

Syed Babar Ali Research Awards 2025-2026

Award Description

The Syed Babar Ali (SBA) Research Awards Program recognizes and supports outstanding PhD students in the Syed Babar Ali School of Science and Engineering, LUMS. The recipients of this award, called SBA Fellows, are expected to pursue research and scholarly activities that support knowledge creation and innovation in science and engineering as well as contribute to the economic well-being of society at large. As part of this prestigious programme, SBA Fellows benefit from a monthly stipend in addition to the stipend contribution from their PhD supervisors. Moreover, they are eligible to apply for additional research support (for example, for procuring equipment, consumables, covering research travel expenses, publication fee for journals etc.) from a central fund exclusively allocated for this program as discussed below. Proposals for the SBA Research awards will be solicited from PhD students once a year, and will follow the following timelines:

- Proposals due: June 15, 2025
- Decisions announced: September 15, 2025
- Fellowship start date: October 1, 2025

SBA Research Fellowship—duration and benefits

1. The fellowship will be awarded for a period of one to two years depending on the PhD graduation requirements of the student. The fellowship amount for the second year will be released after successful evaluation of first year's targets.
2. The fellowship includes a monthly stipend in addition to the stipend contribution from the PhD supervisor.
3. A central fund, called the SBA Scholars fund is allocated to the SBA research fellowship program to support the research and scholarly work of fellows. SBA fellows can apply for the following additional support during the duration of their fellowship.
 - a) Equipment and consumables needed for their research that cannot be supported through departmental funds.
 - b) Research travel for presenting research work at an International Conference or attending preparatory schools. The PhD Student Research Travel Policy will be followed for evaluation of research related travel applications.
 - c) Publication fee for an open-access journal that is highly ranked in the fellow's research discipline (e.g., top quartile of journals in the fellow's research discipline as per Scopus).

Eligibility criteria

1. Only PhD students in the Syed Babar Ali School of Science and Engineering are eligible to apply.
2. Applicants must have successfully defended their PhD Proposal. PhD students who have not successfully defended their proposal will not be considered.
3. At the time of submission of the SBA Fellowship proposal, the applicant must not have completed four years of his/her PhD degree program, calculated from the time of admission.
4. Applicant must submit a Letter of Support from the PhD supervisor along with the proposal. Estimated number of awards At least five Fellowships will be awarded every year.

Proposal review and evaluation

1. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - a) research accomplishments of the applicant,
 - b) novel and innovative aspects of the proposed work,
 - c) a clear and viable research plan to achieve the objectives outlined in the proposal, and
 - d) broader impacts and academic significance of the proposed work.
2. The review process will follow three phases. In the first phase, the School GPC will review the non-specialized description of the proposed projects. The proposals will then be reviewed by the graduate program committees of respective departments in the second phase. The department committees will share their review and grading of the proposals to the School GPC for evaluation in the third phase. The School GPC will have one representative from each department and will ensure uniformity and fairness in the proposal evaluation process across all departments. Based on the results of first two phases, the school GPC may shortlist the proposals and invite the shortlisted applicants for presentation of their proposal. The school GPC will rank all the proposals and will forward their recommendations to the Dean. Phases one, two and three carry the following respective weights: 20%, 40% and 40%. Project proposals will be reviewed by at least three reviewers at each stage. Candidate's PhD advisor(s) will not review his or her proposal at any stage.
3. For benefitting from the SBA scholars fund, the applicant will write to the Dean's Office, endorsed by the supervisor. The Dean may request additional information as well.