

Maqasid Institute Prospectus 2019



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Maqasid Institute

Building a Global
Maqasid Research
Network

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INTRODUCTION

The Maqasid Institute (MI) is a global think tank aiming to create a paradigm shift in the understanding and practice of Islam via maqasid al-shariah. The maqasid are the higher objectives of Islam as derived from divine revelation, the Quran, and the wisdom of Prophetic tradition. In their most general and universal articulation, maqasid al-shariah is grounded in mercy, equity, justice, wisdom, dignity and welfare of all creation. The maqasid approach is broadly understood as the search for ‘why’. It stimulates a move away from status quo apologism to Quranic paradigm, from rules to purposes, from juridical schools to multidisciplinary research groups, and from static to dynamic understandings and harmony with universal laws (sunan). While historically grounded in the rich intellectual heritage of Islamic scholarship, the understanding, method and application of the maqasid are continuously evolving.

VISION & MISSION

MI’s **vision** is to empower Muslims to answer today’s challenges with solutions anchored in an understanding and practice of Islam in accordance with its divine higher-objectives (maqasid).

To this end, our **mission** is to:

- Develop a maqasidi fiqh methodology, an objectives-oriented systematic study of Islam's primary sources.
- Demonstrate the relevance of the maqasidi methodology to address contemporary issues.
- Disseminate the maqasidi methodology to scholars and practitioners in various fields for use in research and to promote its understanding amongst thought leaders and policy makers.
- Catalyze and promote this research agenda worldwide and collaborate with individuals and organizations on the ground to put ideas into practice.



As part of this drive, MI works in a range of areas that include research, education and training, consulting and publishing.

GOALS

MI's strategic plan is focused on the achievement of four primary goals. Advancement toward these goals will proceed concurrently as they are mutually reinforcing. Thus, development and experience in one area will provide important inputs and insights necessary for developments in the other areas.

1. DEVELOP A MAQASID METHODOLOGY

At the heart of MI's project is the development of a comprehensive maqasid research methodology that will form the foundation of a robust paradigm shift based on a holistic understanding of the Quran and the example of Prophet Muhammad (s). The scope of this goal is expansive and will build on a rich historical legacy as well as contemporary intellectual contributions to this field. MI is working with a team of scholars to produce a concept paper within one year and develop a foundational methodology within five years.

2. CREATE A MAQASID RESEARCH NETWORK

MI has created a global maqasid research network membership of 140 researchers. This network is crucial for generating a critical mass of intellectual activities and contributions that can accumulate and build on each other to generate breakthrough ideas.





With the objective of providing a conducive environment and resources to collaborate, learn and produce quality research, the network will be designed like an ecosystem. The core infrastructure of the network is web-based to harness the intellectual talents of researchers worldwide efficiently and effectively. Other major components of the network are: researchers database, digital library, e-learning, research training, publishing, and discussion forums. As a fundamental source for the renewed maqasid paradigm being developed, MI will encourage and guide efforts to generate research in the following key areas: Islamic jurisprudence, public policy, development, and women and minorities. Specific research questions and gap analysis of where research efforts should be focused and what resources are needed will also be generated through surveys of the participants in the system.

3. ESTABLISH A GLOBAL NETWORK OF RESEARCH CENTERS

The global promotion of a maqasid research network and the application of ideas based on such thought will require support from maqasid focused research centers and partnering institutes and organizations. These centers are envisioned to be premier hubs of MI activities, located in strategic geographic locations around



the world to fulfill the following functions: a) conduct research, teach, train, collaborate with local and regional organizations, and provide consultation services, b) provide global perspectives and feedback to further promote and refine R&D throughout MI's centers and offices, c) work with and support MI offices, representatives, affiliates, and partner organizations within their geographic sphere.



To date, MI has established MOUs and partnerships with research institutions in Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey, Nigeria, South Africa, Canada, UK, Germany, Italy, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, among other countries.

4. TRANSFORM THINKING AND BEHAVIOR THROUGH A NETWORK OF PARTNERS

MI's success, ultimately, will be tangible when maqasid based theory and research inspires real solutions and have tangible beneficial impact on individuals and societies. This impact is envisioned to take place through the cultivation of close partnerships with specialized organizations working on the ground in various areas, like development, public policy, women, family, media, education and training institutions, and relief and welfare agencies.



To cultivate these partnerships, MI will offer: a) education and training activities that deepen understanding of maqasid principles and application, and b) support for the development of suitable organizational strategies that promote success while upholding the higher principles of the shariah. These partnerships will form a Maqasid Action Network (MAN) that will work hand in hand with MRN to apply maqasid-based ideas and provide valuable feedback on their effectiveness and how the ideas and application can improve continuously. The partnerships will also synergize efforts and promote efficiency, innovation and diversity of approaches.



THE FORMATION OF MAQASID INSTITUTE

Over the past ten years, MI was registered as a consulting firm in the UK and MI scholars offered training programs and graduate research projects on Maqasid al-Shariah and a number of related applications at universities, think tanks, governments, and NGOs in over 50 countries. The establishment of MI in the USA was a milestone towards providing the proper institutional environment to ensure coherence, integration and synergy for all maqasid-based efforts.

MI USA started its activities formally in 2017 with the appointment of an executive team including Prof. Jasser Auda as president, Dr. Basma Abdelgafar as vice president and Dr. Zaid Barzinji as executive director. MI's structure also includes regional executives and directors of affiliate organizations, representatives who act as contact persons. Maqasid Institute HQ is registered in the USA as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (US Federal EIN 81-5384123). All MI affiliates and offices are registered as independent NGOs and/or non-profit entities in their respective countries.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

MI is working on the following major initiatives:

1- Produce a seminal paper on the theory and methodology of maqasid. Led by Prof. Jasser Auda.

2- Develop the infrastructure for the maqasid research network based on an online platform and a network of offices. Led by Dr. Zaid Barzinji.

3- Develop an executive program for maqasid studies and an e-learning course work. Led by Dr. Basma Abdelgafar.



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