

FALAK SHAH

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EDUCATION

The Cathedral and John Connon School, Mumbai, India

2023 – Present

STANDARDIZED TESTS

- SAT: Total - 1520; Reading -740 ; Math -780 2026
- IELTS: Total - 8.00; Reading – 8.50; Writing – 8.00; Listening – 8.50; Speaking – 7.50 2026

ACADEMIC HONORS AND AWARDS

School

- Academic Honors in Grade 9 2024
- Academic Honors in Grade 11 2026
- ESS SL Subject Prize in Grade 11 2026

International

- Gold Award, Singapore and Asian Schools Math Olympiad (SASMO) 2026
- High Commendation, Minds Underground Essay Competition 2026
- Gold Award, Siam International Math and Science Olympics (SIMSO) 2026
- High Commendation, John Locke Essay Competition 2026
- Highest Distinction, International Environmental Olympiad 2026

MIYAWAKI INITIATIVES AND EXPERIENCES

Outreach Programme Founder

Sustainability Heroes, Mumbai, India (<https://www.sustainabilityheroes.net>)

2021- Present

- Founded an environmental action initiative aimed at increasing access to green spaces in Mumbai through Miyawaki afforestation, empowering students from underserved communities to engage in urban development projects actively
- Partnered with the BMC to execute plantation projects across six Mumbai sites, including Hanging Gardens, Chembur, and Mumbai University, planting 2,000+ plants with 1,500+ volunteers reducing the carbon footprint upwards of 1,71,500 kgs.
- Conducted workshops for 250+ middle school students on urban greening techniques; received media coverage in the Times of India for the initiative's impact on urban biodiversity and community engagement in Mumbai
- Authored a series of 3 storybooks on composting, greenhouses, and Miyawaki methods for younger audiences, donated to the Yasham Foundation library to foster early interest in urban greening
- Launched App, [GreenSpot](#) in July 2026 documenting parks in Mumbai and increasing accessibility

Internship

JKD Hortitech, Mumbai, India (<https://www.jkdhortitech.com>)

2025

- Undertook a two-week research internship contributing to ecological restoration projects, dedicating 8 hours per day to documenting a Miyawaki afforestation project involving 40,000 indigenous trees under architect Swati Dike
- Conducted stakeholder interactions with architects, workers, and residents to assess environmental and social impact; compiled a research document mapping ecological restoration and landscape integration development

ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING EXPERIENCES

Research:

Author, Native Plant Corridors and Pedestrian Comfort

2026- Present

- Undertaking a mentored research project under the guidance of Dr Akshita Bhandari, examining the effectiveness of native-plant green corridors in improving pedestrian comfort and ecological connectivity in urban environments
- Working title Native Plant Corridors and Pedestrian Comfort; conducting literature reviews and primary research to examine findings and develop original conclusions on urban greening interventions

Photographer and Researcher, Photographic Study of Mumbai's Architecture

2026

- Documenting Mumbai's colonial, Art Deco, modernist and informal architecture, including Koli Wada and Dharavi, in an independent project inspired by the Cornell and Syracuse summer programs
- Linking each architectural style and settlement to the planning decisions and climate conditions that shaped it, and compiled the photographs into a photobook

Internship

Lyth Design, Mumbai, India (<https://lythdesign.com>)

2026

- Undertook internship at Lyth Design, an architecture firm, under the mentorship of Apoorva Shroff,
- Studied past projects such as the Hungry Caterpillar in Ashoka University a 19m sustainable edifice twirling through campus
- Collaborated to redesign Ashray Orphanage in Bandra, Mumbai to a vibrant and creative learning space
- Participated in site visits observing passive design strategies, water management, and local material use; drafted a report evaluating vernacular architecture strategies across 2-3 buildings analysed during the internship

Summer Programmes

"Architecture", Syracuse University Pre-College (<https://precollege.syr.edu/programs-courses/summer>)

2026

- Participated in a three-week online credit-bearing program at Syracuse University School of Architecture exploring foundational architectural design principles under faculty instructions
- Engaged with physical model making, orthographic drawing, digital 3D modelling in Rhino, and a culminating pavilion design

“The Just and Sustainable City”, Cornell Summer College [<https://classes.cornell.edu/CRP/1111>] 2026

- Earned an overall grade of A, Participated in a credit-bearing online summer program at Cornell University exploring urban sustainability, equity, and collaborative planning methods; engaging with lectures, readings, and field exercises

“Fundamentals of Bioclimatic Design”, UPenn Coursera [<https://www.coursera.org/learn/bioclimatic-design>] 2026 - Present

- Studied passive design strategies (orientation, thermal mass, natural ventilation, solar shading), thermal comfort and climate analysis, and building envelope performance. Applied them to a thermal model of Louis Kahn’s Esherick House.

DESIGN, INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Outreach

Leader, Little Greenies Workshop Series, Cathedral and John Connon School 2026

- Initiated collaboration with the Middle School Nature Club to lead sustainability-focused workshops for 30 students across Grades 5-7, dedicating 5 hours of preparation per session to curate structured content
- Facilitated structured 2-hour sessions introducing movable solar panel models and sustainable air purification devices through demonstrations, guided discussions, and hands-on exploratory activities with student participants

Content Creation

Member, School Social Media Team 2025

- Designed graphics for the school's official pages, including posts celebrating competition winners and student achievements.

Summer Programmes

“How to Build a Better Mousetrap”, Summer@Brown [<https://apps.precollege.brown.edu>] 2023

- Participated in a three-week in-person interdisciplinary course at Brown University under Phoenix Savage exploring the relationship between product design and environmental sustainability across real-world environmental concerns
- Researched environmental concerns facing Gen Z, developed product design and prototyping skills, and completed a final sprinkler system prototype; received a certificate of completion upon finishing the course

Participant, “Inspirit AI” [<https://www.inspiritai.com/liveonline>] 2025

- Completed a five-week program introducing Python programming and machine learning concepts, including practical computer vision applications, dedicating approximately 5 hours per week to structured assignments
- Developed, presented a final project on AI-generated art, exploring how algorithms simulate creativity and visual outputs

Student, “Product Design”, RISD Pre-College [<https://precollege.risd.edu>] 2023

- Participated in a week-long product design course at the Rhode Island School of Design under Carlos Cruz, learning physical model-making and foundational product building techniques through hands-on studio work. Designed and built a cardboard camera, received a certificate of completion upon successfully finishing the course

Research

Participant, Cambridge Science Competition 2025

- Collaborated with a team over five months under Mr. Vikrant Chaurasia to develop a portable water purifier targeting underserved communities, dedicating 2-3 hours per week to primary research and testing
- Collected and analysed water samples, cultivated bacterial cultures, and compiled findings into a research paper; the team qualified for national level upon completion of the competition

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Creative Arts

Architectural Design & Visual Art 2025 - Present

- Building an architectural portfolio under the guidance of Nina Kosciwa and Isaac Tejera, Cornell-alumni architects, conducting site analysis of the Rann of Kutch through primary research, maps, and images to construct diagrams and models

Athlete

Badminton, Cathedral and John Connon School 2019 - Present

- Selected for school badminton team after try-outs in August 2019, chosen as 1 of 5 from 20 candidates; trained under Mahesh Dalvi at Mafatlal Club since 2018, dedicating 3 hours per week
- Won 1st place Singles U-16 at Mafatlal Inter-Club Tournament (September 2023); reached Semifinals at DSO (2024); competed at MSSA (November 2023, November 2024)

Taekwondo and Karate 2014 – Present

- Trained under Mr Raj Bhatt for taekwondo since May 2014, dedicating 1-2 hours per week to self-defence, nunchucks, tile breaking, and kick-based movements; received Black Belt in November 2023, dedicating 1 hour weekly to training
- Trained through school and school affiliated camps under Mrs. Kevdi Patel and received up to the Brown 3 belt in Karate

Community Outreach and Volunteering

Yasham Foundation [<https://www.yashamfoundation.org>] 2022 – Present

- Dedicated approximately 1 hour per week to bridging learning gaps for children aged 8-14 through interactive sessions in English, Mathematics, vocational training, and basic counselling support

Interact Club 2025 – Present

- Volunteered at club service projects supporting children from underprivileged communities through workshops ranging from science, art and craft and more. Joined the annual club trip, building teamwork and community with peers

IAYP Club (International Award for Young People) [<https://iayp.co.in>] 2022 – 2025

- Attended around four camps a year covering team-building, hiking and outdoor challenges
- Completed Bronze level by achieving required hours in Adventurous journey, voluntary service and creative skill development