



*Allah Almighty,
Exalted be He,
says:*

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ
الْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ أَتُنُونِي بِكِتَابٍ مِّنْ
قَبْلِ هَذَا أَوْ أَثَرَةٍ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

Ask (them, O Prophet), “Have you considered whatever (idols) you invoke besides Allah? Show me what they have created on earth! Or do they have a share in (the creation of) the heavens? Bring me a scripture (revealed) before this (Qur’ān) or a shred of knowledge, if what you say is true.”

*The Majestic Qur’ān
Sūrah al-Aḥzāb
Ayah 4*



Call for Abstracts:
***“Preserving the Islamic Identity -
The Challenge of Atheism Today”***

Overview of Preserving the Islamic Identity Summit

In an era where information is at our fingertips and worldviews are as diverse as ever, our youth are navigating complex questions about faith, belief, and identity. The rise of atheism, particularly among young people, presents both a challenge and an opportunity for Islamic scholars and educators. It is a call to engage in meaningful dialogue, to deepen our understanding, and to articulate the relevance of Islamic principles in the contemporary world.

The Council of Imams NSW, supported by the Australian National Imams Council, is pleased to announce a **call for abstracts** for our **upcoming summit**:

“Preserving the Islamic Identity: The Challenge of Atheism Today”

This summit is a response to the pressing need to address the questions our youth are grappling with. It is an invitation to Imams, scholars, dawah workers, teachers, and educators to contribute their insights, research, and experiences on this critical issue.

We believe that by fostering open conversations and exploring these topics from various angles, we can equip our youth with the knowledge and understanding they need to navigate their spiritual journey in today’s diverse world. We look forward to your contributions and to the vibrant discussions that they will undoubtedly inspire.

Together, let’s embrace this challenge and turn it into an opportunity for growth, understanding, and unity.



Suggested Topics for Abstracts

We welcome abstracts that explore any of the following topics:

Introduction to Atheism and Islam

- Why should Muslims know about Atheism?
- What is the historical background of Atheism?

New Atheism

- What are the core principles of New Atheism?
- How has New Atheism impacted on Muslim communities?

Design Arguments

- What is the foundational concept of design arguments?
- What are some of the challenges and critiques provided by sceptics against design arguments?
- What is the role of design arguments in contemporary scientific discourse, and their compatibility with Islamic cosmological viewpoints?
- What are some of the strengths and limitations of design arguments?

The Kalam Cosmological Argument

- What is the kalam cosmological argument?
- What are the premises and structure of the kalam argument?

The Contingency Argument

- The Contingency Argument: Definition
- Philosophical foundations of the Contingency Argument
- Connections to questions of existence and causality
- How the Contingency Argument aligns with Islamic theology
- Objections and criticisms against the Contingency Argument
- Insights from the Contingency Argument with other fields of knowledge: science and ethics

Realising Allah through Fitra

- Concept of Fitra (natural disposition)
- Role of Fitra in Islamic teachings and its parallels with atheistic perspectives
- How Fitra serves as a bridge between Islamic theology and philosophy
- Significance of Fitra in building a connection between individuals' innate inclinations
- Fitra in broader discourse on faith and reason



Atheism and the Big Bang

- Atheistic interpretations of the Big Bang theory and Islamic cosmological viewpoints
- Implications of atheistic perspectives on the origin of the universe
- Compatibility or tension between scientific and religious narratives on cosmology
- Philosophical implications of the Big Bang theory
- Bridging scientific discoveries with theological considerations in the context of atheism and Islam

Evolution and Atheism

- Navigate the intersection of evolutionary theory and atheistic viewpoints
- Compatibility between evolutionary science and Islamic teachings on creation
- Relation between Islamic thought on evolution and atheistic narratives about life's origins
- Evolutionary theory for questions of purpose, design, and the divine creator
- Nuanced conversations about evolution with scientific and religious interpretations

Consciousness and Atheism

- Atheistic approaches to the concept of consciousness
- Implications of consciousness in spirituality and existence
- Origins and nature of consciousness with atheistic and Islamic perspectives
- Relationship between consciousness, brain function, and the search for transcendence
- Consciousness in atheism and Islamic mysticism
- Bridge the realms of science, philosophy, and spirituality

Scientism and Atheism

- Scientism's intersection with atheism's absence of belief in the supernatural
- Investigate how scientism prompts scepticism towards supernatural claims in atheistic perspectives
- Atheism and scientism on ethics and societal norms
- Compatibility and conflicts arising from scientism and atheism's convergence



The Problem of Evil and Atheism

- Atheism on the problem of evil: coexistence of suffering and a benevolent God
- Atheistic perspectives on evil with Islamic responses to theodicy
- Philosophical approaches offered by atheism and Islam
- Grappling with suffering and divine justice: Faith, morality, and human experience
- Navigate the complexities of evil and suffering, fostering empathy

Exploring Nihilism in Atheistic Thought

- Nihilism within atheistic thought: Meaning and Value
- Atheistic nihilism versus Islamic beliefs. Psychological implications of embracing or rejecting nihilistic viewpoints
- Role of personal meaning-making and spirituality
- The nature of existence, meaning, and purpose in the context of atheism and Islam

Spirituality: Between Atheism and Theism

- Spirituality in atheism, contrasting it with the spiritual dimensions of Islam
- Atheists' and believers' approach to inner growth, and the search for a purpose
- Diverse ways of expressing spirituality in Atheism and Islamic sciences of spirituality
- Impact of spirituality on mental well-being and personal fulfilment
- Intersections of spirituality, self-discovery in atheism and Islam

Atheism and Da'wa: Insights from the Field

- Atheism in apologetics and Islamic outreach (Da'wa)
- Challenges and common misconceptions of atheistic viewpoints in Da'wa efforts
- Strategies for fostering dialogue, empathy, and mutual respect between atheists and believers
- Role of compassion, understanding, and open-mindedness in creating connections
- Facilitate mutual growth and promote understanding of atheism within an Islamic context



Instructions for Abstract Submission

Abstracts should be no more than 300 words and should provide a clear overview of the proposed paper's content.

The deadline for abstract submission is [insert date].

Selected authors will be notified by [insert date] and will be invited to prepare a full paper of up to 1000 words for presentation at the summit, which will be held on **[insert date]**.

Successful papers may be chosen for inclusion in a booklet to be published on the topic of tackling the issue of atheism in the modern context, from an Islamic perspective.

The summit will be open for attendance by Imams, educators, teachers, and anyone with a specific interest in the topic. Information on registration for attendance will be provided at a later stage.

Following the summit, a forum targeted at young people will, insha Allah, be held. The forum for young people will incorporate some of the findings of the papers presented in the summit.

Please submit your abstracts to nsw@anic.org.au by the deadline.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your interest and contribution to this important dialogue. We look forward to your participation in the summit.

With salam and dua,

Imam Ahmed Abdo

Chairman, Council of Imams NSW
on behalf of the Organising Committee and Selection Panel