



GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS



# Welcome to the 2023/24 Global Encounters *Impact Report*

Connecting the Jamat, Empowering Youth, Uplifting Communities



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GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS

*The Global Encounters logo is a striking design that encapsulates the essence of community, connection, growth and excellence. At its core, the step-and-repeat pattern symbolises dynamic pathways that lead to new horizons and boundless opportunities. At the heart of the design is Allah (The Incomparable), beautifully inscribed in Arabic, and encased within a harmonious seven-sided geometric form. This heptagonal shape reflects unity, purpose and transformation, echoing themes that are core to Global Encounters. Woven together, the elements of the logo offer a timeless representation of growth and discovery.*

/ Welcome

# Strengthening Community, Uplifting Our *Youth*

**Dear Partners and Supporters,**  
**Mawlana Shah Karim established Global Encounters during his Diamond Jubilee year, bringing together flagship international programmes under one new institution. Over the past several years, this new institution has been growing, building on past experiences and learning from our collective global Jamati talent.**

This year, we celebrated significant milestones that affirm the strength of our mission. With your steadfast support, we have expanded the reach of programmes like GE Camps, GE Internships and the Talent Institute, enabling a wider impact on young leaders, artists and athletes from diverse backgrounds.

As an organisation, we remain focused on ensuring that Global Encounters stays aligned with its long-term goals, maintaining a strong focus on our mission and those whom we serve, particularly the youth. We are proud of the foundation that we have

With gratitude,  
*Rahim Firozali*  
*| Chair of the International  
Advisory Committee*



built together and are excited about the potential to deepen our impact in the years ahead, under the guidance of our beloved Mawlana Hazar Imam.

Thank you for being an essential part of Global Encounters' journey. Together, we are strengthening our community, nurturing excellence, opening doors to opportunity and providing transformational experiences that will inspire generations to come! ●

# Opening Doors to New *Opportunities*

**Dear Friends of Global Encounters,**

**Late last year, I had the privilege of joining our first-ever programme in Egypt—a Heritage Journey that brought together an intergenerational group from across the globe, with participants ranging in ages from 19 to 72. Spending a week learning, reflecting and celebrating with this incredible group, I was reminded of what makes Global Encounters' programmes so remarkable.**

Together, we explored our collective history, immersed in rich cultures and engaged in meaningful discussions about the many challenges facing our world. The week was filled with joyful moments—dancing and singing together—and profound conversations about how the Fatimid Period offers our societies today important lessons in leadership, intellectual search and pluralism.

It is the bridges we build—connecting across generations and geographies around the faith and values that bind us together—that lie at the heart of Global Encounters.

Together in service,  
*Zahra Kassam | Executive Officer*



We are thrilled to share the **Global Encounters 2023-2024 Impact Report**, which captures some of the incredible stories and accomplishments that have defined our work over the past two years. From international youth camps and internships to the upcoming GE Festival, our programmes have empowered young leaders, artists and athletes to grow, connect and shine on a global stage.

With your support, we have witnessed tremendous progress. This report highlights the passion, dedication and hard work of participants, volunteers and staff. The

impact of their efforts are a testament to the transformative power of opportunities that you make possible.

Looking ahead, our team at Global Encounters is energised by the possibilities on the horizon. There is so much we can achieve together, and we are confident that, with your continued partnership, we will continue to reach new heights. Please stay engaged—whether by participating, volunteering or giving. Every contribution helps create pathways to uplift our communities.

Thank you for your unwavering support! ●

/ Purpose & Goals

# Uniting the Jamat through transformational *experiences*



**UNITY**

Bring the global Jamat together, across frontiers, through shared experiences and lived pluralism.



**IDENTITY**

Enable Ismailis to embrace, preserve and shape their cultures and shared heritage.



**TALENT**

Foster engagement in sports and arts and mobilise exceptional talent to greatness.



**INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE**

Grow a nascent institution into one that is organisationally, financially and operationally sustainable and exemplary.

**Global Encounters** unites the Jamat through transformational experiences that leverage and advance Ismailis' shared identity, global presence and individual talent and spirit, uplifting the communities in which we live.

“Global Encounters brings us together and will provide *hope and pathways* for all of our youth, as well as talented Jamati members from *all corners of the world*, to realise their full potential. Through its unique and ground-breaking programmes, Global Encounters will *create thousands of linkages* between murids across continents and cultures – weaving together a strong foundation upon which the global Jamat can *trampoline into the future*”.

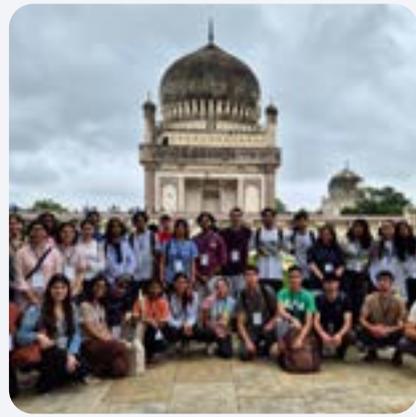
*Malik Talib*

*Chair, Leaders International Forum*

/ What We Do

# Global Encounters: Inspiring *Global* Connections

Global Encounters is committed to building a **united global community**, advancing knowledge, staying connected through our **shared identity** and supporting the growth and potential of young people around the world.



### Youth Leadership and Development

Global Encounters develops and empowers young people to be **agents of change** in their communities. Through international camps, global internships and volunteer opportunities, GE **provides pathways for holistic youth development** and inspires future leaders.



### Arts, Culture and Heritage

Global Encounters fosters a vibrant global community enriched by arts, culture, heritage and education. Flagship initiatives like Jubilee Arts and Heritage Journeys **celebrate creativity** and showcase the artistic talent of the global Ismaili community. Through the arts, we empower future generations and unlock new avenues for creative expression and pluralism.



### Sports and Fitness

Global Encounters promotes excellence in sports by **nurturing coaching and athletic talent**. Our initiatives encourage active, healthy lifestyles that strengthen body and mind. The Jubilee Games and GE Talent Institute foster growth, connection and mentorship for athletes and sports professionals.

# Our Reach

In 2023/24, Global Encounters brought together participants from over 150 cities, a testament to the diversity and reach of our community. This global impact is driven by the support of our donors, partners and volunteers, whose dedication advances our mission to inspire and empower individuals worldwide.



## 2023-2024 Our Global Footprint



**280+**

SPORTS & ARTS  
QUALIFYING EVENTS

**50,000+**

ATHLETES, ARTISTS &  
VOLUNTEERS



**100 +**  
INTERNSHIPS

**600 +**  
YOUTH AT 12  
GLOBAL CAMPS

**1**  
TALENT RETREAT

**4**  
HERITAGE JOURNEYS

# GE *Camps*

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | CULTURE



**Global Encounters Camps**

*Interlocking geometrical patterns  
symbolising the centrality of Allah,  
the spirit of harmony, cooperation  
and balance amongst all created things.*

## / Purpose

Founded by *Mawlana* Shah Karim, *GE Camps* provide *transformational experiences* that develop youth who have *a strong sense of identity*, live their lives in a way that reflects the *values and ethics* of our faith and who believe they are *agents of change* who can *make a difference in the world*.

GE Camps foster a deep **connection** to the Jamat's **history and heritage**, bridging the knowledge gap that emerges as generations grow more distant from their roots. Camps also cultivate an environment that nurtures core values such as **inclusion, respect, openness, kindness, and humility**.

Participants engage in community-driven service projects, immerse themselves in diverse cultures, **build leadership skills** and deepen their understanding of what it means to be a **global citizen**.

# 80,000+ /hrs

Since 2012, **over 2,000** high school students and hundreds of volunteer professionals from **40 countries** have devoted more than **80,000** hours of service to local communities and schools.

# Kenya Home to our *first* GE Camp

Hosted at the Aga Khan Academy, in Mombasa, this camp offers unique opportunities to **explore the rich culture** of the Swahili coast and learn about development through **exposure to the Imamat's work** in the country.



## Service Learning

Each year, Global Encounters partners with government schools on projects that support literacy, arts, sports, science and early childhood education through music, play and enrichment

## Exploring AKDN

Participants visit flagship AKDN initiatives in Nairobi, including the Aga Khan University and Hospital, Nation Media, Diamond Trust

Bank, Industrial Promotion Services and the Aga Khan Foundation.

## Outdoor Adventures

For many, GE Camps provide their first experiences with nature through activities such as visiting breathtaking beaches, snorkelling in a marine park, canyoning and rock-climbing in the Rift Valley and going on a world-class safari.

# 600

During the 2023 and 2024 programme period, **12 camps** impacted over **600 young people**, led by a dedicated group of **160+ volunteer professionals** from **28 countries**.



# Journey Through India's *Heritage*

The India camp, launched in 2015 at the Aga Khan Academy in Hyderabad, offers participants a unique opportunity to explore India's culture and the Jamat's history. They engage with traditional and contemporary cultures through workshops in music, dance, culinary arts, textiles, and visual arts.

## Heritage and Community Connections

Last year, participants visited the Qutub Shahi Tombs, where the Aga Khan Trust for Culture is actively working. They engaged with the local Jamat through home visits and leadership interactions. In Gujarat, they explored community heritage, celebrated the New Year with Malia Hostel youth and witnessed the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme's work in water harvesting, agriculture and economic development. Other highlights included AKTC's extraordinary work at Humayun's Tomb and Sundar Nursery, a green oasis in the heart of Delhi, as well as a visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra.



## Exploring Mumbai

In 2024, Global Encounters piloted our first programme in Mumbai, with visits to heritage Jamatkhana, including Hassanabad, which houses the mausoleum of Imam Aga Hassan Ali Shah. The group also visited local historical sites, and had an opportunity to explore Dharavi, Asia's largest bustling slum with over 1 million residents in the heart of Mumbai, where participants learned about the challenges and opportunities of urbanisation.



# 84%

of Alumni reported that their **experiences at camp** have **transformed** how they live their **daily lives**

# Pakistan Service, learning, *inclusivity.*

Participants in the GE Pakistan programme, which began in 2017, are exposed to the full breadth of AKDN's work across sectors, and see, in-person, the power of a **multi-input area development** strategy.



## Immersed in Innovation

Based at the Aga Khan University, participants deep dive into the cutting-edge work of the University and live on a dynamic and buzzing campus. Participants also collaborate with Jamati Institutions on service learning, supporting community schools with English programmes, technology, theatre and activities for differently-abled children.

## Uncovering Impact and Heritage

In the North, participants explore the AKDN's climate-focused projects

# 91%

of Alumni reported that as a **result of camp**, they have a **better understanding** of their identity ("who I am")

implemented by the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, see the impact of global warming through a hike on the Passu Glacier and a visit to Attabad Lake. They also learn about the history of mountain communities through the stories of local elders, visits to Altit and Baltit villages and Forts and workshops with local artisans in traditional music, jewellery making, woodwork and more. In Lahore, through engagements with Aga Khan Cultural Services, participants explore the conservation of significant Mughal-era monuments, including the Lahore Fort, and learn how culture is a tool for development.

# Testimonials

“What I received was a changed mindset, awareness and respect for other cultures and a huge, loving and caring family.

*Participant, Tajikistan*

”

“My GE [camp] experience has made me a more confident person. I am now someone who thinks at a higher level than I did before. Additionally, I found that my ability to persevere and push through uncomfortable moments greatly increased.

*Participant, North America*

”

“I fondly remember the informal conversations I had with participants over walks to session halls, dining halls or the Jamatkhana. Conversations ranged from learning new languages to sharing life experiences, which led to participants coming out of their comfort zones, helping to cement lifelong connections.

*Volunteer, Pakistan*

”

# GE *Internships*

DEVELOP | CONNECT | GROW



# Empowering Future Leaders

Launched in 2019, the GE Internships Programme offers **university** students and recent graduates **career-building** opportunities across AKDN and Jamati Institutions.

Designed for young adults (18-30 years), the internship programme helps participants develop key career skills, broaden their perspectives and contribute to the development sector and community. Internships provide hands-on experience, foster personal growth and deepen cultural understanding, promoting diversity and pluralism.

## Programme Highlights:

In 2023 and 2024, GE hosted its sixth internship cohort placing 112 interns across three countries (India, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan) and virtually.

# 160

Since 2019, over **160 interns aged 18-30** have participated from **17 countries** engaging with **19 AKDN** and Jamati site partners.

## Our Internship Partners

Accelerate Prosperity

Aga Hall Estate, India

Aga Khan Agency for Habitat

Aga Khan Education Board, Pakistan

Aga Khan Education Services / Aga Khan Schools, Pakistan

Aga Khan Development Network, Kyrgyzstan

Aga Khan Foundation, Kyrgyzstan

Aga Khan Health Services

Aga Khan University - Institute for Education and Development

Aga Khan University Hospital

Central Office for Poverty Elimination

The Ismaili / Department of Communications

First Microfinance Bank

Habib Bank Limited

Serena Hotels

Kyrgyz Investment and Credit Bank

Pamir Energy

Pamir Eco-Cultural Tourism Association

University of Central Asia



## / Kyrgyzstan

“My summer internship was transformative. As a Research and Policy intern, I gained valuable insights into Kyrgyzstan’s political landscape and honed my research skills. I also explored the country’s beauty, hiking Alarcha Gorge and swimming in Issyk-Kul Lake. It was an enriching blend of professional growth and cultural exploration.

”

*Muhammad, Pakistan – Research and Policy Intern with AKF (student at United World College Thailand International School)*



## / Pakistan

“As a college student with diverse experiences, this internship allowed me to apply my knowledge while making a meaningful impact. Participating in field visits to rural areas of Pakistan, engaging with farmers and experiencing cross-cultural communication provided valuable insights for my future career, especially in international banking and politics.

”

*Mashal, USA – Consumer, Agriculture and SME Banking Intern at HBL (student at George Washington University)*



## / India

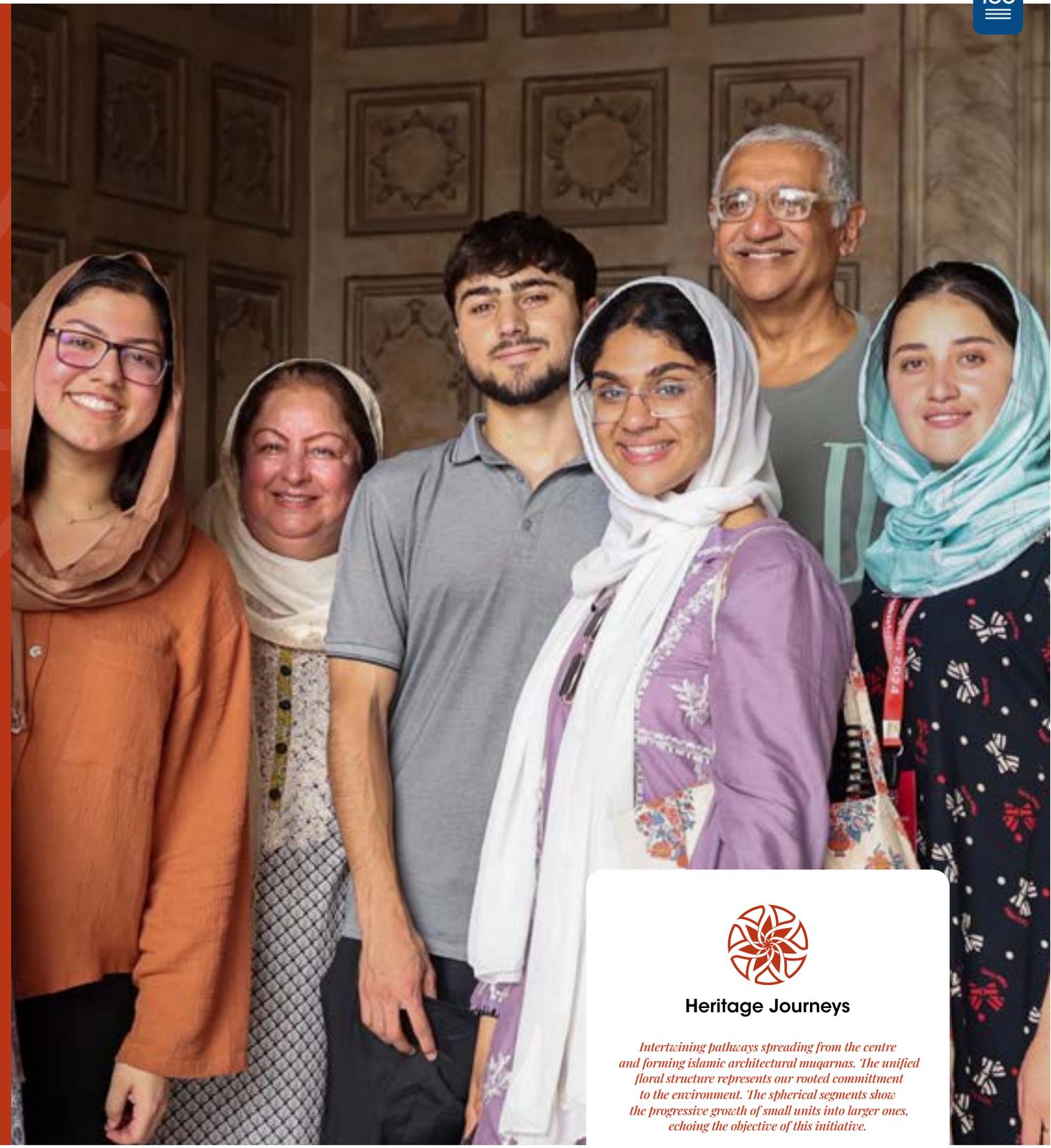
The GE Internship provided invaluable hands-on experience, letting me tackle real-world challenges and apply my knowledge as a fresh graduate. I’m grateful for the chance to meet new people, explore diverse ways of living and grow in a new environment. This experience has been transformative, and I look forward to future opportunities.

”

*Nozigul, Tajikistan – Habitat Assessment Intern, Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (student at University of Central Asia)*

# GE Heritage Journeys

EXPLORE | INSPIRE | CREATE



## Heritage Journeys

*Intertwining pathways spreading from the centre and forming islamic architectural muqarnas. The unified floral structure represents our rooted commitment to the environment. The spherical segments show the progressive growth of small units into larger ones, echoing the objective of this initiative.*

# Building Cultural Connections

The **Heritage Journeys Programme** aims to inspire members of the Jamat to build lasting, meaningful and dynamic connections with the rich cultural and historical **landscapes** of Muslim societies.

Each journey promotes appreciation for Muslim cultures, showcases the Imamah and AKDN's contributions and fosters pluralism through dialogue among diverse participants.



# 27

/ Countries

Heritage Journeys stands out for its intergenerational appeal. In its inaugural year, over **90 participants aged 18-75** from **27 countries** engaged in cultural learning and strengthened community bonds across generations.

# Heritage Journeys Pakistan

In July and August, 20 participants and 4 volunteers from thirteen countries came together for our inaugural journey.



“Meeting and building relationships with Ismailis from across the globe; visiting iconic locations and landmarks across Pakistan; [the] most memorable and impactful moment was being in Hunza and experiencing the warmth and love from the Jamat!”

*Participant, USA*

## Cultural Exploration of Sindh and Punjab

The two-week programme began in Sindh, where participants toured the Aga Khan University and Hospital, and explored the country’s rich tapestry through Karachi’s cuisine, exposure to multiple faith communities, and colonial landmarks. In Punjab, the group explored Lahore’s Mughal Heritage and AKTC’s restoration efforts along with heritage tours, hands-on workshops and Jamati engagement.

## Gilgit-Baltistan Adventures

The group traveled to Gilgit-Baltistan where they were warmly welcomed by the Jamats in Gilgit and Hunza. Visits to the GB museum, a new IT Park, the Aga Khan Hospital in Gilgit and time at Altit and Baltit Forts were the highlights. Participants also met with the local Jamat, participated in traditional workshops and engaged with youth at the Shah Karim Hostel. Memorable moments included boating on Attabad Lake and visiting the women’s entrepreneurship bazaar.



# 96%

96% of participants rated their experience at 10/10, noting that regional and intergenerational exchange, along with faculty-led discussions, enhanced engagement with AKDN and strengthened connections with local Jamats.

# Heritage Journeys Egypt

In November 2024, this programme hosted **31 participants** and volunteers from seven countries. The eight-day journey commenced in Cairo, where participants explored the treasures of **ancient Egypt** and the enduring influence of the **Fatimid Dynasty**.



“The trip was perfectly organised, blending ancient Egyptian culture, Ismaili Fatimid history, modern developments and AKDN’s impact. Learning was exceptional, and fun was endless! The group bonded amazingly in just a week, thanks to the team’s dedication and hard work—KUDOS to them! My only concern? It’s addictive—I’m already planning future GE journeys!”

- Sarfaraz, USA

## Discovering Ancient Egypt and the Fatimid Legacy

The group visited the Al-Azhar Mosque, toured Al-Azhar Park and Al-Darb Al-Ahmar district, witnessing restoration efforts by AKTC and the cultivation of musical talent by the Aga Khan Music Programme.

## Diversity and Pluralism

The programme offered **insights** into Egypt’s religious diversity and its **legacy of pluralism**, with visits to historic places of worship symbolising

**centuries of coexistence** among Abrahamic faiths. The journey concluded in **Aswan**, visiting the Aga Khan Mausoleum to learn about the legacy of the 48th Imam, Mawlana Sultan Mohammed Shah, and Begum Om Habibeh Aga Khan (Mata Salamat) and development initiatives of the Om Habibeh Foundation.

# Heritage Journeys

## East Africa

In December, 30 participants and volunteers from nine countries explored East Africa.

### Discovering Tanzania and Zanzibar's Stone Town.

The journey began in Dar-es-Salaam and Zanzibar, tracing the arrival of Ismailis from the Indian Subcontinent in the 1800s.

Participants visited the The Aga Khan Polyclinic, explored Zanzibar's heritage Jamatkhana, wandered through Stone Town's winding streets and admired its intricately carved doors, markets and shops. The day

ended with a stunning sunset dhow cruise on the Indian Ocean, immersing everyone in the vibrant Swahili culture.



### Experiencing Kenya's Heritage

In Mombasa, the group visited the state-of-the-art Aga Khan Academy and toured Old Town and the historic Fort Jesus, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In Nairobi, they explored impactful AKDN projects, including the Aga Khan University and Hospital as well as participated in meaningful local engagements with the Kenyan Jamat, with a memorable visit to the historic Town Jamatkhana. The journey culminated with a wildlife safari at Nairobi National Park, offering a remarkable close to the experience.

# Heritage Journeys India

In December, **27 participants** and volunteers from **nine countries** explored India's history, **culture**, and traditions, creating lasting memories.

## Exploring India's Heritage

Participants from around the world immersed themselves in the rich **tapestry** of history, **traditions**, and local customs over the course of 15 days. The group explored four regions through heritage walks, savored delicious local **cuisine**, **exchanged stories** with Jamati elders, and learned about our history and the **impactful work** of the AKDN.

## Memories and Connections

The journey was filled with **moments of joy** as participants danced, sang, and celebrated together. Everyone returned home with cherished memories and **newfound friendships**, making this experience a perfect blend of adventure, **community**, **culture**, and **heritage!**



# GE Talent *Institute*

IDENTIFY | NURTURE | ENGAGE



**Talent Institute**

*The logo features a geometric Kufic-style "T" repeated to form a Charbagh-inspired pattern, symbolising serenity, balance and harmony. Merging cultural heritage with modern design, it represents unity, collaboration and growth, reflecting the timeless elegance of traditional gardens.*

# *Empowering* Jamati **Talent** Globally

## / Purpose

The *Talent* Institute seeks to identify and *nurture* talented individuals across all levels in *sports and the arts*. *World-class talent* is being supported to compete at the *Olympics* and on other prestigious international stages. Building a network of Jamati talent will help to foster a culture of health, fitness, *creativity*, athletic *excellence* and artistic achievement, empowering individuals to reach their highest potential and contribute to the development of *communities* around the world.

# ~1,000

Nearly 1,000 **exceptional** and **world-class** athletes and artists have been identified to date, including 20 **legacy** athletes who have already competed on the **world stage**. These numbers continue to grow as more exceptional talent is recognised.

# Celebrating our **World Class** *Athletes*

We are proud to celebrate our community's **world class** athletes. Their **dedication**, **resilience** and **unity** inspire us all, embodying excellence and perseverance.



**Farid Walizade:**  
From Refugee  
to *Olympic*  
*Hopeful*

**Age: 27**  
**Country: Afghanistan**  
**Sport: Boxing**

Farid Walizadeh, a featherweight boxer born in Afghanistan, competes for the Refugee Olympic Team. After training in Turkey, he became Portugal's National Champion and won a Human Rights Prize from the Portuguese Parliament in 2023.



**Marzieh Hamidi:**  
Overcoming  
Challenges on the  
*Road to the Olympics*

**Age: 23**  
**Country: Afghanistan**  
**Sport: Taekwondo**

Marzieh Hamidi, a taekwondo athlete born in Iran to Afghan refugees, fled to France in 2021. A recipient of the IOC Refugee Athlete Scholarship, she now trains with the French national team.



**Fillah Karim:**  
Charting Success  
in Competitive  
*Sailing*

**Age: 27**  
**Country: Canada**  
**Sport: Sailing**

Fillah Karim, a Canadian sailor, began sailing at 12. Career highlights include 11th at the 2019 Laser South American Championship, 2nd at the 2022 US Open Sailing Series and 8th at the 2023 Pan Am Games.



**Natalia Ladha:**  
Paris 2024 Olympic  
Candidate,  
Swimming, Tanzania

**Age: 17**  
**Country: Tanzania**  
**Sport: Swimming**

Natalia Ladha, a swimmer from Tanzania, competed in the African Swimming Championships in Ghana, helping her country rank eighth in the junior category. She also participated in U.S. championships and the Florida Gold Coast Junior Olympic qualifiers.



**Kef Noorani:**  
Rising Star of U.S.  
*Table Tennis*

**Age: 14**  
**Country: USA**  
**Sport: Table Tennis**

Kef Noorani, a 13-year-old table tennis prodigy, began playing at 6. Ranked No. 1 in the U.S. under-13 by ITTF in 2018, he represented the U.S. at the 2024 World Hopes Challenge and Junior Olympics.

# Fostering **Values**, Leadership and *Global Connections*

## Connecting Talent, Empowering Excellence

The **GE Talent Retreats** connect and strengthen professional networks within our **Jamat**, uniting world-class **athletes**, artists, and industry professionals across diverse disciplines. These retreats offer a unique space for collaboration, experience-sharing and engagement with experts and the broader community. The inaugural retreat, held in Los Angeles in July 2023, brought together 56 elite athletes and sports professionals from prestigious

organisations across North America. An Artists and Athletes' Retreat is planned for July 2025, coinciding with the **GE Festival**.



“Twenty years ago, I was perhaps the only Ismaili working in sport in North America. I am so amazed at the growth of our community in the sports industry. The Pioneers Retreat allowed us to come together and discuss ways in which we can propel ourselves even further, and feel comfortable, proud and excel, in an industry that is not typically diverse.

- *Zaileen Janmohammed, GE IAC Member, President and CEO of the Bay Area Host Committee*



# GE *Festival*

CONNECT | ENGAGE | CELEBRATE



### Jubilee Games

*The logo embodies unity in sports through five interlaced crescent moons, symbolising harmony and cohesion within the "One Jamat." The gold colour honours the inaugural games launched during Mawlana Shah Karim's Golden Jubilee.*



### Jubilee Arts

*Inspired by a Fatimid wood carving in high relief showing a finely detailed floral pattern interwoven with intricate and diverging leaves.*

**2025**  
**dubai**  
CREATE. COMPETE. CONNECT.  
**GE FESTIVAL**  
**JULY**  
**20-27**

Under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairman of the Dubai Sports Council

“As the **GE Festival 2025** nears, gratitude drives the journey ahead. More than an event, it’s a celebration of the **human spirit** and the power of unity. **Volunteers**, the heartbeat of this initiative, offer diverse talents and **unwavering dedication**, bringing the magic of the Festival to life.

Anticipation for 2025 is electrifying as this collective effort unites the global **Jamat** in **creativity, athleticism** and **unity**—a historic opportunity for **inspiration and connection** for us all!

*Zahir Ladhani*

*Project Lead, Global Encounters Festival*

/ Welcome

# Unforgettable Encounters that light the human *spirit*



## Celebrating Excellence

The purpose of the GE Festival is to **celebrate and inspire engagement and excellence** in talent across boundaries through the universal languages of **arts, sports and cultural exchange**.

The Global Encounters Festival, uniting two anchor programmes, **Jubilee Games and Jubilee Arts**, brings together the finest talent from the global Jamat. The Festival cultivates artistic and athletic excellence, featuring both established and emerging talent. Participants from over 70 countries will converge to compete, perform and exhibit on the world stage while engaging the global Jamat on the journey to the Festival.

# 800

Over **800 dedicated volunteers**, the majority aged 25-44, from **over 30 countries** have been serving across all areas to bring the GE Festival in 2025 to life.



# 50,000<sup>+</sup>

**50,000+** artists, athletes and volunteers across 70+ countries participated in **280 qualifying events for Jubilee Arts and Jubilee Games** around the world.



# Uniting Arts and Sports *Worldwide*

The Global Encounters Festival journey began with worldwide **qualifying** events in 2023 and 2024, uniting **artists** and **athletes** of all ages and abilities. The Festival in 2025, will culminate under the prestigious patronage of the UAE Government.



## Global Qualifiers: The Road to Dubai 2025

Qualifying events for Jubilee Arts and Jubilee Games in 2023 and 2024 showcased talent and promoted excellence in sports and arts. **Thousands attended as participants, competing locally and nationally.** Independent judges, where possible, selected finalists for Dubai 2025, creating opportunities and fostering engagement across diverse communities worldwide.

## GE Festival Launch: A Global Journey Begins

The GE Festival was launched in Dubai in September 2024 **under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.** Launch events followed globally, marking the beginning of the Festival's journey to Dubai in 2025.

# Connecting the **World** through *Festival*

Our goal is to ensure every Jamati member experiences the **GE Festival**, whether participating in local events, engaging in **GE Festival Challenges**, attending in **Dubai 2025** or enjoying the experience from home.



## Challenges

Jamati Engagement activities kicked off in early December 2024 with a **gratitude** challenge, encouraging the Jamat to reflect daily on moments of gratitude. Challenges focus on themes such as **fitness**, **care** and **sustainability**, aligning with the GE Festival's core objectives, promoting healthy habits and wellness.



## Faanoos

The **Faanoos**, a beautifully designed lantern, has started its **journey** to Dubai. It will travel through 250+ cities. Jamats will be invited to **celebrate** artists and athletes at these events and give them a send-off to the Festival.



## Online Programme Guide

To **support** artists, athletes and the wider Jamat in their participation, an **Online Programme Guide** has been launched, offering comprehensive details about the Festival. Additionally, a **hotel portal** featuring a range of accommodation options at discounted rates, along with **airline discount** codes for reduced flight bookings, are available on the GE Festival website.

[www.gefestival2025.ismaili](http://www.gefestival2025.ismaili)

# What to Expect for 2025

The Festival will be a joyous and memorable eight-day event with the goal to unite our multicultural, intergenerational **Jamat**—physically and virtually—and to connect, engage and celebrate our talent in **Arts and Sports**.



“I hope [the GE Festival] acts as a powerful catalyst for growth. I envision it showcasing the incredible talent we have, highlighting the significant contributions artists make to our society – proving that art isn’t just a hobby, but a vital profession. This Festival should be a platform that amplifies the voices of these brilliant minds, giving them a stronger presence and allowing their work to resonate more deeply with the wider community.”

– Anisa, Artist





Jubilee Games



Jubilee Arts

**Jubilee Games and Jubilee Arts:  
A Celebration of Talent  
and Diversity**

Jubilee Games will feature over **17 sports**, offering **gender parity** and youth categories, with more than **3,200 athletes** and coaches anticipated.

Jubilee Arts will bring together **800+ artists** in a vibrant display of talent through performing arts showcases, an international art gallery and a film festival.

Highlights include a professionally curated gallery of exceptional artists and interactive workshops, panels and clinics led by top professionals in arts and sports.

SPORT	YOUTH	WOMEN'S	OPEN	MIXED
Badminton	New	Existing	Existing	Existing
Basketball	New	Existing	Existing	
Chess	New			Existing
Cricket		New	Existing	
eSports	New			New
Football	New	Existing	Existing	
Golf	New	Existing	Existing	
Pickleball		New	New	New
Squash		Existing	Existing	New
Swimming	New	Existing	Existing	
Table Tennis	New	Existing	Existing	Existing
Tennis	New	Existing	Existing	Existing
Throwball		Existing		
Track & Field	New	Existing	Existing	
Volleyball International		Existing	Existing	
Volleyball Traditional		New	Existing	
Wrestling		New	Existing	

**International Art  
Gallery**



**International Film  
Festival**



**International  
Performing Arts  
Showcase**



# Increasing Access to *Opportunities*

Our commitment to expanding access ensures that all members of the Jamat, and in particular **young people from diverse backgrounds**, can participate in GE programmes, empowering them to become **agents of change** in their communities.



## Access for Global Youth

As our longest-standing programme, GE Camps have delivered the most significant impact. For many youth, participation in GE Camps have served as a **pivotal stepping stone** to further educational opportunities.

Countless participants have harnessed their experiences to secure scholarships and admission to prestigious international schools, exchange programmes and universities, underscoring the **transformative power** of these programmes.

In 2023 and 2024, GE funding enabled over 300 youth from 22 countries to engage in life-changing camp experiences without financial barriers.



## Support for Athletes and Sports Teams

This past year, Global Encounters has been committed to **increasing opportunities** for athletes by enhancing access to equipment, training and competition. These efforts aim to ensure that athletes at all levels are equipped with the resources and support needed to **achieve excellence, fostering growth** and success in athletics within our community.

# 75%

According to a **survey** of camp alumni from the past 10 years, more than **75%** of respondents credited **GE Camps** as a key highlight on their university applications!

# Thank you to our Donors & Partners

At Global Encounters, every achievement, every success and every story of transformation is made possible because of the commitment and vision of our volunteers, donors and partners.



Thank you for your contributions and partnering with us to offer pathways towards new opportunities for our global Jamat—whether for young leaders, talented artists or competitive athletes.

A heartfelt thank you to all of our AKDN and Jamati Institutional partners.

In particular, the Aga Khan Academies in Mombasa and

Hyderabad, the Aga Khan University in Pakistan, as well as National Councils in Kenya, India and Pakistan for your invaluable support in making our global programmes possible.

Your contributions help bring the vision for GE to life!



GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS



giving is **uplifting**

UNITE. EMPOWER. TRANSFORM.

# Our Volunteers: Making a **Difference** *Everyday*

The expertise and enthusiasm of our volunteers are at the heart of our community.



# 1250

Over the past two years, **Global Encounters** has been fortunate to engage **more than 1,250 volunteers**, showcasing the incredible dedication and **passion** of individuals from around the world.

## **Purpose-Driven Volunteers**

These highly **qualified** professionals passionately contribute their knowledge and skills to **mentor** youth, athletes and artists; design and develop programmes; manage teams, budgets, projects and more!

Our volunteers bring expertise from a wide range of fields—business, healthcare, education, technology, the arts, amongst many others. Many hold advanced degrees from top educational institutions and selflessly dedicate their time, energy and resources to driving our mission forward.

# Looking Ahead

In 2025 and beyond, the future holds great promise. We remain committed to building inclusive and impactful international programmes, ensuring they are accessible to all who qualify. Together, we aspire to achieve even greater milestones.



## Expanding Reach

**Global Encounters** plans to grow its Camps and Internships programmes and launch initiatives that provide more youth development opportunities. GE aims to become a global leader in values-driven, community-based, **holistic youth development**, offering tools, resources, training and mentoring to support youth leaders worldwide.



## Strengthening Collaboration

Cultivating **partnerships** with AKDN and institutions across diverse **sectors** to **drive innovation** and create new **opportunities** for our programmes and the communities we serve.



## Engaging Globally

Leading up to the 2025 **GE Festival**, Jamats around the world will engage in arts, sports and cultural exchange programmes that promote **skill-building and excellence**. Alumni reunions at the Festival will foster **meaningful connections** and strengthen our global **community**.

## Sustainability Focus

A strong emphasis on **environmental care** will shape initiatives both during the GE Festival and in the lead-up, **promoting sustainability** across all activities.

# Our Governance & Staff



**INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Rahim Firozali</b><br>IAC Chair, Portugal          | <b>Farhad Karamally</b><br>Pakistan            |
| <b>Amin Rawjee</b><br>Mozambique                      | <b>Munira Boghani-Nathoo</b><br>United Kingdom |
| <b>Amyr Kassim-Lakha</b><br>Portugal                  | <b>Soha Jabr</b><br>Syria and UAE              |
| <b>Anisa Virji</b><br>India                           | <b>Yasmin Bhudarally</b><br>Portugal           |
| <b>Dastanbui Mamadsaidov</b><br>Kyrgyzstan            | <b>Zahra Hayat-Daya</b><br>United States       |
| <b>Farah Naz Sartibzada</b><br>Afghanistan and Canada | <b>Zaileen Janmohammed</b><br>United States    |



**GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS CENTRAL OFFICE**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Zahra Kassam</b><br>Executive Officer           | <b>Jenna Ladha</b><br>Project Manager                                   |
| <b>Aly Remtullah</b><br>Senior Programme Officer   | <b>Rahim Kara</b><br>GE Festival Project Manager                        |
| <b>Aysha Rajwani</b><br>Senior Manager, Operations | <b>Sameer Paroo</b><br>Senior Manager, Youth Leadership and Development |
| <b>Faizal Valibhai</b><br>Senior Finance Officer   |   |



- |  |
|--|
| <b>Farangis Taygunshoeva</b><br>Senior Programme Officer |
| <b>Imran Alimohammed</b><br>Camp Implementation Director |

## Stay in Touch

For more information about Global Encounters, our programmes or how you can get involved, please visit [globalencounters.ismaili](http://globalencounters.ismaili) or email us at [info@globalencounters.ismaili](mailto:info@globalencounters.ismaili).

We look forward to connecting with you!

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