

# Umar Al Faruq

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Urban geographer working on the geo-political economy and ecology of extended urbanisation in Indonesia and the Global South. Over four years of undergraduate and postgraduate teaching experience incorporating research and experiential learning techniques. Expertise in urban theory, planning, Asian cities, and the spatial history of capitalism having published peer-reviewed articles in high impact journals. Experienced field-based qualitative researcher proficient in questionnaire and sampling design, in-depth interviews, critical discourse analysis, and documentary and archival analysis.

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## EDUCATION

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- 2021–2025**      **King’s College London, United Kingdom**  
PhD Urban Geography (AHRC-funded)  
Supervisors: Dr Majed Akhter, Prof Alex Loftus  
Viva date: 31 October 2025 – passed with minor corrections.  
Thesis examiners:  
Prof Hyun Bang Shin (LSE), Prof Delik Hudalah (Bandung Institute of Technology)
- 2017–2019**      **University of Oslo, Norway**  
MPhil Human Geography  
Specialisation: Climate Change Adaptation and Social Transformation
- 2010–2015**      **Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia**  
BSc Urban and Regional Planning
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## DOCTORAL RESEARCH

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- 2021–2025**      **King’s College London, Department of Geography**  
*Doctoral researcher*
- Title: “*Nusantara in the interregnum: Infrastructure-led development and technopolitics in the production of Indonesia’s new capital city*”
- Investigated how Indonesia’s new capital city emerged as a technopolitical project through political histories of expertise and infrastructural policies.
  - Utilised in-depth interviews, critical discourse analysis, and archival methods to analyse the political economy of infrastructure-led urbanisation in Indonesia and across Asian cities.
  - Published two peer-reviewed articles in internationally renowned human geography journals (Q1).
  - Presented at international conferences and workshops.
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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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- Jun–Sep 2025**      **King’s College London, Department of Geography**  
*Research Assistant (Co-PIs: Dr Zahratu Shabrina, Dr Emma Colven)*
- Title: “*Empowering resilience in a sinking city: a Decision Support System (DSS) for participatory knowledge exchange, urban simulation, and modelling*” (funded by the British Academy)
- Conducted desk research to design a research impact methodology as part of the Research Excellence Framework (REF).
  - Developed and drafted the REF Impact Case Study report.
- Jul–Sep 2022**      **University of Oklahoma + University of California, Berkeley**  
*Research Assistant (Co-PIs: Dr Emma Colven, Dr Beki McElvain)*
- Title: “*Developing a market: A comparative study of disaster risk finance in Indonesia and México*”
- Arrange and conducted interviews with Indonesian key informants.
  - Conducted desk research on the state of disaster risk financing in Indonesia.
- Apr–Aug 2021**      **Bandung Regency Local Development Planning Agency (Indonesia)**  
*Expert Staff*
- Authored the document titled “Technical Guidelines for Local Innovation” aimed at helping municipal government agencies to develop public innovation programmes.
- 2015–2017**      **Resilience Development Initiative (Indonesia)**  
*Researcher; Outreach Manager*
- Conducted and assisted on various research projects on disaster risk reduction and resilience.
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- Drafted research proposals and working papers, conduct data analyses for senior researchers. Helped organise monthly seminars.
- As Outreach Manager, managed network of institutional and academic partners and fellows.

Projects:

**Jan–May 2017 United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Indonesia + World Vision Indonesia**

- Conducted policy analysis for child wellbeing related to forest fire-induced haze in Indonesia.
- Drafted final report.

**Nov–Apr 2017 Bandung Institute of Technology**

Title: “*Increasing Energy Security through Institution Adaptive Capacity, Case Study: Palembang City, Indonesia*” (PI: Dr Saut Sagala)

- Assisted fieldwork, interviewed government officials, conducted preliminary analysis.
- Drafted and edited the main research article.

**Sep–Oct 2016 German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) + Indonesian Geology Education Centre**

- Developed a training module titled “*Data Collection for Geology-based Spatial Planning*” to be used in training workshops for government officials and civil servants.

**Jan–Aug 2016 Coventry University**

Title: “*The Role of Culture in Facilitating Disaster-Resilient Communities: A Mixed-Method Investigation of the Community Surrounding Mount Sinabung, Indonesia*”

(Co-PIs: Prof Gavin Sullivan, Dr Saut Sagala)

- Co-organised 15-day fieldwork that collected 400+ questionnaires and 10+ interviews in rural Karo, North Sumatra.
- Liaised PIs with local academics and civil society organizations, organized 15-day fieldwork, interviewed victims of volcanic eruption, wrote internal survey reports, analysed preliminary quantitative data.

**May–Jul 2013 PT Wartha Bakti Mandala (Indonesia)**

Junior Planner Intern

- Assisted the drafting of the Province of Bali Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands

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**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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**2025–present University College London, Department of Geography**  
*Postgraduate Teaching Assistant*

- Planned and taught seminars for undergraduate students on various geographical topics. **Utilised experiential learning techniques.**
- Conducted formative and summative marking.

• Modules:

- **Urban Geography** – UG 2nd year (Spring 2026)
- Foundations of Geography 2 – UG 1st year (Spring 2026)
  - ❖ *Sub-modules:* Academic Skills, Human Ecology, & Territories and Connections.
- Foundations of Geography 1 – UG 1st year (Autumn 2025)
- Geographies of Infrastructure – UG 3rd year (Autumn 2025)

**2022–present King’s College London, Department of Geography**  
*Graduate Teaching Assistant*

- Planned and taught seminars for undergraduate and postgraduate students on various geographical topics. **Utilised experiential learning techniques.** Supported students during office hours.
- Conducted formative and summative marking.

• Modules:

- Geography Tutorials – UG 1st year (Autumn 2025–Spring 2026)
  - Geographical Foundations II – UG 1st year (Spring 2026)
    - ❖ *Sub-modules:* Political Geography, Development Geography, Environment and Society, Cultural Geography, **Urban Geography**
  - Geographical Foundations I – UG 1st year (Autumn 2025)
    - ❖ *Sub-modules:* Geo-histories of Capitalism, Spatial Inequality: The Alternative Sides of the Modern World, Political Ecologies
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- Geography in Action – UG 1st year (Spring 2025, 2026)
    - ❖ Designed syllabus titled: “**New Cities and Urbanisation in the Global South**”
  - Critical Geopolitics – UG 3rd year + PGT (Spring 2024)
  - Fundamentals of Environment, Politics, and Development – PGT (Autumn 2023, 2024, 2025)
  - Development Geographies – UG 2nd year (Autumn 2022)
- 2016–2017**      **Bandung Institute of Technology**, School of Architecture, Planning and Public Policy. *Teaching Assistant*.
- Delivered lectures to undergraduate students.
  - Modules:
    - Introduction to Engineering and Design II – UG 1st year (Spring 2017)
    - Introduction to Engineering and Design I – UG 1st year (Autumn 2016)

### **PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES**

- Al Faruq, U.** (under review). Concessionary state capitalism.
- Al Faruq, U.** (2025). Nusantara as Spectacular Fix: Urbanism, Power, and Exemplary Exception. *Antipode*, 57(5), 1771–1791. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.70039>
- Akhter, M., & **Al Faruq, U.** (2025). Authoritarian urbanism in Pakistan and Indonesia: A conjunctural comparison of two new cities. *Urban Geography*, 46(5), 1281–1302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2024.2409560>
- Sagala, S., Tarigan, A. K. M., Alberdi, H. A., & **Al Faruq, U.** (2024). Energy security governance and its adaptive capacity. *International Journal of Energy Sector Management*, 18(6), 2470–2492. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJESM-01-2024-0018>

### **FUNDING AND AWARDS**

- International Journal of Urban and Regional Research (IJURR) Foundation**  
*Writing-up grant* – £5,600 (2024)
- King’s College London**  
*Department of Geography Small Grants Fund* – £73 (2023–24)  
 £500 (2022–23)  
*Centre for Doctoral Studies Conference Fund* – £300 (2022–23)
- London Arts and Humanities Partnership Doctoral Training Partnership (LAHP-DTP), Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) UK**  
*Research Support Fund (overseas fieldwork)* – £2,800 (2023)  
*Doctoral studentship. Grant no. AH/R012679/1* – £63,208.28 (2021–2024)
- University of Oslo**  
*Faculty of Social Sciences Fieldwork Grant* – £2,255 ~ NOK 24,460 (2018)

### **SERVICES TO THE PROFESSION**

- 2022–present**      **Peer review**  
*Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography (2); Environment & Planning A: Economy and Space (1); Environment & Planning E: Nature and Space (1); Territory, Politics, Governance (1); Urban Studies (1).*
- 2022–2024**      **King’s College London, Department of Geography**  
 Contested Development Research Group  
*PhD Student Representative & Communications Officer*

### **SKILLS**

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| <p><u>Research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field-based data collection           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> <li>▪ Questionnaire design &amp; sampling techniques</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Qualitative analytical methods           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Thematic analysis</li> <li>▪ Critical discourse analysis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Archival methods           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document and thematic analysis</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p><u>IT Skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft 365 Copilot (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)</li> <li>• LaTeX</li> <li>• Zotero</li> <li>• NVivo</li> </ul> <p><u>Languages</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English (C2 in speaking, reading, writing)</li> <li>• Indonesian (Native)</li> </ul> |
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## SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

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- 2026 Bandung Institute of Technology, School of Architecture, Planning, and Public Policy. [Guest lecture] (1 Apr)**  
PL8005 Scientific Writing and International Publication  
Title: "*Publishing during your PhD: Communicating your research as you do it*"
- 2026 Nusantara Research Symposium (17 Mar).** National University of Singapore.  
Invited speaker
- 2025 Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference 2025 (Aug 26–29)**  
Title: "*Historicising Nusantara: A spatial history of authoritarian urban d/Development*"
- 2025 UK Indonesian Students Union / Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia UK (27 Mar)**  
Invited speaker  
Title: "*Nusantara in the history of urbanisation, development, and global capitalism*"
- 2024 Global d/Development and contemporary geopolitical rivalry (12–13 Dec).** Second Cold War Observatory.  
Title: "*From Cold War rationality to the smartness mandate? Political imaginaries of urban d/Development*"
- 2024 University of Florida, Department of Geography. [Guest lecture] (18 Nov)**  
GEO 6938 (Special Topics): Cities: Past, Present, and Future  
Title: "*Authoritarian urbanism in Pakistan and Indonesia: A conjunctural comparison of two new cities*"
- 2024 Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference 2024 (Aug 27–30)**  
Title: "*Whose adaptation? Nusantara and the spatiotemporal disjuncture of Indonesia's 'urban resilience' agenda*"
- 2024 Development Studies Association 2024 (Jun 26–28)**  
Title: "*Authoritarian urbanism in Pakistan and Indonesia: A conjunctural comparison of two new cities*"
- 2024 Pint of Science: Building (Dys)Utopia: Urban dreams in the dust? (May 13)**  
Title: "*How (not) to build a capital city from scratch*"
- 2023 Overlooked Cities in Asia: Interrogating blind fields in urban knowledges and praxes (Sep 6–8).** Overlooked Cities Collective. Urban Studies Foundation Seminar Series Award.  
Title: "*Imagining Nusantara and its unspectacular others: Articulations of 'overlooking' in reproducing hegemony*"
- 2023 American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting 2023 (Mar 23–27)**  
Title: "*Infrastructure's apogee: historicizing Indonesia's new capital city Nusantara*"
- 2022 Beyond Smart Cities Today: Power, Justice and Resistance (Jun 16–17)**  
Title: "*Smart Spectacular Urbanism of Asian New Capital Cities*"
- 2021 SEASGRAD (Southeast Asian Studies Graduate Student Association) Student Conference (May 14–15).** University of California, Riverside.  
Title: "*Experts in the Production of Nature: Indonesian Forest Fire Policy and the 'Issues' of Documents*"