

17th South Asian Economics Students' Meet (SAESM) (Lahore, Pakistan)



December 28 – 30, 2021

Virtual Conference Organized by:

Chaudhry Nazar Muhammad Department of Economics, **Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS)** and the Faculty of Economics, **Lahore School of Economics**.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

PROGRAMME:

The meet will comprise the following events:

1. **Policy Papers and Presentations:** This year's theme for paper presentation is *Equitable, Inclusive, and Sustainable Cities*. Participants will have to write and present a paper on *one of the sub-themes* listed below:

Theme: Equitable, Inclusive, and Sustainable Cities

Sub-themes
1. Urban Air Pollution
2. Gender-Friendly Cities
3. Urban Housing and Land Use
4. Municipal Services and Utilities
5. Urban Governance
6. Urban Transportation

2. **Budding Economist:** Participants will be tested on their knowledge of well-known economic theories, concepts, and ideas across subfields along with their creativity to

apply those concepts to real world problems. Students have to go through a series of selection processes that includes writing an essay and attending visual and interview rounds.

3. **Documentary:** The theme for the documentary is *Challenges to Sustainable Development*. Participants in groups of 2 or 3 will make and screen a documentary that creatively showcases how they perceive development challenges in their countries and the pathways to overcome those challenges.

Details on the themes and the event along with the selection criteria for each event are described in [Section 2](#) below.

Guidelines for candidates interested in representing India in the 17th SAESM:

1. Applicants *must currently be enrolled* in a bachelor's programme in economics in any college in India.
2. The age of the applicants should not exceed 25 years at the time of application.
3. A participant can participate in *only one event*.
4. **There is no registration fee.**
5. All applicants *must* submit a curriculum vitae (CV) along with transcript/mark-sheet of your undergraduate study along with additional requirements of individual events. (The criteria are listed in [Section 2](#).)
6. All file names must mention the event name they are applying for, student's full name and document name. For example:
Theme1_StudentName_CV.docx or Theme5_StudentName_Marksheet.pdf
Budding_StudentName_Essay.doc or Documentary_StudentName_Outline.docx
7. **The country coordinators have the final authority to select the participants. The decision of the country coordinators will be final and binding.**
8. The deadline for submission of relevant material for selection is **September 10, 2021**.
9. The result of the selection process will be declared (tentatively) by September 25, 2021.

All submissions and other correspondence should be addressed to Coordinators of SAESM 2021 (India) at: indiasaesm@gmail.com

Submission Deadlines:

September 10, 2021: Last date of application
October 31, 2021: Submission of final paper / essay to coordinator
December 10, 2021: Submission of documentary to coordinator

Check SAESM website www.saesm.net for further details and updates.

Dr. Apoorva Gupta

Dr. Rupali Sharma

Coordinators, SAESM 2021, India

Dr. Mihir Pandey

Dr. Deb Kusum Das

Country Coordinators, India

1 SAESM AT A GLANCE

1.1 About SAESM

SAESM is a well-established regional annual meet of the South Asian undergraduate students in economics. This meet was hosted for first time in 2004 and has already successfully celebrated its 16th edition in 2020 in Kathmandu, Nepal. This conference is recognized and supported by the World Bank and other donor agencies, government bodies, corporate sector, and the higher educational institutions in the region. The event provides an opportunity for the undergraduate students to write academic papers on various issues of regional importance, to present the papers and to learn from each other, while promoting knowledge on development and cooperation in the region. The annual meeting normally comprises of a conference, a quiz contest, and a budding economist competition. Following the event, the tradition has been to provide a retreat to the delegates by way of visit to the sites of cultural and natural importance. **However, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's meeting will be hosted online.** This event is open to all undergraduate students studying economics as a major in the Universities in the region.

1.2 SAESM Architecture

SAESM runs as a regional network. A team of dedicated faculty members representing various academic institutions in South Asia facilitates the organization of SAESM. SAESM's governing council is an apex advisory body that provides vision, guidelines, and framework for smooth functioning of SAESM.

Coordinating Institutions	Governing Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Afghanistan: Kabul University, Faculty of Economics• Bangladesh: South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM)• Bhutan: Royal University of Bhutan, Royal Thimphu College, Sherubtse College• India: SAESM India (Association for South Asia Scholars)• Nepal: Tribhuvan University, Central Department of Economics• Pakistan: Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan• Sri Lanka: University of Colombo, Department of Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Dr. Bishwambher Pyakuryal – Chairperson (Nepal)• Dr. Deb Kusum Das, Member (Department of Economics, Ramjas College, University of Delhi-India)• Dr. Mihir Pandey, Member (Department of Economics, Ramjas College, University of Delhi-India)• Prof. Dr. Selim Raihan, Member (Department of Economics, Dhaka University- Bangladesh & Executive Director, SANEM)• Prof. Sirimal Abeyratne, Ph D- Member (University of Colombo, Sri Lanka)• Dr. Syed Turab Hussain- Member (Lahore University of Management Sciences- Pakistan)

1.3 SAESM from 2004 to 2020

Year	Venue	Theme	Main Partner
2004	New Delhi	Economic Developments in South Asia: Which Way Ahead	National Foundation of India
2005	Lahore	Issues for South Asian Development	Syed Babar Ali Foundation
2006	Dhaka	Sharing Ideas for a Better Understanding of South Asian Development	Prime Bank
2007	Colombo	Economic Development and Regional Cooperation in South Asia	The World Bank
2008	New Delhi	Economic Challenges to Make South Asia Free from Poverty and Deprivation	The World Bank
2009	Dhaka	Young Economists for an Integrated South Asia	National Bank
2010	Colombo	Economic Freedom and Poverty Reduction in South Asia	Friedrich Naumann Stiftung
2011	New Delhi	Development Alternatives in South Asia	Institute for Financial Management and Research
2012	Kathmandu	Towards a Green South Asia	The World Bank
2013	Lahore	The Political Economy of South Asia	The World Bank
2014	Thimpu	South Asian Integration: Prospects and Challenges	The World Bank
2016	Colombo	South Asia in the Asian Century	The World Bank
2017	Kathmandu	One South Asia	The World Bank
2018	Chittagong	Sustaining South Asian Integration	The World Bank
2019	Colombo	Development in South Asia: Challenges and Opportunities	The World Bank
2020	Kathmandu	Towards Prosperous South Asia	The World Bank

1.4 17th SAESM Organizing Committee

The 17th SAESM will be jointly organized by the Chaudhry Nazar Muhammad Department of Economics, Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and the Faculty of Economics, Lahore School of Economics.

The members of the organizing committee are listed below:

Syed Ali Hasanain (Country Coordinator)	Associate Professor, LUMS
Syed M. Turab Hussain	Associate Professor, LUMS
Sanval Nasim	Assistant Professor, LUMS
Adeel Tariq	Assistant Professor, LUMS
Maryiam Haroon	Assistant Professor, Lahore School of Economics
Zunia Saif Tirmazee	Assistant Professor, Lahore School of Economics

2 EVENTS

The meet will have following major events.

2.1 Policy Paper Presentations

For the policy paper students will have to pick a South Asian city as a case study, identify its major problems, and propose policy solutions on how to transform the city in line with the theme. They can also pick a city from another region and compare it to the city that they've selected to highlight their similarities and differences. Students must demonstrate that they can reasonably apply economic concepts, ideas, and tools in addressing their topics.

To apply to this event students must send in an extended abstract (with an indicative bibliography) outlining their idea for the paper. The extended abstract along with the CV and marksheet of undergraduate course must be sent by September 10, 2021.

Co-authored papers are not allowed.

Selected students will have to write a paper not exceeding 3,500 words (including figures, tables, and references) on any of the themes listed below. A total of 6 students from each country will be selected for these categories, *one student per theme*. Papers should follow the conventional styles in economics. We expect students to write original content and to properly cite and reference material borrowed from other sources. Plagiarized papers will be disqualified.

Following are the themes and the potential questions under each theme that a student can consider for their papers. Note that the list of questions offered only serve as a guide for

the students to think through the topics. The students have the flexibility to consider other ideas to develop in their policy papers, within in each theme.

Theme 1: Urban Air Pollution - Questions to consider for selected city or cities: What's the state of air quality? What are the various pollution sources? Are current air quality regulations working? How can policymakers improve air quality outcomes?

Theme 2: Gender-Friendly Cities - Questions to consider for selected city or cities: Do women and transgender people feel safe? Do women and transgender people have adequate access to services, spaces, and mobility? How can policymakers ensure equitable access to women and transgender people? How can policymakers engage with civil society in this endeavour?

Theme 3: Urban Housing and Land Use - Questions to consider for selected city or cities: Do most citizens have access to affordable housing? How do rental and mortgage markets function? Do current housing regulations hurt the poor? How can policymakers ensure citizens have access to low-cost housing? Is sprawl leading to inefficiencies and high costs? How can policymakers contain sprawl?

Theme 4: Municipal Services and Utilities - Are municipal services and utilities (electricity, water, gas, roads, parks etc.) adequate? Are they managed publicly or privately? Are they affordable? What hurdles do citizens face in accessing municipal services and utilities? How can policymakers improve municipal services?

Theme 5: Urban governance - Are governance decisions made democratically or through a bureaucratic system? Are local governments operational, how do they work, and how have they delivered? Do local governments perform better than centralized governments? What kinds of governance reforms can lead to better public administration?

Theme 6: Urban Transportation - Are citizens mobile? Do they have access to reliable and safe public transportation? Should policymakers subsidize public transportation? Which forms of public transportation work best in your context? How does public transportation compete with private vehicles? How can policymakers ensure safe and reliable mobility of citizens?

Papers can be written using primary survey data / case study / review of the issue / modelling economic theory / econometric tools. The expected standard of the presentations takes into account that the delegates are undergraduates and hence the expected academic excellence and competency is of normal academic standards at undergraduate level. Thus, while any of the above methodologies may be used, the papers *must demonstrate application of economics and analysis in addressing the chosen issue.*

A student from each theme will be declared as the best paper presenter. Each paper will be evaluated based on merit of their written paper and oral presentation. A team of experts will be formed for evaluation. The details of evaluation guidelines will be announced later.

2.2 Budding Economist Competition

This meet will declare a budding economist of the region for the year 2021. The students have to go through a series of selection processes that includes writing an essay and attending visual and interview rounds. **To apply for this event, students have to write (1) an essay (not exceeding 1000 words) on *Indian Economy Post Covid* discussing issues relating to the Indian Economy post the Covid-19 pandemic and (2) a statement of purpose (SOP) describing what inspires them to pursue economics as a discipline, why do they choose economics over other fields, and how would they put their training in economics to use in the future. The applicant must send in their essay, SOP, CV along with marksheet of undergraduate study by September 10, 2021.**

Selected students will submit an essay (topic will be given later) in 1500 words. At the meet, there will be a Creativity Test, which will involve answering or responding to a series of questions and images projected on their screens. Five candidates will be shortlisted for the final round based on their essay and Creativity Test scores. In the final round, shortlisted candidates must sit through an interview with a panel of judges.

2.3 Documentary

A team of 2 to 3 students will collectively produce a documentary. The documentary should creatively showcase how students perceive development challenges in their countries and the pathways to overcome these challenges. The length of the documentary must lie between 8-10 minutes. Students must create the documentaries in English and offer subtitles for all non-English dialogue. Entries that contain any unauthorized, copied, or borrowed work without acknowledging the original content creator(s) will be disqualified. *Applicants have freedom of expression, but they should be sensitive that the content of the film should not be offensive or discriminatory to any community, gender, ethnicity, or nationality.*

Students must apply to this event in groups of 2 or 3 only. The group members may or may not be from the same institution, but all team members must currently be enrolled in a bachelor's programme in Economics in an Indian institution. Applicants must send in a one- or two-page document describing their idea for the documentary in as much detail (content, site, subjects) as possible. They should also indicate the device they intend to use to shoot the documentary - a DSLR camera, phone camera or any other device. Additionally, the applicants should mention in the document whether any of them, as an individual or part of any team, has any experience of making short films or documentaries and whether any of them has publicly screened her/his work, won accolades or certificates for any such endeavour. The team of judges may contact the students to verify or enquire about these details. Students must send the document and the scans of certificates or reviews (if any) along with the general CVs and marksheets of undergraduate study for each member of the team by September 10, 2021

Selected team will screen their documentary at the meet and will be given five minutes to discuss its content and the experience of creating it. The documentary will be evaluated based on how well they engage with the theme, deliver innovative content, and imagine the context, issues, and their solutions.

2.4 Lectures

On each day of the event, a prominent South Asian economist will be invited to deliver a lecture and engage with the audience.

2.5 Awards and Honours

- Sen-Haq Award for best of the best paper
- Best Paper Award in each theme
- Budding Economist of South Asia - 2021
- Best Documentary Award

3 SELECTION PROCEDURE AND DEADLINES

3.1 Selection Process

Country coordinators will be responsible for the selection of the students from their respective country. Country coordinators will communicate to the organizer about the final selection. **Applications sent directly to the organizer will not be entertained.**

3.2 Eligibility

The student must be studying at an undergraduate level pursuing a core course in Economics at the time of application. Student must have the citizenship and residence of the one of South Asian countries; and shall be studying at the university or college of the same country. The age of the students should not exceed 25 years at the time of application. The other eligibility criteria will be as per the guidelines issued by the respective country coordinator.

3.3 Deadlines

The milestone dates are:

Submission Requirements	Deadline
Last date of Application	September 10, 2021
Selection of Students (Tentative)	September 25, 2021
Submission of Full Papers and Essays	October 31, 2021
Submission of Presentations and Documentary	December 10, 2021

4 PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

The tentative program schedule will be as follows:

Dec 28, 2021 (Day 1): Policy paper presentations and conferment of awards.

Dec 29, 2021 (Day 2): Budding Economist interviews and conferment of awards.

Dec 30, 2021 (Day 3): Documentary screenings and conferment of awards.

On each day of the event, a prominent South Asian economist will deliver a lecture and engage with the audience. Detailed programme schedule will be shared closer to the meet.

Check SAESM website www.saesm.net for further details and updates.