



LUMS RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL

OFFICIAL GUIDE



TAJDEED-E-TIJARAT

(INVESTOR'S INSIGHT)

WELCOME TO LUMS RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL!

This study guide has been prepared to help students and institutions understand what to expect in each competition category to ensure a smooth and overall amazing experience.

WHAT IS TAJDEED E TIJARAT?

Tajdeed-e-Tijarat is a platform to inspire entrepreneurs to develop innovative business ventures rooted in Islamic principles. This category will emulate the format of popular shows like Shark Tank and Dragon's Den, focusing on business ideas and projects that align with Islamic principles and values.

This category focuses on creating ethical Shariah-compliant business models that address real-world challenges and provide lasting benefits to society.

PURPOSE AND REASON

The significance of inclusion of a business category, such as Tajdeed-e-Tijarat (Investor's Insight), in a religious event like the LUMS Religious Festival 2.0 becomes evident when considering the broader interplay between **religion and business**. This category aligns seamlessly with the values and objectives of a religious event by addressing key issues such as ethical entrepreneurship, community empowerment, and economic sustainability.

ROUND I: ELEVATOR PITCH

GENERAL OVERVIEW

In this round, each team will be tasked with identifying a market need or a business opportunity. After pinpointing this opportunity, the team would be required to develop a sustainable business model for an innovative product or service that addresses this need.

The final deliverable is an **elevator pitch**, where delegations will succinctly present their idea, highlighting its market potential, sustainability, and impact.

SPECIFICATIONS

The market need, gap, or a business opportunity must align with the principles and values of any **religious community**. The target market must primarily be any religious community although the product/service can - of course - cater to other factions of society as well, which is what differentiates this category from similar categories in other events.

- **Duration:** 60–90 seconds per presentation.
- **Presentation Style:** Verbal pitch only, without any slides or visual aid.
- **Content:** Focus on problem identification, solution proposal, and storytelling.
- **Q&A Session:** Judges will have 2–3 minutes to ask questions.
- The shortlisted teams will proceed to the next round.

JUDGING CRITERIA

- **Clarity & Precision (30%):** Clear articulation of the problem and solution.
- **Relevance to Religious Communities (30%):** Alignment with the values and needs of religious communities.
- **Innovation (25%):** Uniqueness and creativity of the proposed solution.
- **Presentation & Defense (15%):** Clarity, confidence, and engagement during the presentation and the ability to defend the idea by responding effectively to questions.

Extra credit may be awarded if teams bring a prototype.

OUTCOME

Shortlisted teams advancing to Round 2 will be selected for their idea's relevance, impact, and clarity. Feedback will be provided only to them.

ROUND II: BUSINESS MODEL DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL OVERVIEW

After Round 1, shortlisted teams will explore their proposed solution's business model, showcasing its feasibility and relevance to religious communities. Teams will have one day to prepare their presentations.

SPECIFICATIONS

- **Duration:** 6–8 minutes per presentation.
- **Presentation Style:** Full presentation with slides.
- **Refined Concept:** Teams will briefly revisit their idea, incorporating any feedback or changes made since Round 1.
- **Content:** In-depth discussion of the business model, feasibility analysis, and marketing plans which take into consideration the unique context of various religious communities and address them effectively.
- **Q&A Session:** Judges will have 5–7 minutes to ask in-depth questions and critique the plans.

JUDGING CRITERIA

- **Relevance & Impact (25%):** Potential impact on religious communities and addressing real needs.
- **Business Plan (20%):** The depth and completeness of the business plan.
- **Feasibility (20%):** Realistic and practical implementation, addressing challenges and risks.
- **Market Potential (20%):** The potential for the business to grow and expand.
- **Presentation & Defense (15%):** Clarity, confidence, and engagement during the presentation and the ability to defend the business model by responding effectively to questions.

OUTCOME

There will be a final evaluation of teams' ideas, leading to the selection of a winner based on the completeness, feasibility, potential, and impact of their business models, as well as their presentation and defense skills.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

BUSINESS PLAN

These elements collectively form a comprehensive business plan, ensuring that all critical aspects of the venture are covered:

- **Market Analysis:** Research and understanding of the target market, including customer segments, market needs, and competitive landscape.
- **Marketing Strategy:** Plan for promoting and selling the product or service, including advertising, pricing, distribution channels, and sales tactics.
- **Financial Projections:** Brief financial forecasts, including income statements, cash flow statements, and balance sheets, showing how the business will grow and become profitable.
- **Operations Plan:** Description of the day-to-day operations, including location, facilities, technology, equipment, and supply chain management.
- **Risk Management:** Identification of potential risks and challenges, along with strategies to mitigate or manage these risks.

WHAT DOES 'SHARIAH COMPLIANCE' MEAN?

1. Prohibition of Haram

Business ideas must avoid all activities, products, and services prohibited in Islam, such as:

- Dealing in alcohol, pork, gambling, and other haram items (Quran 5:90).
- Avoiding riba (usury/interest), as it is explicitly forbidden (Quran 2:275-279).
- Ensuring no involvement in deceit or fraud, as stated by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): "Whoever cheats is not one of us." (Sahih Muslim).

2. Ethical and Just Practices

- Adherence to honesty and transparency in business transactions, as Allah commands: "*And give full measure and weight with justice...*" (Quran 6:152).
- Fair treatment of customers, employees, and stakeholders, ensuring no exploitation.

3. Interest-Free Financial Model

Financing and revenue generation must avoid riba. Alternative Islamic financing methods like Mudarabah (profit-sharing) and Musharakah (joint ventures) should be encouraged.

"Allah has permitted trade and forbidden usury." (Quran 2:275).

4. Social and Community Welfare

Businesses should uphold the Islamic principle of Maslahah (public good), addressing the needs of the Ummah (Muslim community) and promoting social welfare.

We encourage ideas that help reduce poverty, provide equal opportunities, and improve quality of life for all, in line with the Quranic command: "*Help one another in righteousness and piety...*" (Quran 5:2).

5. Environmental Stewardship

Islamic teachings emphasize the responsibility of humans as stewards (Khalifah) of the Earth. Business ideas must protect natural resources and promote sustainability, as mentioned: "*Do not commit abuse on the Earth, spreading corruption.*" (Quran 2:60).

6. Integrity and Accountability

Participants must demonstrate trustworthiness (Amanah) in their business dealings. They must follow every bookkeeping standard properly. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said: "*The truthful and trustworthy merchant is with the Prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs.*" (Tirmidhi).

SAMPLE CONCEPT PITCHES

A. RELIGIOUS TOURISM AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Problem: Religious heritage sites often lack structured tours and reliable guidance, leaving visitors without meaningful insights into their cultural and spiritual significance. This gap limits tourism potential, hinders cultural understanding, and misses opportunities for heritage preservation and local economic support.

Solution: A specialized travel agency can offer curated tour packages to religious sites, featuring trained guides, digital booking platforms, and interactive tools like augmented reality. By collaborating with local artisans, vendors, and preservation organizations, the agency would provide authentic experiences while supporting conservation and local economies.

Impact: The initiative would promote cultural understanding, stimulate local economies, and support heritage conservation. It would cater to a growing audience seeking ethical and educational tourism, filling a vital gap in the travel industry.

B. INTERACTIVE LEARNING APP FOR CHILDREN

Problem: Teaching Islamic values to young children can be challenging, as traditional methods often fail to engage tech-savvy youth in today's digital age. Parents and educators struggle to capture children's interest while conveying important teachings, resulting in a disconnect between Islamic education and modern learning preferences.

Solution: A mobile app designed for children that combines education and entertainment through interactive games, animated Quranic stories, and engaging quizzes. The app would feature age-appropriate content, colorful graphics, and gamified learning experiences, making Islamic education appealing and accessible. Additional features such as parental controls and progress tracking would ensure safety and encourage consistent learning.

Impact: The app would bridge the gap between traditional teaching methods and modern technology, creating a fun and engaging way for children to learn about Islam. It would foster early interest in Islamic values, making education more accessible while empowering parents with effective teaching tools.

C. ETHICAL HIJAB LINE

Problem: Muslim women often face a lack of culturally relevant hijab options that blend traditional values with modern fashion. Most available designs fail to address the need for high-quality, stylish, and culturally inspired products that cater to diverse preferences.

Solution: A hijab fashion line that combines traditional craftsmanship with contemporary designs. The brand would collaborate with local artisans to produce high-quality, ethically made hijabs in a variety of styles, fabrics, and patterns. By emphasizing cultural relevance and modern aesthetics, the line would appeal to a wide range of Muslim women globally.

Impact: This initiative would provide stylish, culturally relevant options for Muslim women while supporting local artisans and promoting ethical fashion practices. It would empower women to express their faith confidently and creatively, contributing to a growing market for modest and inclusive fashion.

SAMPLE PROPOSALS

A. STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH IN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

Mental health challenges remain highly stigmatized in many religious communities, often dismissed as a lack of faith or spiritual weakness. This stigma discourages individuals from seeking professional help, perpetuating cycles of suffering and isolation. In Muslim-majority societies, this issue is compounded by the dominance of Western psychological frameworks in academic and professional settings. These frameworks often prioritize individualism, conflicting with the collectivist ethos of Islamic values and the communal nature of Muslim societies.

Additionally, the rise of ideologies like LGBTQ+ and other identity movements presents unique challenges for religious communities. These movements often advocate for affirming individual choices without addressing deeper psychological and spiritual conflicts, leading to tensions with Islamic principles. The absence of counselors grounded in both Islamic teachings and sound psychological practices exacerbates the problem, leaving a critical gap in mental health services for Muslims.

To address this, we propose an Islamic mental health counseling service that combines modern psychology with principles of the deen. This initiative will provide a safe, faith-affirming space for individuals to seek help, fostering holistic well-being and addressing the root causes of stigma.

CONCEPT PITCH

Problem Statement

Muslims struggling with mental health issues often find themselves torn between seeking professional help and adhering to their faith. Western-trained psychologists may lack the cultural and spiritual sensitivity required to address the unique challenges faced by religiously observant Muslims. Meanwhile, many religious leaders lack the psychological expertise to offer effective counseling. This gap in culturally and religiously appropriate mental health services perpetuates stigma and isolates individuals in need.

Solution

Our counseling service will integrate Islamic teachings with modern psychological practices to create a holistic support system. Key features include:

- **Islamic-Integrated Therapy:** Counseling sessions that align with Islamic values, ensuring clients feel supported without compromising their faith.
- **Community Engagement:** Workshops and seminars in mosques and community centers to reduce stigma and raise awareness about mental health.
- **Deen-Oriented Psychologists:** A platform for psychologists trained in both Islamic knowledge and modern psychology to collaborate and expand their reach.
- **Educational Programs:** Training initiatives to encourage more psychologists to pursue dual expertise in deen and psychology.

Impact

- **Breaking Stigma:** Normalizing mental health discussions within religious communities through education and advocacy.
- **Holistic Support:** Offering services that cater to the spiritual, emotional, and psychological needs of clients.
- **Empowering Professionals:** Providing a platform for deen-oriented psychologists to serve the community effectively.

Storytelling

Consider a young Muslim man, Ahmed, struggling with depression after his business failed. He consults a Western-trained psychologist who encourages him to prioritize self-fulfillment by focusing on material success and detaching from his family's expectations. However, this advice leaves Ahmed feeling more isolated, as it contradicts his deeply held belief in familial responsibility and trust in Allah's decree.

When Ahmed turns to our service, he finds a psychologist who understands his religious and cultural values. Instead of encouraging detachment, the psychologist helps Ahmed reframe his challenges through an Islamic lens, emphasizing sabr (patience), reliance on Allah, and practical steps for personal and spiritual growth. They work together on building resilience through dua (prayer), self-reflection, and reconnecting with his family for support. Over time, Ahmed regains his sense of purpose, not just in his career but also in his relationship with his faith and community.

BUSINESS MODEL DEVELOPMENT

Refined Concept

Based on feedback, we will refine the service by introducing online counseling options, expanding training programs for aspiring deen-oriented psychologists, and developing partnerships with Islamic organizations to build trust.

Market Analysis

The target market includes Muslims across urban and semi-urban areas who face barriers to accessing culturally sensitive mental health services. Secondary markets include Islamic organizations and educational institutions seeking to promote mental health awareness.

Business Plan

- Core Services:
 - One-on-one counseling tailored to individual needs.
 - Group therapy sessions for families and communities.
 - Mental health awareness workshops in mosques and schools.
- Marketing Strategy:
 - Collaborating with community leaders and Islamic scholars to build credibility.
 - Utilizing social media to reach younger demographics.
 - Partnering with universities to introduce Islamic psychology electives.
- Operations Plan:
 - Establishing counseling centers in major cities with virtual counseling options for remote clients.
 - Training counselors in both Islamic and psychological principles.
 - Developing a comprehensive digital platform for booking sessions and accessing resources.
- Financial Projections:
 - Initial funding from Islamic charities, angel investors, and philanthropic organizations.
 - Sustainable revenue model through affordable service fees and workshop registrations.
- Risk Management:
 - Addressing stigma through continuous community engagement.
 - Ensuring ethical counseling practices by training professionals extensively.

CONCLUSION

This initiative represents a groundbreaking approach to mental health in religious communities, combining Islamic principles with modern psychological practices. By addressing stigma and providing holistic support, we aim to create a transformative impact on individuals, families, and society at large.

B. SHARIA-COMPLIANT MICROFINANCE INSTITUTION

INTRODUCTION

Access to financial services is essential for economic growth and entrepreneurship, particularly in a vibrant and economically diverse city like Lahore. However, for religiously observant Muslims, the lack of Sharia-compliant financial institutions creates a significant barrier. Conventional microfinance institutions heavily rely on interest-based lending, which is prohibited under Islamic law. This exclusion limits opportunities for individuals adhering to these principles and stifles the growth of halal businesses and ethical enterprises. The absence of such services exacerbates economic inequities, leaving a vast segment of Lahore's population underserved.

To address this gap, we propose a Sharia-compliant microfinance institution tailored to the economic and cultural context of Lahore. This institution will empower Muslim entrepreneurs, foster economic development, and promote ethical business practices. By integrating traditional Islamic financial methods such as Murabaha, Mudarabah, and Qard al-Hasan with modern digital technologies, we aim to ensure convenience, scalability, and community impact. While the initial focus will be on Lahore, the institution will expand its operations to other major cities in Pakistan over time, ensuring nationwide economic inclusion.

CONCEPT PITCH

Problem Statement

Lahore, as the cultural and economic hub of Punjab, has a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. However, entrepreneurs seeking to establish halal businesses often face systemic exclusion due to the lack of Sharia-compliant financial services. Conventional financial institutions in Lahore operate on interest-based models, which are incompatible with Islamic principles. This exclusion not only limits individual economic empowerment but also hinders the broader development of halal markets in one of Pakistan's most significant cities. The absence of ethical financing options exacerbates income inequality and restricts growth opportunities for many local entrepreneurs.

Solution

Our Sharia-compliant microfinance institution offers a transformative solution tailored to Lahore's unique economic and cultural landscape. By providing financial services that adhere to Islamic principles, we create opportunities for Muslim entrepreneurs to thrive while promoting ethical practices and community development.

The institution will focus on three core financial products:

- **Qard al-Hasan (Interest-Free Loans):** Essential capital will be provided without interest, ensuring compliance with Sharia principles while empowering entrepreneurs to start or expand their businesses.
- **Murabaha (Cost-Plus Financing):** This financing model allows entrepreneurs to purchase assets with transparency and a pre-agreed profit margin.
- **Mudarabah (Profit-Sharing Partnerships):** We will invest in entrepreneurial ventures, sharing profits based on agreed terms rather than charging interest.

Additionally, the institution will offer comprehensive financial literacy programs tailored to the entrepreneurial needs of Lahore's communities. These programs will cover essential topics such as budgeting, business planning, and Islamic financial principles. A state-of-the-art digital platform will further simplify access to our services, allowing users to apply for financing, track progress, and access educational resources from anywhere in the city.

Impact

The impact of this initiative is multifaceted:

- **Increased Financial Inclusion:** By offering ethical and accessible financial services, we empower a significant portion of Lahore's population previously excluded from conventional systems.
- **Promotion of Ethical Business Practices:** The institution's adherence to Islamic principles ensures transparency, fairness, and justice in all transactions.
- **Fostering Economic Growth:** The support for halal businesses will stimulate economic activity, create jobs, and drive sustainable development in Lahore's underserved communities.
- **Strengthening Communities:** Financial literacy programs and community-based risk-sharing mechanisms will build resilience and self-reliance among participants.

Storytelling

Consider an entrepreneur in Lahore's bustling Anarkali Bazaar who dreams of launching a halal food delivery service. Without access to interest-free loans, he struggles to secure the necessary capital.

Through our institution, he receives a Qard al-Hasan loan, along with mentorship and training in financial management. Within a year, his business thrives, providing employment to delivery workers and inspiring others in the community. This success story reflects the transformative potential of Sharia-compliant financial services in Lahore.

BUSINESS MODEL DEVELOPMENT

Refined Concept

Building on feedback from Round 1, we have refined our business model to enhance its feasibility, scalability, and alignment with the needs of Lahore's religious communities. Key updates include advanced features in our digital platform for improved user experience, expanded financial literacy programs to include risk management strategies, and strategic partnerships with Lahore's Islamic organizations to increase outreach and credibility. The long-term vision includes expanding to other major cities such as Karachi, Islamabad, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, etc, creating a nationwide network of Sharia-compliant financial services.

Market Analysis

The target market for our institution consists primarily of Muslim entrepreneurs in Lahore's urban and semi-urban areas. Secondary markets include halal business stakeholders such as suppliers and distributors. Lahore's vibrant economy, coupled with its entrepreneurial culture, creates a high demand for Sharia-compliant financial services. Despite this demand, existing financial institutions have largely overlooked this niche, leaving a significant opportunity for our institution to fill the gap.

The halal industry, encompassing food, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals, is thriving in Lahore. By providing tailored financial solutions, we position ourselves to become a key enabler in this industry's growth. Furthermore, our digital-first approach ensures scalability and cost efficiency, making it possible to serve a large customer base without significant overhead.

Business Plan

Our operations will focus on the following components:

- Core Services:
 - Qard al-Hasan loans for microenterprises and startups.
 - Murabaha financing for asset purchases.
 - Mudarabah profit-sharing agreements for established businesses.
- Marketing Strategy:
 - Collaborating with mosques, community leaders, and Islamic organizations in Lahore to build trust and credibility.
 - Leveraging social media and content marketing to reach younger entrepreneurs.
 - Encouraging word-of-mouth referrals by providing exceptional service and customer support.
- Operations Plan:
 - Establishing a central office in Lahore's financial district, with satellite centers in key areas like Gulberg and Johar Town.
 - Developing a robust digital platform for service delivery, incorporating AI-driven risk assessment and personalized recommendations.
 - Training staff extensively on Islamic finance principles to ensure consistent and ethical service delivery.
- Financial Projections:
 - Initial funding: PKR 50 million from Islamic charities and angel investors.
 - Break-even point: Within three years of operations, driven by service fees and profit-sharing revenues.
 - Annual growth: 20% post-break-even, supported by market expansion and increased customer adoption.

- Risk Management:
 - Implementing community-based risk-sharing mechanisms to mitigate loan defaults.
 - Regularly updating financial literacy content to address evolving challenges.
 - Conducting market research to adapt services to emerging needs and opportunities.

Presentation and Defense

Our presentation will comprehensively address all aspects of the business model, emphasizing its alignment with Islamic principles, market demand in Lahore, and scalability. The team will engage confidently with judges, providing detailed responses to critiques and demonstrating a deep understanding of the subject matter.

CONCLUSION

The proposed Sharia-compliant microfinance institution represents a transformative approach to financial inclusion and economic empowerment in Lahore, with a vision for nationwide impact. By addressing a critical gap in the market, we aim to uplift underserved communities, promote ethical practices, and drive sustainable development in harmony with Islamic values. This initiative is not just a business model; it is a vision for a more inclusive and equitable financial system, making it an ideal fit for Tajdeed-e-Tijarat's objectives.

DISCLAIMER

The sample concept pitches and developed business proposals provided are intended solely for reference purposes and to assist participants in understanding the expectations of the competition.

These examples are not to be considered as final templates or definitive guidelines. Participants are encouraged to demonstrate originality, creativity, and innovation in their submissions, tailoring their ideas to reflect their unique perspectives and insights. All submissions will be evaluated on their merit and adherence to the competition criteria.

Best of Luck!