



ISMAILI CIVIC

*Communication Guidelines*

Welcome to the Communications and Media Guidelines for Ismaili CIVIC. This document is a comprehensive guide to creating effective communications and media materials for our organisation. These guidelines ensure all communications and media materials align with our values, mission, and vision.

These guidelines provide you with the necessary information to create compelling and impactful communications and media materials that accurately reflect our brand and mission. They cover various topics, including messaging, social media, and media relations.

We encourage all members of the Ismaili CIVIC community, including volunteers, partners, and stakeholders, to use these guidelines as a reference when creating any communications or media materials related to our organisation. We can further strengthen our impact by working together to ensure that all communications are consistent and aligned.

## ***Background***

The Ismaili CIVIC initiative was conceived in response to guidance from Mawlana Hazar Imam to build an understanding of the Ismaili community, its work, presence, and contributions to the countries it resides. The programme exemplifies how the Shia Ismaili Muslim Community has added value wherever it is situated through its institutions, sharing of knowledge and voluntary service.

At the nominations meetings for the Canadian Jamati Institutions in April 2019, Mawlana Hazar Imam conveyed his happiness with the Ismaili CIVIC programme implemented as part of Canada's 150th anniversary and expressed his desire that Ismaili CIVIC be implemented around the world with the possibility of an annual global Ismaili CIVIC day to strengthen our partnerships and recognise our civic actions in the countries in which the Jamat resides. The Department of Communications was tasked with leading the global initiative and in February 2020, a presentation was made to the Leaders International Forum where the global initiative was endorsed, and it was agreed that accountability for Ismaili CIVIC rests with the National Council President in each country.

## ***What is Ismaili CIVIC?***

The Ismaili CIVIC initiative is a global programme initiated under the leadership of His Highness the Aga Khan, Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, and Chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network. It aims to improve the quality of life of the vulnerable, irrespective of their origin, faith, or gender and unites the global Ismaili community in its centuries-old Ismaili tradition of voluntary service to the communities in which it lives. Ismaili CIVIC reflects the community's ethic of civic engagement and good citizenship, exemplifying Islam's core values of service, peace, compassion, and care for those in need.

**Global Ismaili CIVIC Day (GICD) 2023** Global Ismaili CIVIC Day will be held on 24 September 2023 with objectives around poverty alleviation, environmental stewardship and community health.

**Poverty Alleviation** – To help reduce and, where possible, eliminate human suffering resulting from poverty

**Environmental Stewardship** – To implement and support initiatives which aim to conserve, protect, and create a more sustainable environment.

**Community Health** – To help improve health outcomes, particularly for those who lack sufficient access to basic services, including providing support during health-related emergencies.

# Messaging

## Overview

Ismaili CIVIC is an excellent opportunity to showcase Jamat's commitment to service and good citizenship when many communities face unprecedented hardship and uncertainty. GICD additionally draws attention to our values as Shia Ismaili Muslims, our ethics and our unity as a global community.

## Key Messages

The following key messages have been developed to support the awareness of Ismaili CIVIC and Global Ismaili CIVIC Day (GICD), with internal and external audiences.

- Ismaili CIVIC was launched in 2020 in response to Mawlana Hazar Imam's desire to position the Jamat as a global, diverse community that brings value through its institutions, the sharing of its knowledge and ethics, and its extraordinary tradition of good citizenship and voluntary service.
- Since the launch of the Ismaili CIVIC, a significant impact has been created in the areas of Health, Education, Economic Development, Environmental Stewardship and Culture.
- Ismaili CIVIC is a global programme under which the Shia Ismaili Muslim community across the world has united around its centuries-old tradition of serving humanity by rendering voluntary service to improve the quality of life of the communities in which they live, regardless of faith, gender and background.
- This international endeavour reflects the community's civic engagement and good citizenship ethic, exemplifying Islam's core values of service, peace, compassion and care for the vulnerable.
- Ismaili CIVIC endeavours to strengthen community bonds and foster collaboration and commitment to improving the human condition.
- The Global Ismaili CIVIC Day will commemorate giving back to communities in all the countries where Ismailis live. This year, on **24 September 2023**, Ismailis worldwide will come together to celebrate Ismaili CIVIC's contribution to serving humanity and enriching lives.
- Ismaili CIVIC aims to serve humanity through diverse activities that coincide with GICD globally, focused on one theme: poverty alleviation, **environmental stewardship** and community health.
- Ismaili CIVIC volunteers across the globe will work with their local civil society partners to contribute their time, knowledge, and skills for the betterment of their fellow citizens.
- Ismaili CIVIC is actively contributing to global civil society. This year, GICD aims to achieve **140,000+ hours of service**, and engage **52,000+ volunteers** in over **20+ countries**.
- GICD in [insert country name] aims to contribute over x hours of community service by x volunteers and generate x positive media articles, x senior government acknowledgements and more than x civil society relationships..
- [insert country name] will [insert thematic activity(s) + stats, e.g., plant 50 seedlings] in [mention locations] in partnership with [insert partner(s) names] to impact [insert expected impact/outcome details]

***This document contains reference material from speeches made by Mawlana Hazar Imam to supplement and support broader messaging on the themes of the environment, the natural world, climate change and environmental preservation.***

<b>Source</b>	<b>Speech Excerpt</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<p>The Aga Khan Award for Architecture 2019 Presentation Ceremony</p> <p>Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan Russian Federation (13 September 2019)</p>	<p>Both the natural world and the world of human capacities are divine gifts, but it is tempting sometimes to embrace one without thinking much about the other. The Holy Quran asks Muslims not to be passive recipients of our Natural Habitat but instead to be faithful stewards of the divine creation; we need to expand our commitment in all directions. This means not merely conforming to the power of nature, but actively engaging with its challenges. At the same time we must be careful not to exaggerate the capacities for human mastery - trying to defy nature is counterproductive in many ways.</p>	<p>Natural World, Stewardship, Nature, Built Environment</p>
<p>The Aga Khan Award for Architecture 2019 Presentation Ceremony</p> <p>Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan Russian Federation (13 September 2019)</p>	<p>Human challenges seem to intensify at an accelerating pace these days - climate change, economic and technological inequalities, epidemics, political polarisation, population displacements and the daunting task of helping one another to live together in dignity. I believe deeply in the potential of the architectural world to help inspire and enrich a creative dialogue in all four of the areas I have mentioned: a dialogue between creative architectural partners, a dialogue between past and future, a dialogue between natural reality and human creativity, and a dialogue among diverse cultures.</p>	<p>Natural World, Stewardship, Nature, Built Environment, Architecture</p>
<p>Inaugural Ceremony of the Delegation of the Ismaili Imam</p> <p>Ottawa, Canada (6 December 2008)</p>	<p>But in Islamic thought, as in this building, beauty and mystery are not separated from intellect - in fact, the reverse is true. As we use our intellect to gain new knowledge about Creation, we come to see even more profoundly the depth and breadth of its mysteries. We explore unknown regions beneath the seas - and in outer space. We reach back hundreds of millions of years in time. Extra-ordinary fossilised geological specimens - palm leaves, amethyst flowers, hedgehog quartz, sea lilies, chrysanthemum and a rich panoply of shells- seize our imagination. Indeed, these wonders are found beneath the very soil on which we tread - in every corner of the world - and they connect us with far-distant epochs and environments.</p>	<p>Natural World, Creation, Environment, Nature</p>

Inaugural Ceremony of the  
Delegation of the Ismaili Imamamat,  
  
Ottawa, Canada  
(6 December 2008)

And the more we discover, the more we know, the more we penetrate just below the surface of our normal lives – the more our imagination staggers. Just think, for example, what might lie below the surfaces of celestial bodies across our universe’s far-flung reaches. What we feel, even as we learn, is an ever-renewed sense of wonder, a powerful sense of awe, and Divine inspiration.

Natural World, Creation,  
Environment, Nature

Inauguration of the  
Aga Khan Park  
  
Toronto, Canada  
(25 May 2015)

The Garden has, for many centuries, served as a central element in Muslim culture. The Holy Qur’an, itself, portrays the Garden as a central symbol of a spiritual ideal – a place where human creativity and Divine majesty are fused, where the ingenuity of humanity and the beauty of nature are productively connected. Gardens are a place where the ephemeral meets the eternal, and where the eternal meets the hand of man.

The tradition of Islamic Gardens places an emphasis on human stewardship, our responsibility to nature and to protect the natural world. We see that principle expressed in the disciplined use of geometric form – framing the power and mystery of nature.

Gardens, Built Environment,  
Nature, Environment, Natural  
World, Stewardship, Ethics

Inauguration Ceremony  
of the National Park of Mali  
  
Bamako, Mali  
(22 September 2010)

Indeed, the importance of green spaces in fast-growing mega-cities cannot be underestimated... Like Mali itself, this Park has the mission of upholding the country’s tradition of encounters and dialogue while preserving the natural heritage and ecosystems of which man has stewardship, as the Holy Qur’an instructs us.

Inspired by this vision, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture’s Historic Cities Programme has created and manages urban park projects in locations as diverse as Cairo, Kabul, Delhi, Khorog, Zanzibar – and, today, Bamako. Creating green spaces in urban areas constitutes a significant improvement in the quality of the environment and people’s living conditions. They are leisure spaces and meeting places for all ages and all social categories, encouraging different sectors of the population to mix and integrate. And they have proved to be catalysts for economic activity and a source of employment, both directly and indirectly, particularly through the services provided for visitors.

Parks, Gardens, Nature, Natural  
World, Environment

<p>Scully Seminar</p> <p>Washington D.C., USA (26 January 2005)</p>	<p>In Islam, the Holy Koran says that man is God's noblest creation to whom He has entrusted the stewardship of all that is on earth. Each generation must leave for its successors a wholesome and sustainable social and physical environment.</p>	<p>Stewardship</p>
<p>Stephen Ogden Lecture at Brown University</p> <p>Providence, Rhode Island, USA (10 March 2014)</p>	<p>One of the energising forces that makes a quality civil society possible, of course, is the readiness of its citizens to contribute their talents and energies to the social good. What is required is a profound spirit of voluntary service, a principle cherished in Shia Ismaili culture.</p>	<p>Volunteerism, Service, Ethics</p>
<p>Accepting the Adrienne Clarkson Prize for Global Citizenship</p> <p>Toronto, Canada (21 September 2016)</p>	<p>These are just a few thoughts as I look to the future of Global Citizenship. The challenges, in sum, will be many and continuing. What will they require of us? A short list might include these strengths: a vital sense of balance, an abundant capacity for compromise, more than a little sense of patience, an appropriate degree of humility, a good measure of forgiveness, and, of course, a genuine welcoming of human difference. It will mean hard work. It will never be completed. But no work will be more important.</p>	<p>Citizenship, Service, Ethics</p>
<p>Conference of Indigenous Philanthropy</p> <p>Islamabad, Pakistan (17 October 2000)</p>	<p>The second lesson is that giving can take many forms - funds, time, ideas, and professional skills. Everyone can and should be a donor, not just the wealthy, and all forms of giving should be encouraged and recognised. Volunteerism is critical and is obtaining, fortunately, greater and greater recognition and encouragement.</p>	<p>Service, Ethics, Volunteerism</p>

## ***Building Partnerships with Ismaili CIVIC***

It is important for Ismaili CIVIC to develop partnerships for the purpose of a long-term alliance between two organisations (Ismaili CIVIC and partnering organisation) whereby both organisations can mutually benefit. Two organisations together can help better disseminate key messaging and positively impact the communities in which we live. This alliance is critical to strengthen the awareness and impact created through our efforts of Ismaili CIVIC and the upcoming Global Ismaili CIVIC Day to be held on 25th September 2023.

In any partnership, it is important that the partnering organisation's values are aligned with Ismaili CIVIC's own values, reflective of Islam's core values of service, peace, compassion, and care for the vulnerable. The partnering organisation will have the objective of being committed to making a difference and impact in society.

In addition to aligned values, 2 key concepts will make the partnership successful: trust and mutual benefit. The partnering organisation needs to feel a sense of trust and 'goodwill' with Ismaili CIVIC and vice versa. Both organisations also need to 'grow' or be mutually beneficial because of each other's efforts. This can only occur through open communication, accessibility, flexibility, and clear deliverables. Clear deliverables should be outlined at the onset of the partnership to ensure transparency and manage expectations.

An example of clear deliverables may be:

### **Ismaili CIVIC will:**

1. Work collaboratively with [partnering organisation] to help raise awareness and promote [partnering organisation] amongst members of the Ismaili community in [country name].
2. Recruit volunteers to support [name of programme/organisation] for Global Ismaili CIVIC Day and other joint events.
3. Use print, digital, and media marketing to increase awareness and impact of the work of [partnering organisation].

### **Partnering Organisation will:**

1. Provide resources and materials to support Ismaili CIVIC for the purpose of recruitment and engagement on Global Ismaili CIVIC Day and other joint events.
2. Work collaboratively to help raise awareness and promote Ismaili CIVIC through its marketing platforms (i.e. social media, print, media, membership, etc...).
3. Partner with Ismaili CIVIC on a long-term basis to positively impact the community in which the work is being done.

While partnerships can begin with smaller initiatives, it is important to consider sustainability and the potential of a long-term commitment.

## ***Sample Partners with Global Presence***

<b><i>Environment</i></b>	<b><i>Other</i></b>
Habitat for Humanity	Rotary Club
Rotary Club	YMCA
WWF - World Wildlife Fund	International Committee of the Red Cross
Greenpeace	Lions Club
Climate Foundation	UNICEF*
350.org	WHO*
Friends of the Earth	UNDP* - UN Development Programme
UNEP - UN Environment Programme	
WRI - World Resources Institute	
The Nature Conservancy	
Prince's Trust*	

\*AKDN partner

## *Initiating Partnerships*

- Ismaili CIVIC leads are recommended to closely consult with the National Council President and AKDN Diplomatic Representative (in countries where they are present) to ensure partners selected are appropriate and aligned with national/regional objectives and strategies.

What is a partnership? A partnership is a relationship where two or more parties, having common and compatible goals, agree to work together for a particular purpose and/or for some time.

### Identifying a like-minded Partner:

1. Identify potential partners in Environmental Stewardship.
2. Understand your partner's goals & needs.
3. Identify common values, and introduce Ismaili CIVIC (use a partnership letter).
4. Identify Terms of Reference for GICD and beyond. Partnerships should be engaged throughout the year, not simply for GICD.
5. Set clear parameters around expectations and follow-up.
6. Partners and Ismaili CIVIC will profile activities on respective social media platforms.
7. Partners will mutually engage in media/press releases.
8. Partners will provide representatives at key initiatives.
9. Ensure an onboarding meeting is established and completed.
10. Establish and sustain effective communication through regular interactions.

## ***Partnership Checklist***

- Values & Goals - does a synergy exist?

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- How does Ismaili CIVIC benefit from this partnership?

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- How does the partner organisation benefit from Ismaili CIVIC?

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- Do they have a strong social media presence - followers, engagement?

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- Would this partnership garner positive media attention?

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- Does the partner have a solid reputation (web search), and are there any potential risk concerns?

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- Can this partnership be sustained long-term (not just for GICD), 3-5 years?

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- Is the partner non-partisan and how are they funded?

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- Is there a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Ismaili CIVIC and the partner regards to engagement?

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- Is this partner an existing institutional partner or a strategic partner based on national council priorities?

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\*\* If the answer is affirmative to the majority of the above questions, then this partnership will likely be worth pursuing.

## ***Partnership Letter***

Reflecting the pluralism of the Muslim world generally, the Shia Ismaili Muslim Community are a richly diverse community within the Shia branch of Islam that belong to distinct ethnogeographic and linguistic traditions. They are united by their belief in a living hereditary Imam of the Time from the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him and his family).

They are led by His Highness the Aga Khan, the 49th hereditary Imam (spiritual leader). In the context of his hereditary responsibilities, His Highness has been deeply engaged with the development of countries around the world for 65 years through the work of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).

In keeping with the ethics of Islam, in every country where they reside, the Ismailis are active in civil society, working in diverse fields, and contributing their time, knowledge and material resources for the betterment of the community and the societies amongst whom they live.

Ismaili CIVIC is a global initiative developed in keeping with His Highness the Aga Khan's continuing vision to convey an understanding of the values of community service and volunteerism to improve the quality of life of humankind. Today, Ismailis live in over 25 different countries, mainly in Central and South Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, North America, and Australia, and come together in this endeavour to improve the quality of human life.

“There are many, many interpretations of Islam within the wider Islamic community, but I think one on which there is greatest consensus is the fact that we are trustees of God's creation, and we are instructed to seek to leave the world a better place

than it was when we came into it”, His Highness the Aga Khan interview with Robert Ivy, FAIA Editor in Chief, Architectural Record (Aiglemont, August 31, 2001).

The annual Global Ismaili CIVIC Day is one day when members of the Ismaili community around the world, in unity, demonstrate their centuries-old tradition of serving humanity and enriching the lives of the communities in which we live regardless of faith, gender and background. Through the actions over this weekend, the Ismaili community hopes to increase the awareness of our community's ethic of civic engagement and good citizenship, exemplifying Islam's core values of service, peace, compassion, and care for the vulnerable.

This year's theme will be Environmental Stewardship. Examples of activities include tree planting, park, city and shoreline cleanups, and evasive plant removal.

We hope to partner with [insert partner's name] so that together we can make a sustainable effort and impact under the theme of Environmental Stewardship.

We would like an opportunity to further discuss this with you. Please contact [insert name] at the coordinates below.

We look forward to working with you and contributing to the communities in which we reside

Respectfully,

Ismaili CIVIC Lead  
[National Council Name]

## ***Annual Ismaili CIVIC Events - Social Media Sample Posts***

1. Join us in promoting active citizenship and social responsibility! Ismaili CIVIC is dedicated to empowering and engaging the community in civic and public affairs. Together, let's make a difference! **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #ActiveCitizenship #SocialResponsibility**
2. Looking for ways to get involved in your community? Ismaili CIVIC is here to help! We offer a variety of volunteer opportunities and programs that promote social responsibility and civic engagement. Contact us to learn more. **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #CommunityEngagement #Volunteerism**
3. Save the date! Ismaili CIVIC is hosting a community service event on [date]. Join us as we come together to impact our community positively. Stay tuned for more details! **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #CommunityService #MakeADifference**
4. At Ismaili CIVIC, we believe in the power of active citizenship to create positive change. Whether volunteering, voting, or advocating for important causes, your voice matters. Let's work together to make a difference! **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #ActiveCitizenship #PositiveChange**

## **GICD 2023 - Social Media Sample Posts**

1. Today, we proudly serve our community and the environment as Ismaili CIVIC volunteers! Our team is out full force, planting trees and cleaning up our local park. Let's all do our part to protect our planet and make a difference in our community. **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #GICD2023 #environmentalstewardship #communityservice**
2. Being an Ismaili CIVIC volunteer means taking action to protect our environment. Today, we're doing just that by volunteering our time to clean up our local beach. Together, we can make a difference and create a healthier world for future generations. **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #GICD2023 #environmentalstewardship #beachcleanup**
3. We believe in being good stewards of the environment, and that's why we're proud to be Ismaili CIVIC volunteers. Today, we're partnering with \_\_\_\_\_[local organisation] to plant trees and restore a natural area. Join us in taking action to protect our planet and create a more sustainable future. **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #GICD2023 #environmentalstewardship #sustainability**
4. As Ismaili CIVIC volunteers, we're committed to serving our community and the environment. Today, we're doing just that by participating in a neighbourhood clean-up event. Working together can make our community cleaner and safer for everyone. **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #GICD2023 #environmentalstewardship #communityservice #environmentalresponsibility**
5. As Ismaili CIVIC volunteers, we're committed to serving our community and the environment. Today, we're doing just that by participating in a neighbourhood clean-up event. Working together can make our community cleaner and safer for everyone. **#Ismaili #IsmailiCIVIC #GICD2023 #environmentalstewardship #communityservice #environmentalresponsibility**