

Canadian Islamic Youth Organization To Host the Country's First Muslim-Led Environmental Conference

AMT Editorial Staff

The virtual conference plans to promote Islamic teaching on being green and nationalize conversations about diversity gaps and lack of inclusion within environmental movements.



Image courtesy of [Green Ummah](#)

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Green Ummah will host a virtual conference on Sat. March 6 and Sun. March 7 in an attempt to get Canadian mosques to think more environmentally.

Created in 2019 by young Muslims, Green Ummah is a Canadian non-profit organization aiming to create a green movement in Canadian Muslim communities.

The “Building A Greener Community” event, which is Canada’s first Muslim-led environmental conference, has been two years in the making, according to a chairperson for Green Ummah, Marium Vahed.



Marium Vahed

“When we began in 2019, we were driven by the need to address a diversity gap in the environmental movement,” she said. “We know that there are unique barriers that our communities face to accessing nature and participating in environmental advocacy. We also know that a strong environmental movement includes people of all backgrounds. The Building a Greener Community Conference 2021 was created to bring this conversation to a national scale, in the first-ever Muslim-run environmental conference in Canada.”



The conference will bring together [a range of scholars, experts and practitioners](#) to discuss how Islam relates to environmentalism, [including](#) Dawood Zwink of the ISNA, long-time Muslim community activist Imam Saffet Abid Catovic and Aasiya Hussain, an award-winning Canadian Racialized Muslim Woman with Disabilities.



The speakers will use [religious backing](#) to address how Muslims can integrate green principles into their daily lives and will focus on ensuring the green movement in Canada makes space for marginalized people.

“We have worked to create a conference that is representative of people from diverse backgrounds,” Vahed said. “We are excited to host experts for each of our topics that bring their unique perspective to the table and are hoping to engage them on how they have overcome barriers to becoming community leaders for the environmental movement. By highlighting their stories and giving a platform to their voices, we hope that we are able to galvanize Muslim youth and remind them that the environmental movement must be inclusive and equitable to succeed.”



A brainstorming meeting right before forming Green Ummah / image courtesy of [Green Ummah](#)

Vahed said the event is meant to create a space for Muslims and non-Muslims to work together in environmental advocacy.

“We are hoping to create the space for Muslims and non-Muslims alike to engage in a conversation about our collective responsibility to understand our duty to care for nature,” she said. “We are covering a lot of ground with panels focused on practical tips for building greener communities, Islam and the environment, inclusivity in the environmental movement, and Indigenous and Muslim collaboration. These conversations are not meant to end with the conference on Sunday, but instead, kickstart a national ongoing discussion.”

Green Ummah is also in the process of completing a [four-module curriculum](#) that they hope to test in Islamic schools across Canada beginning in September. The courses will provide an introduction to climate science, a deeper conversation about Islam and the environment and a critique of environmental racism.

The event will run from 12 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on March 6 and 7, and is pay-what-you-can. You can reserve your spot [here](#).



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