

Press Release

British Council celebrates UK Alumni in India

Kolkata, 4 March 2023: British Council, the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities, today, organised the **Study UK Alumni Awards 2023 to celebrate UK Alumni in India** and honour them on their outstanding achievements as innovators, business professionals, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and for their important contribution to strengthening collaborative ties between the UK and India. The winners were **felicited during a ceremony** at The Oberoi Grand in Kolkata, in the presence of government dignitaries and leaders across education and sports industry, including **Padmashri Deepa Malik, Khel Ratna, Arjuna Awardee, Mr. Saurav Ghosal, Squash Player and Arjuna Award winner and Mr. Anirban Aditya, Chairman, Aditya Group.**

The prestigious international event, now in its ninth year, celebrates UK higher education and the achievements of UK alumni all over the world. This year, the award received more than **1200 applications** from international UK alumni **in nearly 100 countries**, representing more than **120 UK higher education institutions** across the UK. Following in-depth interviews with a judging panel, the winners were selected across four categories:

Science and Sustainability award which recognises distinguished alumni in the field of science who have demonstrated the impact and scale of their achievements in their profession, and beyond was presented to **Abhinav Sinha**, an alumnus from the University of Glasgow. With dual degrees in Preventive and Social Medicine (MD) and Molecular Life Sciences (PhD), Abhinav Sinha is a senior Scientist at the National Institute of Malaria Research. Abhinav is currently leading a national project on estimating the malaria burden in India, findings of which will help sharpen malaria elimination strategies in the country.

Culture and Creativity award acknowledges alumni who have carved a career for themselves in arts and culture and have demonstrated their artistic ingenuity, influence and creativity. This year it was presented to **Puja Changoiwala**, who is a published author and focuses on the marginalized sections of Indian society. She holds a graduate degree in journalism from University of Westminster. Her work has also been featured in over 50 renowned publications globally, earning her numerous Indian and international awards.

Social Action award is conferred on alumni who have made an exceptional contribution and commitment to creating positive social change and improving the lives of others. This year it was presented to **Sugandha Yadav**, a Supreme Court advocate in India, an alumnus of Durham University. She has an extensive experience in constitutional, environmental, and human rights law, having drafted, argued, and advised on over 300 cases, including the case to decriminalize homosexuality, the Right to Privacy, and the case against the Indian Government's deployment of Pegasus.

Business and Innovation award which identifies alumni who are active in initiating and contributing to innovative or creative new ideas, solutions or business opportunities, that have the potential for growth, was presented to **Saumya Singh Rathore**, Co-founder of India's largest interactive entertainment company, WinZO. A Psychology post-graduate from The University of Manchester, Saumya is also a member of the British Psychological Society. Saumya Singh is passionate about building inclusive, culturally relevant products on the back of technology.

Rittika Chanda Parruck, Director Education India, British Council, said, “We are delighted to honour the accomplishments of the deserving graduates from UK universities and highlight the work of all the finalists of this year’s British Council Alumni Awards. These extraordinary people, who were adjudged as winners, all used their UK education as a springboard to succeed in their chosen professions and change the world. These awardees have already made a significant contribution to India's economic development, knowledge aspirations, and are positively impacting the society, their communities and networks. We are proud of such alumni and aim to celebrate their success, while fostering fruitful future partnerships with them.”

Ms. Parruck added, “The British Council has supported the aspirations of millions of young Indians for more than 75 years via our work, providing them with access to globally renowned UK education and funding tens of thousands of scholarships and academic exchanges. We hope to continue our efforts in the future as well.”

British Council has a long-standing history of building relationships with international alumni of UK universities. Last year, British Council globally launched the **Alumni UK platform. From 27 October 2022 till 26 February 2023 the global Alumni UK platform has received nearly 1500 registrations from India.** The platform is open to all international UK alumni who have spent at least one term studying at a UK higher education institution, including transnational education and online learning. Individuals can grow their professional networks and connect with people living in every corner of the world who have studied at a UK university. They also get a chance to collaborate on tackling global challenges.

Notes to Editors

About the Study UK Alumni Awards

The Alumni Awards were developed by the British Council and UK universities and were launched by the British Council in September 2014. They are open to alumni currently residing in any country outside the UK, who have studied in the UK, at an officially recognised provider of UK university degree level study for a minimum of a term or semester, or who have been awarded a full UK degree level qualification (or higher), by a UK university, within the last 15 years.

Award winners and finalists are leaders in their fields who have used their experience of studying at a UK university to make a positive contribution to their communities, professions and countries. The Alumni Awards celebrate and showcase the impact and value of a UK higher education and raises the profile and reputation of UK alumni, their former universities, and the whole of UK education.

Awards are presented in four categories:

- **Science and Sustainability Award** - Recognising alumni who have distinguished themselves through their career and achievements in the world of science and sustainability, and who can demonstrate the impact and scale of their achievements in their profession, and beyond.
 - Areas of work could include: Climate action, clean energy, medicine, sustainable cities and communities, engineering, industry and construction.
- **Culture and Creativity Award** - Recognising alumni who have carved a career for themselves in arts and culture - individuals who can demonstrate their artistic ingenuity, influence and creativity.
 - Areas of work could include: Arts, design, media, video, TV, music, sports, bloggers, vloggers, YouTubers and the humanities.
- **Social Action Award** - Recognising alumni who have made an exceptional contribution and commitment to creating positive social change and improving the lives of others.

- o Areas of work could include: Reducing inequality, poverty and hunger, education and upskilling, peace and justice.
- **Business and Innovation Award** - Recognising alumni who are active in initiating and contributing to innovative or creative new ideas, solutions or business opportunities, that have the potential for growth.
 - o Areas of work could include: Entrepreneurship, business, technology and finance.

For a list of previous Alumni Award winners, see
<https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/alumni-awards/winners>

Follow the Alumni Awards on Study UK [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

About the British Council:

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language. Last year we reached over 80 million people directly and 791 million people overall including online, and through broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934 we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. We receive a 15 per cent core funding grant from the UK government. www.britishcouncil.in

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