



What is the Islamic Scholarly Tradition?

The Islamic scholarly tradition is a scholarly movement that participates in, develops and utilizes all domains of knowledge in order to support the realisation of a spirituo-ethical (Akhlaqi) community.

The worldview at the core of such a tradition is one in which existence is seen as imbued with meaning and purpose (harmonization between value and fact [Qima and Waqi']), an outlook which leads to the production of scholarship that aims to increase, rather than erode and diminish, man's experience of the divine.

In addition, the pursuit of beneficial knowledge (Ilm An-Nafi') and its practice is held to be a scholarly imperative. This principle emphasizes the understanding, explication and practice of that which supports and augments growth for mankind (harmonization between knowledge and practice [Ilm and 'Amal]).

Moreover, an emphasis on and realization of man's spirituo-ethical (Akhlaqi) essence, condition and potential in all fields of life constitutes the Islamic Scholarly tradition's originating cause and most elementary aim. It is the establishment of the virtues (Akhlaq), and their cultivation to the highest degree, that the Islamic Scholarly Tradition promotes in all walks of man's life (harmonization between spirituo-ethics and activity [Akhlaq and 'Amal]).

In the Islamic scholarly tradition all fields of knowledge are attended to and developed in order to realise this goal. Whilst the strictly religious sciences are seen as the core resource for producing spiritually and ethically inspired communities, the non-religious sciences are viewed as an indispensable means to ensure that such an ethic permeates and guides all areas of such a communities activity.

Thus, historically, the preservation and development of not only the religious sciences was emphasized (represented by the Ashari and Maturidi Theological schools, the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanibali legal schools and the various Sufi spiritual 'paths', as well as those scriptural, linguistic and rational disciplines that most directly support them) but also the advancement of fields such as medicine, astronomy, botany, mathematics, politics, history, philosophy, architecture and so forth in terms inspired by and continuous with the overarching worldview and values encapsulated by revelation.

Furthermore, the production of knowledge through the existence and promotion of dialogue between qualified and erudite scholars is a defining and universal feature of the Islamic Scholarly tradition (harmonization between dialogue and truth [Hiwar and Sawab]). Such a methodological practice played a key role in the overall development of the sciences and knowledge in the Islamic scholarly tradition and, in particular, during the most productive and innovative periods of its history.

For the purpose of such a collaborative intellectual culture the preservation and employment of Classical Arabic and the logical sciences between its diverse members has, and continues to be, indispensable. This provides the members of such a scholarly community with a universal language, both linguistic and intellectual, through which they can communicate and benefit from one another (as well as from past scholarship).

The presence of the Islamic Scholarly tradition historically in communities has empowered its members to continue to realise its spirituo-ethical message in novel geographical and temporal contexts and, most importantly, provided opportunities for Muslims to contribute to the well-being of mankind.



Sanad
Foundation
Scholars & Communities

Philosophy and Culture – Summary

What is the Sanad Scholarship Fund

Sanad scholarship fund is a fund established by Sanad Foundation for the funding of future scholars. Sanad believes in providing scholarships to study abroad to those dedicated and able individuals who possess a firm conviction and commitment to contributing to the development of an Melbourne Muslim community that enjoys a strong and creative connection to its Islamic heritage and tradition.

This scholarship aims to provide local university graduates with both proficient Arabic and prior grounding in the Islamic sciences (see 'Sanad's Pre-requisites' and 'Sanad Testing Format' documents) with the opportunity to receive support and funding in order to acquire education and expertise in areas of the Islamic Scholarly Tradition needed in the local Melbourne community.

Sanad scholarship fund is committed to contributing towards acquiring the cultural infrastructure needed in order to ensure the emergence in Melbourne of a functioning and active Islamic Scholarly Tradition (See 'What is the Islamic Scholarly Tradition' document) able to undertake the foundational and essential goal of satisfying the educational and intellectual needs of Muslims, and non-Muslims, in contemporary Melbourne society .

This goal takes immediate form in the establishment of a fund in order to ensure, into the future, the ongoing education and development of a sufficient number of local Islamic scholars, specialists and thinkers who can together collaborate (between themselves, with other scholars nationally and internationally and with professionals in all fields) to form, in every generation to come, a community of specialists and intellectuals capable of addressing the needs of Muslims in Melbourne.

Why the Sanad Scholarship Fund

It is the position of Sanad that the establishment of a fund in order to ensure the satisfaction of the educational and intellectual needs of local Muslims represents one of the most direly needed initiatives in the Melbourne Muslim Community today .

Islamic Law considers the ongoing presence and availability of scholars able to address the general and particular needs of any given Muslim community to be a congregational obligation (Fard Kifaa'iyy) that the Muslim community is responsible for ensuring.

The attainment of beneficial knowledge before the undertaking of action is vital, and the current lack of accessible, authoritative and organized Islamic education and scholarship such a community suffers from in almost all areas of its activity today requires immediate attention. It is Sanad's position that the intellectual and educational needs of members of such a community are varied and complex.

These include: (next page)



- 1) Those whose needs and interests are limited to acquiring an understanding of the basic teachings of Islam (in law, theology, spirituality etc)
- 2) Those who require and/or seek a more rigorous and systematic knowledge and understanding of the conventional Islamic sciences (in both the procedural [Aaliyya] and transmitted [Naqliyya] sciences).
- 3) Those who require and/or seek a more advanced and specialized comprehension of the Islamic Scholarly tradition in all its different areas of thought and practice (that is, both in the conventional religious sciences and beyond them in those fields such as history, politics, education, economics -and so forth- that possess Islamically directed lines of inquiry [see 5.2 & 5.3 below])
- 4) Those who seek an understanding of how the Islamic scholarly tradition can be utilised to contribute constructively and positively to a wide range of contemporary and challenging fields, developments and issues.

Sanad perceives the gradual and future satisfaction of the entire spectrum of these needs to be a necessity-and not a luxury- as a consequence of the complex and challenging needs of the local Muslim community.

With Muslims effected and engaged in all fields of cultural, intellectual, social and political life in Melbourne, planning and preparing for future access to authoritative and quality education and scholarship in all areas of the Islamic Scholarly tradition upon which their activity bears has become an indispensable part of Muslim communal life and obligations. Moreover, as a consequence of the ever growing percentage of educated Muslims, as well as the increasing interest of contemporary Australian society in the Muslim community, the need for a functioning Islamic Scholarly Tradition in Melbourne is predicted to become ever more vital.

Realising the Sanad Scholarship Fund Vision

As a consequence of this outlook Sanad believes that planning and preparation for the provision of Islamic scholars and thinkers able to address the aforementioned needs is imperative if the goal of ensuring an Melbournian community with a healthy and vibrant connection with its scholarly tradition is to be realised.

As a result of the reality that no single individual is able to develop a deep level of expertise in all fields of the Islamic Scholarly tradition, Sanad believes in adopting an approach in which the responsibility for acquiring the vast array of expertise and specializations in the Islamic Scholarly tradition needed by the Melbournian Community will be divided between its scholarship recipients.

Consequently, three things will be required of each scholarship recipient. Firstly, he/she will be required to acquire and develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the different and key areas of the Islamic sciences. Secondly, a scholarship recipient will be allocated the responsibility of pursuing a more focused study in a specific field/subject of the Islamic sciences. Thirdly, a scholarship recipient will be



required to acquire a solid grounding in the particular area of Islamic thought that overlaps with the scholarship recipient’s university background.

In addition, it is the hope of Sanad that texts that are deemed foundational and important for any Muslim community to have in order to assure a strong and rich connection to the Islamic Scholarly tradition will be acquired through this process.

Thus, Sanad fund will aim to contribute to the development of a ‘Sanad Scholar’, that is, a scholar who, in addition to having a good general knowledge of the religious sciences, will emerge as an expert/reference in both a specific religious and non-religious field.

Furthermore, it is the aim of Sanad that as a result of this project the following sciences, fields and texts will in the future be accessible to the Melbournian Community :

<p>Islamic Sciences: within the Islamic Scholarly tradition the Islamic sciences refer primarily to the theological, legal and spiritual disciplines, as well as those scriptural, linguistic and rational disciplines that most directly support them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arabic Sciences: Grammar, Morphology, Rhetoric, Literature etc • Logical Sciences: Traditional Logic, Argumentation etc • Islamic Law: Fiqh, Qawa’id Fiqhiyya (Legal Maxims) Usul-Al-Fiqh, Tarekh At-Tashree’ (History of Islamic Law), Maqasid (Higher Objectives of Islamic Law) etc • Islamic Theology: Basic Islamic Dogma (revealed and logical evidences), Core Issues of Islamic Theology, History of Islamic Theology, Schools of Islamic Theology etc • Islamic History: Seerah, History of the Righteous Caliphs, Pre-Modern Islamic History, Modern Islamic History etc • Quranic Studies: Tajweed, Qira’aat, Asbab-Nuzul, Al-Makki and Madani, I’jaz Al-Quran etc • Hadith Sciences: Sciences of Hadith, Hadith Commentaries etc • Ethics: Islamic Ethics, Tasawwuf, Comparative Ethics etc
---	--



<p>Islamic Thought: Within the Islamic Scholarly Tradition Islamic thought refers to those rich scientific, humanistic, artistic and so forth movements developed in terms inspired by and continuous with the overarching worldview and values encapsulated by revelation (that is, influenced by its unique spiri- tuo-ethical orientation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam and Philosophy • Islam and History • Islam and Economics • Islam and Education • Islam and Science • Islam and the Social • Islam and the Political • Islam and Art etc
<p>Texts: Effort will be exerted towards acquiring those texts that have historically received wide attention and focus from Islamic scholars and thinkers, as well as any texts that are perceived to hold special value for Muslims in the West today. The texts acquired will include those considered essential and important for both laypeople and students of knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shama'il of Tirmidhi • Shifaa' of Qadi Iyad • Canonical Hadith Work • Text on Hadith of Ahkam (Bulugh Muram etc) • Waraqaat • Fiqh Texts • Ihya' • Hikam • Alfiyya • Cannons of Arabic Literature ('Eqd Al-Fared [Ibn Abdi Rabbih], Mu'allaqat etc) etc