELTS test, gathering necessary documents, and ultimately securing admission to a prestigious institution with a full scholarship. However, I soon realized that this endeavor required immense dedication, unwavering consistency, and a great deal of patience.

Amid my search for valuable insights, I discovered the Sir Syed Mentorship and Fellowship (SSMAF) initiative, established in

Dec. 2021 by our esteemed seniors. SSMAF aimed to provide exceptional guidance and financial support to students at Aligarh Muslim University, enabling them to pursue their academic dreams confidently. I was fortunate enough to be selected as an SSMAF awardee, and I was paired with Md Asad Ahmad as my mentor—a guiding light who accompanied me throughout my journey.

Md Asad Ahmad became my source of motivation and encouragement during moments of doubt and self-reflection. His unwavering support and belief in my capabilities instilled in me the resilience and determination to overcome challenges. Asad Bhai dedicated his time and expertise to reviewing my CV and statement of purpose, guiding me in selecting suitable universities, navigating the intricate application processes, assisting with visa applications, and even helping me book flight tickets. I also want to express my gratitude to Rashid Bhai, whose consistent assistance, valuable insights, and

guidance contributed significantly to my success. I am extremely thankful to SSMAF for fulfilling their commitment to provide financial support by reimbursing the fees for the IELTS English Proficiency test. This assistance has greatly relieved the financial burden associated with the application process.

The dedication and selflessness displayed by our senior students in establishing and nurturing SSMAF have deeply impacted me. Their visionary initiative has not only inspired me, but it has also paved the way for countless students to pursue their academic aspirations. I firmly believe that SSMAF will continue to flourish and empower an increasing number of students from Aligarh Muslim University, enabling them to realize

their dreams and make a lasting impact in their chosen fields.

In conclusion, I sincerely appreciate the SSMAF community for their unwavering commitment, invaluable guidance, and unrelenting support. Through their efforts, I stand where I am today, pursuing my dreams at a prestigious university. I will forever cherish the opportunities SSMAF has provided me, and I hope my journey will inspire fellow students at AMU. May it remind them that with determination, perseverance, and the right support, they can surmount any obstacle and achieve their goals. Once again, I wholeheartedly express my profound gratitude to SSMAF, and I am honoured to be part of this transformative program that has shaped my academic journey in extraordinary ways.



## SSMAF Awardee Spotlight: Nurturing Brilliance, Unleashing Potential

**Shubh Singhal**

*SSMAF Awardee 2023*

*MS in Marine and Maritime Intelligent Robotics*

*Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's program*



As an esteemed alumnus of ZHCET, Aligarh Muslim University, where I obtained a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, I am honoured to share my transformative journey and extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Sir Syed Mentoring and Assistance Fellowship (SSMAF) for their invaluable support during my pursuit of a master's degree. When I embarked on the path of higher education, I grappled with doubts about the adequacy of my profile and the caliber of my essays. Little did I know that this journey would culminate in a profound achievement: being awarded the prestigious Erasmus Mundus scholarship fully funded, an opportunity to unlock an extraordinary educational adventure.

The role of SSMAF in my success cannot be overstated. The foundation played a pivotal role in guiding and facilitating my admission to renowned universities across the globe. Demonstrating an unwavering commitment to excellence, SSMAF assigned Mr. Rashid Ahmed

Khan as my mentor, a seasoned expert who invested his invaluable time and expertise in comprehending my aspirations, identifying my strengths, and identifying areas where improvements could be made. This personalized guidance and support from SSMAF proved to be a defining factor, illuminating the intricacies and complexities embedded within the landscape of graduate school applications.

Beyond the mentorship of Rashid Bhai, SSMAF fostered an inclusive and nurturing environment, encouraging all mentees to explore their full potential. Through constructive criticism and engaging dialogues with mentors, I meticulously refined my writing and presentation abilities, unlocking the perfect blend of creativity, clarity, and impact in my essays. This continuous improvement process was instrumental in setting my application apart and securing admissions to esteemed universities.

Reflecting on my transformative experience with SSMAF, I am deeply grateful for the unwavering dedication, guidance, and support that propelled me forward. The program not only provided me with exceptional opportunities but also instilled in me the confidence to embrace challenges and excel in pursuing my dreams. With immense gratitude, I acknowledge the role of SSMAF in shaping my future and providing me with a solid foundation for success.

In sharing my journey, I sincerely hope aspiring individuals find inspiration and motivation to aim higher, push beyond perceived limitations, and strive for extraordinary achievements. SSMAF's unwavering commitment to nurturing talent and unlocking potential serves as a beacon of hope for countless students, and I am proud to be a part of this exceptional community.

## CONVERSATIONS With Successful Awardee



**Md Asad Ahmad**

Doctoral Student at  
Purdue University, USA

**Personal Biography:**

*Md Asad Ahmad is pursuing his doctoral studies in Civil engineering at Purdue University, U.S.A. He received his master's degree in civil engineering, majoring in Geotechnical Engineering, from the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology (Taiwan Tech), Taipei (R.O.C.), Taiwan, in 2023. He received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India, in 2020. He has some publications in peer-reviewed journals and international conferences. His research interests include Mechanically Stabilize (M.S.E.) Walls, Rayleigh waves in Tunnels, Signal Processing, Numerical Modelling, and Slope Stability.*

**1. Can you elaborate on the specific skills or knowledge you gained through participating in the SSMAF program?**

Through my participation in the SSMAF program, I have gained specific skills and knowledge that have been instrumental in my academic and professional development. The program has provided me with individualized mentoring and guidance from experienced AMU alumni currently studying abroad, allowing me to navigate the complex process of studying in international universities. I have received support in university selection and program and guidance on securing visas and funding. Additionally, the program has organized webinars, expert talks, and workshops that have enhanced my understanding of various aspects of studying abroad. Through SSMAF, I have also related to a diverse community of AMU students and faculty worldwide, fostering valuable networking opportunities.

**2. From your experience in the SSMAF program, what are the key factors that**

**contributing to successful mentorship?**

Based on my understanding of the SSMAF program, the key factors that contribute to successful mentorship are personalized guidance, effective communication, mutual trust and respect, and a commitment to the mentee's growth and success. Personalized guidance involves tailoring the mentorship experience to each mentee's specific needs and aspirations, providing individualized advice and support. Effective communication is essential for mentors to actively listen, provide constructive feedback, and maintain open and honest dialogue with their mentees.

**3. In what ways has the SSMAF program helped you overcome challenges or obstacles in your career?**

I had yet to learn about getting exposed to study abroad, but SSMAF made it happen. I am Md Asad Ahmad; I always needed clarification about the best career options during my undergraduate. At first, I was exploring opportunities in India because the steps were clear and

straightforward, and abroad study was looking chaotic. I discussed my career with Seerin Ahmad, who taught/guided me like a brick higher daily. I got several opportunities to study for a Master of Science but continued with the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology (Taiwan Tech.). However, a brick higher every day was still under progress, and I got several offers for doctoral studies from Purdue University, Aalto University, University College Cork, and Lehigh University. I joined Purdue University in January 2023, where I learned and still building to gain giant leaps in small steps. Boilermaker!

## CONVERSATIONS With Successful Awardee



**Nadeem Akhtar**

Master's Student at  
National Taiwan University, Taiwan

### Personal Biography:

Nadeem Akhtar has recently completed his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Aliah University, Kolkata, India. In 2019 he did his Diploma in Civil Engineering from Aligarh Muslim University. With a strong academic background, he has been accepted into National Taiwan University, Taiwan, for his master's degree in civil engineering, which he will be commencing in September 2023. During his undergraduate studies, he had the opportunity to participate in two research internships, one at NIT Meghalaya in 2022 and another at NIAS, IISc Bangalore Campus in 2023. He has some publications in peer-reviewed journals and international conferences.

### 1. How has the mentorship provided through the SSMAF program helped you enhance your networking and professional connections?

The mentorship offered through the SSMAF program has been instrumental in significantly improving my networking and academic connections. Through regular guidance, personalized advice, and access to the mentor's vast network, I have expanded my contacts within the academic world and gained valuable insights from experienced academicians. Their support has empowered me to attend relevant events, establish meaningful relationships with key stakeholders, and navigate the complexities of the professional landscape more confidently. As a result, I have witnessed a substantial boost in my career opportunities and overall growth, all thanks to the invaluable mentorship provided by the SSMAF program.

### 2. What strategies or techniques have you learned from your mentor in the



**SSMAF program that you have found particularly valuable?**

During my participation in the SSMAF program, my mentor has imparted numerous invaluable strategies and techniques that have significantly enhanced my professional growth. Firstly, my mentor Rashid bhai and Asad Bhai emphasized the importance of setting clear, achievable goals, breaking them down into manageable tasks, and creating a structured execution plan. This approach has greatly enhanced my productivity and kept me focused on the most critical aspects of my work. Moreover, I learned valuable problem-solving techniques, such as analysing challenges from multiple angles, seeking input from diverse sources, and thinking outside the box to generate innovative solutions. These strategies, combined with my mentor's emphasis on continuous learning and self-improvement, have been instrumental in my personal and professional development, equipping me with the necessary tools to navigate complex situations and succeed.

**in your professional life and how your mentor in the SSMAF program assisted you in navigating it?**

In my professional life, I encountered a challenging decision when I received admission offers from several foreign universities but was unsure about which one to choose based on my background. At this critical juncture, my mentor in the SSMAF program played a crucial role in helping me navigate this dilemma. They gave me valuable guidance and insights to make an informed decision regarding university and country selection. Their expertise and experience in the field helped me weigh the pros and cons of each option, considering factors such as academic reputation, research opportunities, and career prospects. With their assistance, I made a well-thought-out decision that aligned with my goals and aspirations, ultimately setting me on a successful academic and professional journey.

**3. Can you discuss a situation where you faced a difficult decision or dilemma**

## DONATION

We are delighted to update you on the latest plans of the Sir Syed Mentorship and Assistance Fellowship (SSMAF). As we reflect on the past year, we would like to express our sincere gratitude for the generous contributions we received from several alumni and the stipend of our core team members. These contributions enabled us to impact the lives of deserving students positively.

With our limited budget last year, we could reimburse up to 60-70% of the IELTS/TOEFL test fees for a selected few awardee. While we wish we could have


supported more students, we were constrained by our resources and funding collection. However, we are determined to do more this year.

For the upcoming year, our goal is to reimburse all awardees who successfully advanced to the final round and cover the application fees for a select number of universities. We understand the significant financial burden associated with these tests and application fees. Below, we provide a breakdown of the planned financial support for the next session if enough funding is collected:

S.No.	Name	Test Fees
1	IELTS/TOEFL	200 USD (Approximate)
2	Application Fees (2 Universities)	120 USD (Approximate)
<b>Total</b>		320 USD per Student (26,000 INR) (Approximate)

Each awardee's expenditure can amount to approximately 26,000 INR. Achieving our ambitious goal of fully reimbursing awardees and covering application fees is only possible with the generous support of our esteemed alumni and the well-wishes of Aligarh Muslim University.

We humbly ask you to lend your support by contributing to our cause. Your financial assistance will be crucial in empowering deserving students to pursue their dreams and educational aspirations. To contribute, please refer to the bank details provided below:

Through Bank Account	UPI
<p><b>Bank Name:</b> Kotak Mahindra Bank  <b>Account Number:</b> 0745294283  <b>Branch:</b> Aligarh  <b>IFSC Code:</b> KKBK0005293</p>	<p>9997833842@kotak</p> 

\*Kindly note that SSMAF is not registered as of now, which means we do not have a bank account under this particular name. Nevertheless, we have made provisions for separate bank accounts exclusively allocated for SSMAF's operational needs. We assure you that there is no need for concern regarding this matter. If necessary, we can provide a detailed bank statement outlining our expenditures. We plan to proceed with the registration process for SSMAF later this year.

Your support and generosity will make a tangible difference in the lives of these talented awardees. Together, we can empower the next generation and help them realize their potential.

Thank you for being a part of the SSMAF community, and we appreciate your continued support.



### **Altafur Rahman**

*SSMAF Finance Division (Team Lead)  
Ph.D. Scholar, Plant Physiology  
Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences,  
Hungary*

## From the Editor, SSMAF Annual Newsletter Desk

**Rashid Ahmed Khan**

*Editor, SSMAF Annual Newsletter*

*Vice President SSMAF*

*Ph.D. Scholar, Electrical Engineering  
University of Sheffield, United Kingdom*



Dear SSMAF Community,

Assalam-o-Alaikum and Greetings!

Thank you for taking the time to read our SSMAF Newsletter. We are delighted to showcase the incredible achievements and hard work of our SSMAF Awardees through this platform. Your support and engagement are greatly appreciated. If you have any comments or suggestions to enhance the content, please feel free to reach me at [rakhan2@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:rakhan2@sheffield.ac.uk). Your feedback is valuable to us as we strive to improve and provide the best experience for our readers. Once again, thank you and JazākAllāhu Khayran for being a part of the SSMAF community and your continued support. Wishing you a joyous and prosperous year ahead.



### SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

[Inaugural Ceremony of Sir Syed Mentoring and Assistance Fellowship \(SSMAF\) - YouTube](#)

[SSMAF Fellowship - YouTube](#)

**Note:**

Your feedback and suggestions are invaluable to us in our efforts to serve the Alig community better. Please share your ideas and comments with us at [contact@ssmaf.org](mailto:contact@ssmaf.org). We genuinely appreciate your input as we continuously strive for improvement and meeting the community's needs. Thank you for your contribution.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions to help us better serve our community. Please reach out to us at [contact@ssmaf.org](mailto:contact@ssmaf.org).