



## SPCAI INSIGHT

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## From The Editor in Chief

Welcome to the sixth edition of the SPCAI quarterly newsletter!

Bringing you the sixth edition of SPCAI's quarterly newsletter gives me great pleasure. Communication is the first pillar of growth and success of a team, followed by the celebration of small and significant achievements alike. What you have in your hands right now (or possibly on your screens) is the sixth edition of the SPCAI newsletter, which highlights our important events, activities, and achievements over the last quarter.

This newsletter aims to strengthen our bond in the constant grind of our daily work lives. It keeps us all updated regarding breakthroughs in the shape of projects, research work, industry/academia collaborations, and mega-events that originated from the platform of SPCAI, PAF-IAST and ensures that we all have a united front for all future challenges. This is not only the platform to celebrate our success and acknowledge our colleagues for their outstanding work but also a medium to understand the overall performance of our center. I hope this effort will help us gain a more robust perspective about SPCAI, PAF-IAST, inspire breakthrough ideas, and give us more reasons to celebrate together.

I consider it an honor to be the editor-in-chief of this newsletter. With my team of motivated and qualified editors, I look forward to making it a marquee platform for all.

We appreciate your opinion and feedback, so please get in touch with us at [info@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk](mailto:info@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk).

### **Dr. Atif Mashkoor**

Managing Director

SPCAI, PAF-IAST

Editor-in-Chief

## Editorial Board of SPCAI

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## Industrial and Academia Collaborations

The partnership's objective with National and International institutes/industries is to achieve mutual academic and industrial goals in teaching, research, and areas of common interest regarding Joint Academic Programs, Research Collaborations and Academic and Scholarly Exchanges, with the overall objective of establishing SPCAI.

### SPCAI and COMSTECH Sign MoU for Future Collaboration

We are proud to announce that SPCAI, PAF-IAST signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with, Organization of Islamic Cooperation Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH). The ceremony was held on March 10, 2022, at PAF-IAST, Haripur, which was personally attended by Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Chaudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH and Director, ICCBS, Karachi. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mujahid Rector, PAF-IAST, briefs the guests about PAF-IAST vision and mission, and the milestones achieved.

Both sides agree to adhere to the assigned roles and responsibilities as stipulated below:

#### SPCAI, PAF-IAST, and COMSTECH

1. Collaborate in organizing national and international events such as workshops, conferences, symposiums, seminars, exhibitions, etc.
2. Will support in reaching industries (Healthcare, Agriculture, Energy Sectors, Telecom, and IT) for such activities/events.
3. Membership of SPCAI to the COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence
4. SPCAI participation in the COMSTECH guest lectures and expert talks regarding emerging technologies.
5. Participation of SPCAI, PAF-IAST in COMSTECH Fellowship Programme
6. Participation of SPCAI, PAF-IAST in COMSTECH Distinguished Scholars Programme
7. Registration of SPCAI, PAF-IAST to COMSTECH Technology and Innovation Portal
8. Joint Capacity Building Programmes
9. PAF-IAST technology park promotion by COMSTECH among the member countries
10. Promote the efforts being made by the parties under this MOU at various forums both at the government level and in private events.



### SPCAI and International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi Sign MoU for Future Collaboration

The ceremony was held on March 10, 2022 during the same visit of Dr. M. Iqbal Chaudhary to PAF-IAST. Being a Director, ICCBS, he signed the MOU. SPCAI and ICCBS agree to hold to the assigned roles and responsibilities as stipulated below:

1. Collaborate in joint research and training proposals focusing on AI.
2. Offer co-supervision to the M. Phil/MS and Ph.D. students.
3. Provide access to research facilities to supervise students jointly.
4. Encourage the exchange of jointly supervised students.
5. Promote the efforts being made by the parties under this MoU at various forums both at the government level and in private events.



## SPCAI, PAF-IAST Outgoing Visits

### SPCAI delegation Visits Pakistan Science Foundation

On January 27, 2022, SPCA representatives Ms. Madiha Aslam, Program Manager, and Mr. Babar Khan, Marketing Manager, meet Prof. Dr. Shahid Mahmood Baig, Chairman, PSF, at his office in Islamabad. The meeting was arranged to brief the Chairman about the upcoming event 'International Exhibition and Workshop on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare, Agriculture and Energy Sectors' to be organized by the SPCA, PAF-IAST in collaboration with COMSTECH. During the meeting, a formal application for event funding was also submitted to the PSF Chairman. Prof. Dr. Shahid Baig extended his good wishes and offered full support to the SPCA's organizing committee of the International Exhibition and Workshop.



### Visit of SPCA team to Pakistan Software Houses Association for IT and ITeS (P@SHA)

SPCAI (PAF-IAST) representatives Ms. Madiha Aslam, Program Manager, and Mr. Babar Khan, Marketing Manager visited Pakistan Software Houses Association for IT and ITeS (P@SHA) on February 17, 2022. The main agenda of this meeting was to discuss the upcoming International Exhibition and Workshop organized by the SPCA and the role P@SHA can play in the event's successful execution. A formal request for the event collaboration was also submitted to P@SHA by the SPCA delegation.

Apart from the event discussion, various other points of mutual interest, in particular the internship opportunities for the MS and BS students, were also discussed during the meeting with Mr. Hashim, Lead Industrial Liaison. The P@SHA team showed great interest in the activities and events being initiated by the SPCA, PAF-IAST. On this occasion, P@SHA agreed to reach a formal agreement with the SPCA, PAF-IAST to officially collaborate with the institute on mutually rewarding events and activities. The draft of the MOU will be exchanged after necessary approvals by the Management of both organizations.



## Real Intelligence Behind Artificial Intelligence!

### SPCAI Students Join Predmain Projects of SCCH, AUSTRIA

Artificial Intelligence can't work until real and intelligent brains are behind it.

SPCAI proudly shares that five of their brightened brains have been selected to work for Software Competence Center Hagenberg (SCCH).

We congratulate them and look forward to their bright future in Artificial Intelligence.



Mr. Bilawal Jadoon



Mr. M. Ahmad Khan



Ms. Isra Zafat



Mr. Muhammad Qasim



Mr. Muhammad Adil



**scch { }**  
software competence  
center hagenberg

  
Ministry of Information Technology  
& Telecommunication  
Government of Pakistan

  
**SPCAI**  
Sino-Pak Center for  
Artificial Intelligence

  
**AF-IAST**  
Skilling Pakistan

# CONGRATULATIONS!

WE ARE GLAD TO ANNOUNCE THAT OUR COLLABORATION WITH THE AUSTRIAN INDUSTRIAL PARTNER - SOFTWARE COMPETENCE CENTER HAGENBERG (SCCH) - FINALLY MOVED TO A NEW ERA OF PRACTICAL COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH WORK. FIVE MASTER STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY JOINED THE PREDMAIN PROJECT OF SCCH. PREDMAIN IS A JV OF THE AUSTRIAN AND CZECH REPUBLIC CONSORTIUM FUNDED BY INTERREG EUROPE. THE STUDENTS WILL WORK ON DIFFERENT SUBTOPICS OF THE PROJECT WITH SCCH UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF DR. MAQBOOL KHAN FROM THE

**SINO-PAK CENTER FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SPCA, PAF-IAST**

WE CONGRATULATE THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS ON THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO THEIR BRIGHT FUTURE IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

<b>Mr. Bilawal Jadoon</b> MS (Artificial Intelligence)	<b>Mr. M. Ahmad Khan</b> MS (Artificial Intelligence)	<b>Ms. Isra Zafat</b> MS (Artificial Intelligence)
<b>Mr. Muhammad Qasim</b> MS (Artificial Intelligence)	<b>Mr. Muhammad Adil</b> MS (Data Science)	

## SPCAI Students to Work with JKU on Software Engineering and AI Interesection

Congratulations to our students who are going to work with Johannes Kepler University, Austria. Three MS student of SPCAI are shortlisted to work on the intersection of Software Engineering and AI under the supervision of Dr. Waqar Mehmood.



# CONGRATULATIONS!

We are glad to announce that our collaboration with the Austrian partner - **Johannes Kepler University (JKU)** - finally moved to a new era. Three master students will work on the intersection of software engineering and AI with JKU under the supervision of **Dr. Waqar Mehmood** from the **Sino-Pak Center for Artificial Intelligence (SPCAI)**. We congratulate the following students on their achievements and look forward to their bright future in Artificial Intelligence.



**Mr. Aizaz Ali**  
MS (Data Science)  
Integrating  
microservices and legacy  
systems



**Ms. Aqsa Khan**  
MS (Artificial Intelligence)  
AI for Software engineering -  
Inconsistency detection at design  
level in microservices architecture



**Ms. Yousra Rehmana**  
MS (Artificial Intelligence)  
AI for Software engineering -  
The role of AI in model driven  
development

## SPCAI Webinar Series

SPCAI started a series of webinars last year to discuss and share the latest research work being conducted in key domains relevant to AI and its applications, including but not limited to Computer Vision, Deep Learning, Intelligent Systems, Smart City and Urban Planning, Smart Agriculture, Intelligent Biomedical Applications, and Neurocomputing. These webinars are open to the public. Those who are interested can register free of cost and participated in the live sessions. In this context, two of webinars were conducted in first quarter of year 2022. Students and professionals from different walks of life participated in the webinar online.

### Cybersecurity for AI and AI for Cybersecurity

**Speaker: Dr. Zunera Jalil**

Associate Professor at the Department of Cyber Security, Faculty of Computing & Artificial Intelligence, Air University, Islamabad. Artificial intelligence and Machine Learning have created a significant impact in the current digital world and have been shown to create machines that exhibit intelligence comparable to or in some cases even better than human intelligence. AI has been used in medical applications, security applications, cloud computing, smart cities, web, and in many other domains. Pakistan is moving towards digitalization and the emphasis is on using technology to enhance productivity, economic stability, security and reachability. In this shift towards digitalization, cybersecurity cannot be neglected. AI is helping to achieve cybersecurity by detecting anomalies, adapting security parameters based on ongoing cyber-attacks, and to combat cyber-adversaries. However, flawed learning models and poisonous input data can control, compromise, bias, and mislead AI systems. Therefore, AI systems need robust security. One should know how to use AI models securely? How to safeguard AI models from malicious inputs? How to not make adversaries take advantage of your smart moves? The integration of cybersecurity and AI can boost progress through a secure, smooth, and smart shift towards digitalization.



The poster features a green and blue background with a network diagram of a brain. It includes the SPCA I and AF-IAST logos, a QR code for registration, and the following text:

**WEBINAR**  
**CYBERSECURITY FOR AI  
AND AI FOR  
CYBERSECURITY**

**Presenter:**  
**Dr. Zunera Jalil**  
Associate Professor at the Department of Cyber Security, Faculty of Computing & Artificial Intelligence, Air University, Islamabad.  
Chief Trainer at National Cybercrimes and Forensics Lab and also involved in R&D of cyber security solutions using Artificial Intelligence.

**Date:**  
Wednesday  
**09<sup>th</sup> February, 2022**

**Time:**  
**12:00 pm**  
(PKT, GMT+5)

[www.spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk](http://www.spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk)

## Applications of Machine Learning in Software Engineering

**Speaker: Mr. Saad Shafiq**

Ph.D. candidate JKU, Austria

Machine Learning (ML) systems are the ones that learn from past experiences and occurrences. As a subset of Artificial Intelligence (AI), ML has been considered vital when developing software systems such as speech/image recognition or autonomous vehicles. The growing demand for agility and the ability to solve complex problems in Software Engineering (SE) has led researchers to explore the potential of ML in SE. This webinar encompasses the range of applications of ML to facilitate SE life cycle stages, an overview of the techniques, and a practical demonstration of developing prediction models for software effort estimation.



The banner features a green and blue background with a network diagram of a brain. It includes the SPCA I and AF-IAST logos, a QR code for registration, and the following details:

**WEBINAR**  
**APPLICATIONS OF MACHINE LEARNING IN SOFTWARE ENGINEERING**

Presenter:  
**Mr. Saad Shafiq**  
Ph.D. candidate JKU, Austria

Date:  
Tuesday  
15<sup>th</sup> March, 2022

Time:  
03:00 pm-04:00 pm  
(PKT, GMT+5)

[www.spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk](http://www.spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk)

QR Code to Register





## Artificial Intelligence Society, PAF-IAST

Sino-Pak Center for Artificial Intelligence (SPCAI), Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences & Technology, Haripur (PAF-IAST) has constituted an AI society named "Artificial Intelligence Society (AIS)." The initiative aims to promote community ownership in developing skills related to artificial intelligence applications addressing the societal challenges in Pakistan. The aim of this initiative is to enable the present and future generations with the knowledge and tools necessary to become part of a productive workforce that will oversee integration of AI systems across all sectors of Pakistan's economy and Society. Following are the objectives of the AIS:

1. Educate and learn by targeted workshops and symposiums to enlighten the students at PAF-IAST about the industrial requirements and practically
2. Support in setting up national and international beacon projects that promote the artificial intelligence in its true spirit at campus and globally
3. Promote consultation between public and private sectors by arranging industrial networking events and training
4. Mainstream AI discourse in Pakistan's academic and industrial landscape



**Stay Updated  
on all the latest  
developments  
in AI**

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TODAY!** REGISTER FOR  
ARTIFICIAL  
INTELLIGENCE  
SOCIETY



## The 2nd International Workshop on AI System Engineering: Math, Modelling and Software (AISYS 2022)

The 2nd DEXA workshop on AI System Engineering: Math, Modelling and Software (AISys2022) aims at a holistic view addressing the increasing need of interconnecting traditionally separated disciplines such as data analysis, model building and selection, software engineering, deployment, legal aspects, and standards. By this holistic view we encounter a variety of challenges along the AI modeling cycle and software system engineering lifecycle.

The workshop is jointly organized by SCCH (Dr. Bernhard Moser) and SPCAI faculty (Dr. Maqbool Khan). The role of SPCAI is to manage the workshop online on easychair, PC members, and overall peer-review process. The workshop is useful for PAF-IAST faculty and students to present and publish their research results in the proceeding of DEXA conference.



**DEXA 2022**

# AISYS 2022

**2<sup>nd</sup> International Workshop on AI System Engineering:  
Math, Modelling and Software**

**22-24 August 2022** Vienna, Austria

<http://www.dexa.org/aisys2022>

The poster features a central graphic of interconnected gears and icons representing various AI and system engineering concepts like a factory, a robot, a brain, a gear, a Wi-Fi signal, a database, a monitor, a funnel, and a binary code block.

## The 2nd International Workshop on Artificial Intelligence for Clean, Affordable, and Reliable Energy Supply (AiCARES 2022)

Societal infrastructure such as power-grids, smart houses/buildings, transport and other energy networks are growing exponentially to meet the rising energy demand and rapid industrialisation. There is a growing need that such cyber-physical systems are designed and operated on human-centered values and energy services are delivered efficiently and resiliently. The recent technical developments in forecasting, learning, control and optimisation applications holds immense potential to transform future energy networks in intelligent systems that address urgent social concerns such as the energy crisis, climate change and environment population. There has been a growing interest in using machine learning, data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) in various energy supply networks, including smart cities, power systems, transportation system etc. in applications related to modelling, automation, preventive maintenance, faults detection, and optimisation of energy, space and cost applications. This has resulted in increased energy efficiency, convenience and comfort in smart buildings, and improved robustness and stability in power systems and energy networks.

The purpose of International Workshop on Artificial Intelligence for Clean, Affordable, and Reliable Energy Supply (AiCARES 2022) is to bring together researchers from multiple disciplines to present their proposed and ongoing work regarding application of machine learning in energy supply systems including smart cities, smart grids and transport systems suggesting state-of-the-art AI-based solutions to improve energy systems' reliability, efficiency, affordability and resilience.

Dr. Sohail Khan, Senior Faculty SPCA) will co-chair this conference along with Thomas Strasser, Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT), Austria and Peter Palensky, TU Delft, Netherlands

The workshop papers will be published by Springer in "Communications in Computer and Information Science." Best papers of the workshop, after further revisions and independent reviews, will be considered for publication in a special issue of Wiley Journal of Software: Evolution and Process (IF 1.972).




**DEXA 2022**

**AiCARES 2022** The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Workshop on Artificial Intelligence for Clean, Affordable and Reliable Energy Supply

**IMPORTANT DATES**

Paper submission: **7<sup>th</sup> March, 2022** Camera-ready copies due: **1<sup>st</sup> June, 2022**

Notification of acceptance: **10<sup>th</sup> May, 2022** Workshop days: **22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2022**

[www.dexa@iwas.org](http://www.dexa@iwas.org)

<https://easychair.org/cfp/AI-CARES2022>



## CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

**SINO-PAK CENTER  
FOR ARTIFICIAL  
INTELLIGENCE  
RESEARCH GRANT  
PHASE II, 2022  
(SPCAI-RG-II)**

The Sino-Pak Center for Artificial Intelligence (SPCAI) at Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences & Technology (PAF-IAST) aims to build national capacity in research and development in Artificial Intelligence (AI). SPCA I invites product based research proposals related to AI.

### Key Features

The SPCA I research grant Phase-II (SPCAI-RG-II) is a crucial component of financial assistance from the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT). It aims to foster academic and industrial collaborations in developing research competencies at SPCA I and proposes solutions that support industrial development. The SPCA I-RG-II awards will be granted competitively using merit-based, independent, and transparent evaluation and selection criteria based on international standards. The funding amount can be up to PKR 10 million with a maximum duration of 1 year.

Queries regarding SPCA I Research Grant Phase-II may be directed to email: [info@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk](mailto:info@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk)

**Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology**  
Khanpur Road, Mang, Haripur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



### Applicant Eligibility

The Principal Investigator (PI) must be a faculty member/engineer of SPCA I/PAF-IAST. The Co-PI can be any individual, either from HEC recognized university or industry in Pakistan. The project team may include researchers from more than one university/industry but must have one industrial partner.



### Proposal Submission Procedure

For further information & submission of proposals either consult the website on: <https://spcai.paf-ast.edu.pk/researchproposalcall> or contact us on [info@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk](mailto:info@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk).

**Deadline for the Proposal Submission:**

**April 25, 2022**

## Faculty at SPCA I



**Dr. Atif Mashkoo r**

**Foreign Faculty / Managing Director**  
Email: [atif.mashkoo r@spcai.paf-ia st.edu.pk](mailto:atif.mashkoo r@spcai.paf-ia st.edu.pk)

Dr. Atif Mashkoo r is the founding MD at SPCA I, a Foreign Faculty at PAF-IAST, and a Senior Research Scientist at JKU Linz, Austria. He is also an Adjunct Faculty at ICCBS - one of the premier research establishments in the developing world and a UNESCO center of excellence. He has extensively worked on European-level application-oriented research and development projects in Austria, France, and Portugal. He was the Scientific Head at SCCH, the Austrian center of excellence in data and software science, from 2012 – 2017. He holds Ph.D. from France, and M.S. from Sweden in Computer Science. Additionally, He has also studied Computational Linguistics in Spain.

Dr. Sohail Khan holds a Doctoral degree with distinction in Electric Power Systems from the Technical University of Vienna, Austria, obtained in 2016. He has been working as senior faculty at SPCA I at PAF-IAST since October 2020. Before that, he worked as Scientist from 2016 to 2020 in Austria's leading applied research institute called Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT). There, he worked in the co-funded European and customer-oriented projects in the areas of renewable energy integration in medium and low voltage (MV, LV) distribution systems, frequency stability analysis of transmission systems, virtual inertia support from bulk energy storage systems, and integrated energy systems (combining the district heating networks with power distribution networks). He is actively working on using AI for energy forecasting, machine learning to deal with the uncertainty in energy systems, and cross-cut applications using AI for decision support in urban planning, agriculture, transport, and security-related areas. He is promoting AI for clean, affordable, and reliable energy supply at the center of excellence.



**Dr. Sohail Khan**

**Senior Faculty / Associate Professor**  
Email: [sohail.khan@spcai.paf-ia st.edu.pk](mailto:sohail.khan@spcai.paf-ia st.edu.pk)



**Dr. Waqar Mehmoo d**

**Associate Professor**  
Email: [waqar.mehmoo d@paf-ia st.edu.pk](mailto:waqar.mehmoo d@paf-ia st.edu.pk)

Dr. Waqar Mehmoo d received his Ph.D degree in Software Engineering from University of Innsbruck, Austria in 2011. He received the prestigious Pakistan Government higher education commission (HEC) scholarship award for his Ph.D. Waqar Mehmoo d has more than 16 years of professional experience in a National and International organization with more than 9 years post-PhD teaching and research experiences at University level. He has extensive research work experience in fields of software engineering, model-driven engineering, software quality assurance, model-based software configuration management, model diff and model versioning. He has collaborated Nationally and internationally with various researchers from different institutes such as Yeungnam University (South Korea), Jazan University (KSA), Al Baha University (KSA), COMSATS University Islamabd and Islamia University Bhawalpur. He served about 9 years as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Computer Science, COMSATS University Islamabad, Wah Campus, Pakistan.



**Dr. Arshad Ahmad**

Assistant Professor

Email: [arshad.ahmad@fecid.paf-iast.edu.pk](mailto:arshad.ahmad@fecid.paf-iast.edu.pk)

Dr. Arshad Ahmad received the MS Software Engineering degree from Blekinge Tekniska Högskola (BTH), Sweden in 2008. He worked as a Research Assistant at Fraunhofer Institute of Experimental Software Engineering (IESE), Germany and Institute of Computer Technology, Vienna University of Technology, Austria respectively during the years 2010-2014. Afterwards, he received the PhD degree in Computer Science & Technology (specialization in Software Engineering) from Beijing Institute of Technology, China in 2018. He worked as an Assistant Professor of Software Engineering/Computer Science at the City University of Science & Information Technology, Peshawar, and University of Swabi, Swabi during the years August 2018-October 2020. In October 2020 he started working as an Assistant Professor of Software Engineering & Computer Science at Department of IT & CS, Pak Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences & Technology, Haripur, Pakistan. He has published several research papers in well reputed peer reviewed international journals and conferences. His current research interests include Requirements Engineering, Software Engineering, Software Quality Management, Software Analytics, Text Mining, among others.

Dr. Arshad Iqbal received the Ph.D. degree in electrical and computer engineering at Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon, Korea, in Aug 2020 and the B.S. degree in electrical computer engineering from COMSATS (CIIT), Abbottabad, Pakistan, in 2013. His research interests include wireless LANs, energy-harvesting networks, backscatter communication networks, Internet of Things, sensor networks, resource allocation, Artificial Intelligence / Machine Learning / Reinforcement Learning, and medium access control of wireless communication networks and next-generation communication networks.



**Dr. Arshad Iqbal**

Support Faculty / Assistant Professor

Email: [arshad.iqbal@spcai.paf-iast.edu.pk](mailto:arshad.iqbal@spcai.paf-iast.edu.pk)



**Dr. Maqbool Khan**

Assistant Professor

Email: [maqbool.khan@fecid.paf-iast.edu.pk](mailto:maqbool.khan@fecid.paf-iast.edu.pk)

Dr. Maqbool Khan received the MS Information Security degree from Huazhong University of Science and Technology (HUST), Wuhan, China, in 2013 and Ph.D. degree in Computer Science and Technology from Nanjing University, China, in 2018. He worked as a Big Data Solution Architect and Data Scientist at Siemens China and Atos China for several years up to 2020. In October 2020, he started working as an Assistant Professor of Software Engineering & Computer Science at the Department of IT & CS, Pak Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences & Technology, Haripur, Pakistan. He has published several research papers in well-reputed international conferences and journals, and an active IEEE Member since 2014. He is also Google certified Associate Cloud Engineer and Professional Cloud Architect.

Dr. M. Mohsin Jadoon has done post-doctorate research from Department of Radiology and Biomedical Imaging, Yale university, New Haven, CT, USA. He did his PhD in Split degree program i.e. course work from IIUI and research from Queen Merry University (QMU), London, UK in 2018.

Currently he is Assistant Professor at Sino-Pak Center for Artificial Intelligence (SPCAI) Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (PAF-IAST), Haripur, Pakistan. His research interest is to apply Artificial Intelligence / Machine learning techniques to different domains of IOT, sensor networks and biomedical.



**Dr. M. Mohsin Jadoon**  
Assistant Professor

Email: [mohsin.khan@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk](mailto:mohsin.khan@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk)



**Dr. Ihtisham Ali**  
Assistant Professor

Email: [ihtisham.ali@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk](mailto:ihtisham.ali@spcai.paf-iaast.edu.pk)

Dr. Ihtisham Ali holds a Doctoral degree with distinction in distributed systems from Gyeongsang National University, Jinju, South Korea, in the year 2020. He is holding bachelor's and master's degrees from NWFP agricultural University Peshawar and Institute of Management Sciences, Hayatabad Peshawar, respectively. At present, he has been working as a Postdoc Researcher at SPCA at PAF-IAST since August 2020.



## Another History in the Making | Atif Mashkooor

In his article “Another scam in the making,” published by Dawn on 5th February 2022, Dr. Pervez Hoodbhoy criticized the idea of PUEET (Pak University of Engineering & Emerging Technologies) to be established in the Prime Minister (PM) house in Islamabad and referred to it as a scam. While most of the article is based on slur against the prominent Pakistani scientist Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman, many other claims made in the piece are also unfounded and against reality.

First and foremost, I have the utmost respect for Dr. Hoodbhoy as a thinker, scientist, and patriot fellow Pakistani. However, I'd like to humbly correct certain statements in his article, specifically regarding Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (PAF-IASST), Haripur. Dr. Hoodbhoy first wrote, “a visit to the polytechnic’s website shows no foreign faculty have come from Austria or elsewhere.” Then, he added, “It’s just a plain, average place.”

First, let’s get the facts straight. I am a foreign faculty member at PAF-IASST. I am also a faculty member at Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria (<https://www.jku.at/en/lit-secure-and-correct-systems-lab/about-us/team/>). Therefore, his statement about the foreign faculty of the university is factually incorrect. Anyway, it would

have been appropriate from an ethical point of view had Dr. Hoodbhoy contacted the university in this regard before writing about it.

Second, I'd like to mention why PAF-IASST is a different university and not “yet another plain and average place.” In PAF-IASST, we are promoting “skill-based” education. We are not training our students merely for the sake of a degree. Yes, at the end of their study, they do get degrees, but these degrees are just side effects of their skill-based education, designed to train them as professionals with a ready-to-market skill set. From the first semester, these students are engaged in industrial internships (several at the nearby Hattar industrial estate), grooming them for local market needs. Our master’s degree students are involved even in projects with Austrian industries. Although not a new concept, it is a proven winning recipe for successful education in central European/German-speaking countries like Germany, Austria, and Switzerland (collectively known as the DACH countries). Incidentally, this is the region from where the idea of Fachhochschule – University of Applied Sciences – stems.







Another distinctive feature of PAF-IAST is its associated centers of excellence in artificial intelligence (AI), mineral resource engineering, nanotechnology, transportation, and food technologies. Consider, for example, only its center of excellence in AI, which is known as the Sino-Pak Center for AI (SPCAI). It is an application-oriented research facility for promoting AI in Pakistan, collaborating with Austrian and Chinese universities and industry. It became operational in October 2020 and currently focusing on smart cities, robotics, agriculture, disaster management, biomedicine, intelligent systems, etc. In collaboration with Chinese and Austrian universities, SPCA I is building the national AI research and development (R&D) capacity through innovative research and master programs. In addition, SPCA I is solving local challenge problems using AI in cooperation with its industrial partners. The center is currently working on multiple research projects/startup ideas in the areas such as agriculture, energy, and healthcare. As a result, it has gained international recognition and reputation in just a year.

In September 2021, SPCA I, PAF-IAST, hosted Pakistan's first National AI Forum (NAIF) in Haripur. NAIF was attended by hundreds of delegates from industry, academia, R&D establishments, and the public. In addition, several top scientists from academia and industry from Austria and China participated in NAIF as distinguished speakers. Furthermore, the associated Lab2Market event attracted 235 project entries from 66 universities across Pakistan, where students showcased their AI-based innovative projects. Generally, these projects are done and dusted once the students graduate. However, PAF-IAST is enabling them to turn these projects into products/startups by providing mentorship, seed funding, and a technology park and business incubation center to nurture those ideas further. NAIF also offered a platform to publicly discuss the National AI Policy of Pakistan by the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom – a curious case in Pakistan's history when the regulator took the live feedback of stakeholders before rolling out a policy.

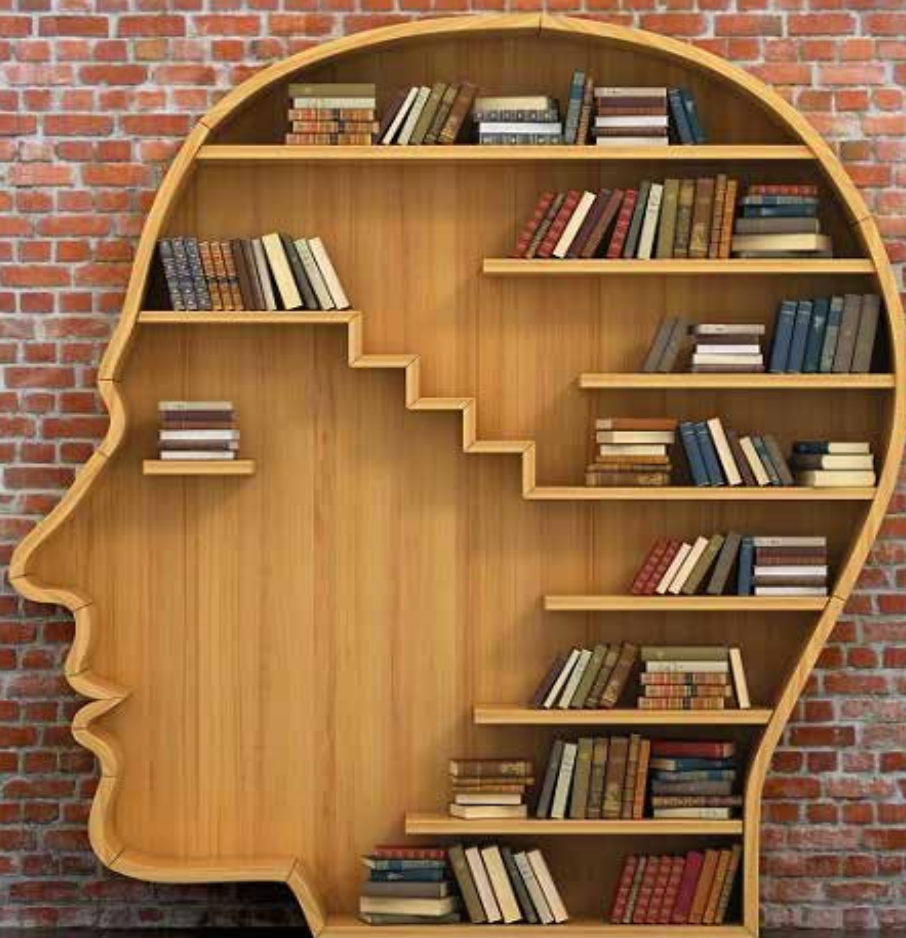
In March 2022, SPCAI, PAF-IAST, is hosting an international event in Islamabad to discuss the scope and applications of AI in the health, energy, and agriculture sectors in the Muslim world in cooperation with COMSTECH and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Several researchers, academics, dignitaries, and delegates from OIC countries are expected to attend this event. Additionally, SPCAI, PAF-IAST, hosts two international workshops on AI technologies in Vienna, Austria, this summer. Again, several hundred international top scientists are expected to attend.

The point of the whole discussion is that Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman and his team are trying their level best under the leadership of the honorable PM Imran Khan to create a world-class research and teaching environment in Pakistan. This could be a stepping stone towards a knowledge-driven economy whose main pillars are IT, AI, and other futuristic technologies. P@SHA – an independent industry body – has already

forecasted that these industries could add up to 59.7 billion\$ annual revenue by 2030 in Pakistan's economy. Be it PAF-IAST, PUEET, or the University of Applied Engineering and Emerging Technologies (UAEET), Sialkot; all are unconventional, unorthodox, ambitious, and high-risk/high-gain projects. However, the success of PAF-IAST gives us reasonable confidence that Pakistan is moving in the right direction. Of course, like anywhere else, there is always room for further improvement.

The standard of Pakistani education did not fall overnight; neither will it be reestablished any time soon. All we need is patience, perseverance, support, and a leap of faith.

Note: We contacted Dawn, urging them to publish our response. This is their journalistic responsibility to allow us to clarify our position. But unfortunately, we did not hear from them at all.



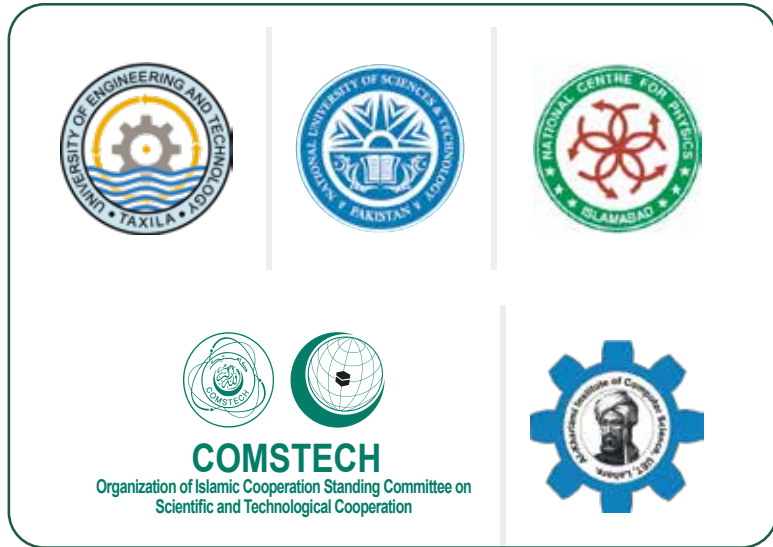
# Partners

## Industrial Partners



A grid of six logos for industrial partners: ATS, Solar tech, a stylized 'K' logo, RENZYM, N-ovative, and the Government of Pakistan emblem.

## Academic Partners



A grid of six logos for academic partners: University of Engineering and Technology, National University of Sciences and Technology, National Centre for Physics, COMSTECH, and the National Institute of Computer Graphics.

## International Partners



A grid of five logos for international partners: Johannes Kepler University Linz, Shandong University of Technology, scch, Lenovo, and SIAT.



# SPCAI

Sino-Pak Center for  
Artificial Intelligence



## **Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology**

Khanpur Road, Mang, Haripur,  
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



+92-995-934145/46



info@spcai.paf-iast.edu.pk



www.spcai.paf-iast.edu.pk



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