

# MASHAL ZAHRA

SYSTEMS THINKER | SOCIAL DESIGN RESEARCHER & STRATEGIST | EDUCATOR

## CONTACT

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## EDUCATION

### MA Social Design

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)  
2024-2025

### BDes Textile Design

Pakistan Institute of Fashion & Design  
2013-2017



## TOOLKIT

- Microsoft Office
- Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign)
- Canva
- Figma
- Mural
- Google Forms



## STRENGTHS

- Strategic Planning
- Problem Solving
- Knowledge Management
- Brand Development
- Facilitation
- Adaptability to Change



## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

A highly organized researcher, strategist and design educator with 8+ years of experience transforming community narratives and qualitative insights into authentic, engaging storytelling frameworks and design solution for social impact in youth development, sustainability & education.



## WORK EXPERIENCE

### Graphic Designer and Impact Strategist

Curated with Karmen LLC  
Baltimore, Maryland

OCT 2025 - DEC 2025

- Created interactive workbooks and instructional materials connecting students with under-resourced entrepreneurs.
- Conducted audience research to identify strategic partners and scale program impact.

### Creative Impact Fellow

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)  
Baltimore, Maryland

Oct 2024 - May 2025

Project: Multiscale RECIPES for Sustainable Food Systems

- Conducted qualitative research and interviews to identify equity-focused patterns in sustainable food systems initiatives
- Synthesized insights into strategy briefs and visual knowledge products for network-wide dissemination
- Facilitated virtual sensemaking sessions using Mural, enhancing participant engagement and collaborative insight generation

### Graduate Teaching Assistant

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)  
Baltimore, Maryland

Aug 2024-May 2025

- Liaised between students and faculty; supported critiques, studio instruction, and course coordination
- Mentored students in concept development, material experimentation, and capstone production
- Coordinated end-of-year fashion show showcasing student collections

### Communications and Outreach Strategist

SABAH Pakistan  
Lahore, Pakistan

June - Aug 2024

Project: South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Business Association (SAARC) of Home-Based Women Workers.

- Led brand refresh and designed outreach materials, improving digital engagement and partner visibility
- Facilitated participatory workshops with craftswomen to co-create inclusive storytelling assets and knowledge kits
- Applied systems thinking to communication tools, enhancing livelihood outcomes and civic participation for marginalized women

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## LANGUAGES

- English (Fluent)
- Urdu (Native)
- Punjabi



## ACHIEVEMENTS

### Publications

Master's Thesis, MICA (2025); BA Thesis, PIFD (2017); cohort & journal publications

### Exhibitions

Master's Thesis Exhibition, Peale Museum, Baltimore (2025); BA Thesis Exhibition, PIFD, Lahore (2017); Spatial Design Interventions, PIFD, Lahore (2016)

### Awards

Leslie King Hammond Scholarship, MICA (2024-25)



## CERTIFICATIONS

### Online Teaching Level 1

Online course by NAHE Higher Education Commission

### Introductory Course to build Internationalization in universities in Pakistan

B-International project  
Co-funded by Erasmus



### Design Educator and Trainer

JAN 2017 - JUNE 2024

Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design  
Lahore, Pakistan

- Developed curricula integrating traditional & digital design tools; taught foundation & advanced design courses.
- Mentored 200+ students in concept development, material experimentation, capstone production, portfolio development, collaborative projects, and industry partnerships.
- Led workshops on visual communication and design strategy for emerging professionals.

### Communications Designer & Consultant

Jan 2017 - Jan 2025

Deans Textiles-Deans Neckties  
Lahore, Pakistan

- Developed cohesive visual storytelling strategies that bridged traditional brand identity with evolving global markets, including a consumer engagement strategy that demystified the product-making process, fostering transparency and inviting consumers to actively participate in the brand story and craftsmanship journey.
- Designed comprehensive brand identity systems and multimedia assets informed by audience research and strategic communication goals ensuring alignment with diverse market contexts.



## CIVIC INITIATIVES

### Empowering Women & Youth in Digital Design & Visual Literacy

National Vocational and Technical Training Centre (NAVTTTC)  
Lahore Chamber of Commerce  
Trade Development Authority

### Design Exploration and Knowledge Exchange

Swedish School of Textiles, Borås, Sweden  
Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design

### Civic Design Projects

Neighborhood Design Centre (NDC), Baltimore  
Public Servants Creative & Civic Practice



## CASE STUDIES

### Sustainable Behavior Change, MICA

Translated field insights into visual storytelling tools promoting sustainable practices

### Financial Accessibility for Entrepreneurs, IGNITE CAPITAL X MICA

Researched barriers to capital; developed insight decks and stakeholder-focused knowledge products

### Community Health Engagement, JACQUES X MICA

Synthesized research into communication strategies and visual knowledge products