

GUIDING  
PRINCIPLES &  
RESOLUTIONS



**1st** World  
Zoroastrian  
Youth  
Leaders  
Forum  
March 16 – 25, 2018

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# FORUM AIMS

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Understand the dynamics of sustainable change as it applies to the global Zoroastrian community



Connect with the heart of Zoroastrianism and with each other



Unite our focus and our energies for the betterment of the global community

# THE JOURNEY

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In the heart of pastoral Gloucestershire, England, the transformational Asha Centre played host and facilitator for the first World Zoroastrian Young Leaders Forum. Uniting just over 20 Zoroastrian youth leaders from a myriad of diverse views, backgrounds and geographies - the Forum aimed to form a vision, mission and action plan for tackling some of the most contentious issues facing the vibrant but diminishing worldwide Zoroastrian community.

The lens through which we viewed the Forum was worldwide in scope, yet our experiences were tied to our home continents and regional involvements. Each one of us brought a unique perspective, view and level of leadership that qualified our involvement and enabled us to speak ardently on behalf of our experiences, and eventually on behalf of one another as a group.

Our issues were vast, interconnected, interdependent, and complex. As a result, we came up with ways to identify these issues, formulate a tool to achieve a solution, in turn, leading to ideas and actions to help move the needle.

From this, we transformed our solutions into the Guiding Principles of the project and the actions into Action Projects.

Furthermore, we achieved group consensus in drafting and finalizing our formal Mission and Vision statements, similarly coming together to express our vision for the future, which is reflected further in this document.

The issues facing our community are all too familiar, so we were determined to list them out in order for us to tackle them. Whilst the issues were numerous, we were inspired by our Amesha Spentas to turn them into solutions. Our findings are below.

Issues we currently face...	Guiding Principle	How we will solve the issues...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of spirituality</li> <li>● Not practicing the core philosophy</li> <li>● Individualistic mind sets, not valuing the wider community</li> <li>● Lack of appropriate places of worship</li> </ul>	<p><b>Asha Vahishta (Best Truth &amp; Righteousness)</b></p> <p>To live the values and philosophy of Zoroastrianism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lead by example</li> <li>● Actively engage the community through charitable causes and social services</li> <li>● Provide programs/events that bring Zoroastrians together to celebrate commonalities</li> <li>● Encourage Zoroastrian communities to create appropriate places of worship</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of religious knowledge</li> <li>● Lack of Zoroastrian scholarship</li> <li>● Lack of authoritative knowledge sources</li> <li>● ‘Half-life’ of knowledge through generations</li> <li>● Lack of awareness in the global community</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spenta Mainyu (Bounteous mentality / Spirit)</b></p> <p>To cultivate knowledgeable Zoroastrians connected with their religion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teach Zoroastrians aspects of spirituality that can benefit their lives</li> <li>● Create opportunities for lifelong learning on Zoroastrianism</li> <li>● Preserve the knowledge that was traditionally passed down orally from previous generations</li> <li>● Create opportunities and incentivise the study of Zoroastrianism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of effective leadership</li> <li>● Lack of authority in priests</li> <li>● Lack of democracy</li> <li>● Entrenched legal disputes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Kshathra Vairya (Desirable Strength &amp; Dominion)</b></p> <p>To improve the way we collaborate globally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage, celebrate and respect current religious leaders</li> <li>● Rethink who can become a priest</li> <li>● Encourage priestly participation amongst the youth</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stigma of women marrying out (double standards)</li> <li>● Women priests not allowed</li> <li>● Taboos - menstruation, sexuality</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spenta Armaiti (Bounteous Devotion)</b></p> <p>To encourage greater engagement and participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Actively promote gender allies</li> <li>● Foster representation of women in elected bodies</li> <li>● Provide opportunities for voices to be heard confidentially</li> <li>● Shatter stereotypes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dwindling numbers</li> <li>● Mental health</li> <li>● Genetic problems from interrelated marriages</li> <li>● Ethnicity being lost</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ameretat (Immortality)</b></p> <p>To have a healthy and thriving Zoroastrian population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide platforms for Zoroastrians to interact with each other on a regular basis</li> <li>● Accept practising Zoroastrians irrespective of personal preferences</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of engagement</li> <li>● Disenfranchised youth</li> <li>● Lack of support for future generations</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Haurvatat (Wholeness &amp; Perfection)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">To achieve greater gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote diverse programming and activities to engage all community members</li> <li>● Build the infrastructure for worship and religious involvement, beyond social activities</li> <li>● Engage and inspire youth across all scales, starting locally and building to the global level</li> <li>● Empower the youth to build and contribute to their communities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Zoroastrian vs. Parsi vs. Irani</li> <li>● Lack of acceptance towards mixed-marriages and their children</li> <li>● Ethnic purity and not accepting conversion</li> <li>● Lack of empathy and respect for others' views</li> <li>● Not adapting to a modern context</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vohu Manah (Good Mind)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">To accelerate tolerance and open-mindedness through wisdom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Motivate local and global youth to bring about long term, sustainable change</li> <li>● Advocate the need for mutual respect as a guiding principle</li> <li>● Consult and engage other communities for ideas and strategies that encourage inclusivity</li> </ul>

# OUR VISION

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A harmonious Zarathushti  
community flourishing through  
righteousness

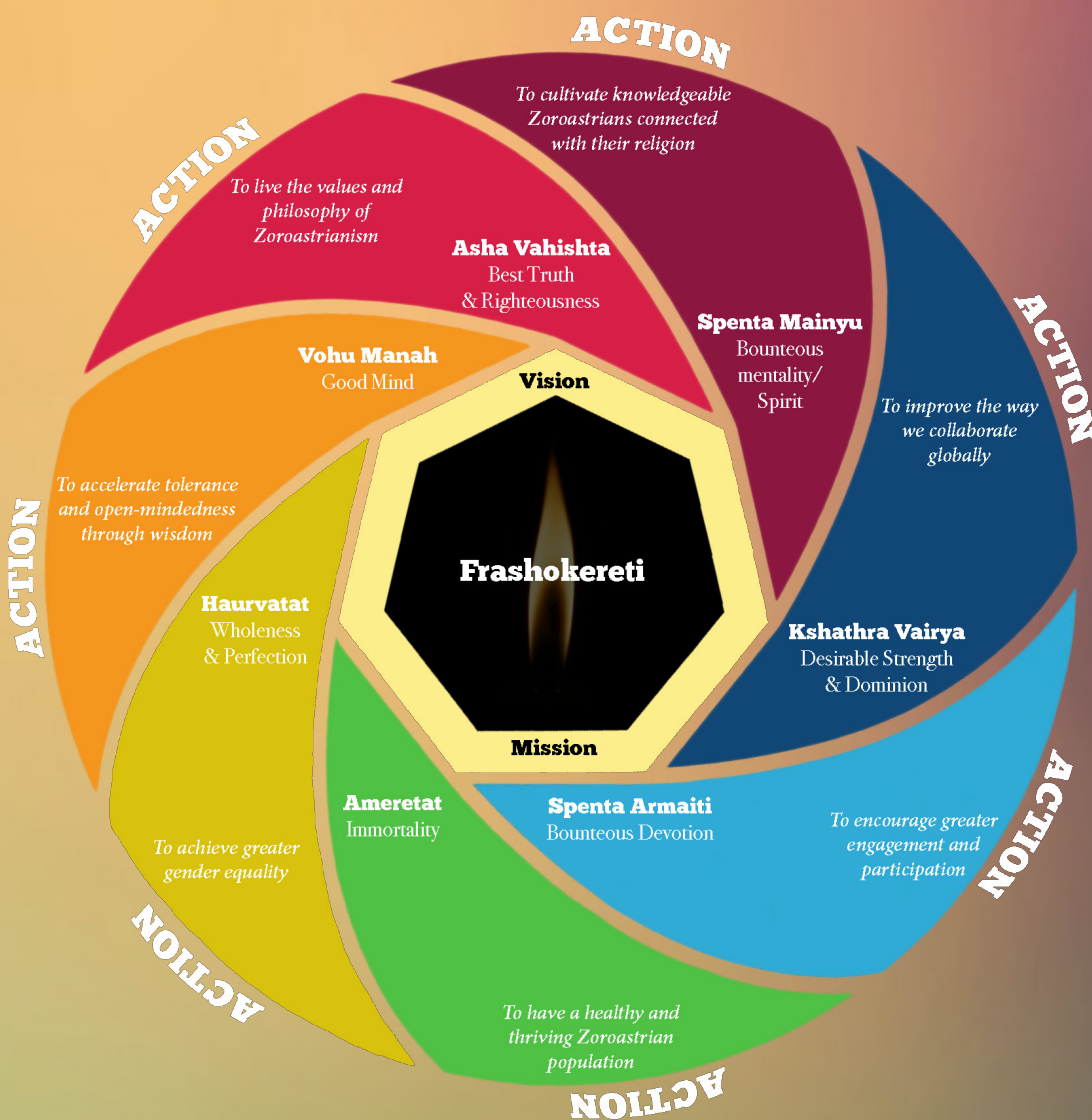
# OUR MISSION

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To connect today's Zoroastrian youth leaders, fostering dialogue, and empowering diverse voices into action



# PLAN INTO ACTION



We have adhered to a circular model featuring the heptagon as our state of Frashokereti; the Zoroastrian doctrine of a final renovation of the universe, when evil will be destroyed, and the world will be in perfect unity with Ahura Mazda’s vision.

Outlining the heptagon is our Vision and Mission, which is surrounded by the seven leaves we attribute to the Amesha Spentas, and as you work your way outwards, how we can achieve these are highlighted.

The projects on the next few pages elaborate on this.

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# ACTION PROJECTS

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Determined to bring about sustainable change, we transformed the above guiding principles into projects that can be implemented. The projects are intended to close the loop in solving our community's issues. The projects are listed over the next few pages.

However, this is just the beginning. At the WZYL Forum we were able to dream up the above projects to help strengthen our community.

For us to turn words into action, we need you.

If there are any projects you would like to be involved in, please get in touch with the relevant contact. From there we'll be able to see how you might help, or be helped, with any of these projects. Your religion and community will appreciate all the love you can give, no matter how big or small.

Hama azor, hama asho bed

“May we all be united in strength and righteousness”

Stay up-to-date on the work we're doing by checking out our:

- Website: <http://wzylf.com/>
- Instagram @wzylforum

# ACTION PROJECTS

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Asha Vahishta (Best Truth &amp; Righteousness)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>To live the values of Zoroastrianism</b></p>			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Primary contact(s)</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Volunteer work (especially for projects related to the WZYLFF)</b>	<b>Coordinating a global movement to inspire Zoroastrian youth into action, instigated from the WZYLFF.</b>	<b>Karl Desai, Sanaya Master, Jim Engineer</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>Promote Appropriate Zoroastrian Architecture</b>	<b>Presentations and discussions with communities about developing and promoting appropriate Zoroastrian Architecture, and encompasses environmentally-friendly principles.</b>	<b>Cyrus Rivetna, Arash Shroff</b>	<b>In development</b>
<b>Support for elderly, survivors of domestic abuse</b>	<b>Confidential, short-term crisis intervention services and referrals for ongoing resources will be offered to the Zoroastrian community members in Seattle, Washington. Phone support may also be offered for those living outside this area, if such services are unavailable locally.</b>	<b>Diana Bharucha</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

## Spenta Mainyu (Bounteous mentality / Spirit)

**To cultivate knowledgeable Zoroastrians connected with their religion**

<b>Lifelong Learning Project</b>	Cultivate knowledge, understanding and a spiritual connection with Zoroastrianism through creating a universal curriculum, educational resources and a global network of teachers, to allow Zoroastrians of all ages to integrate principles and teachings into their way of life.	Shazneen Munshi, Cainaz Vakharia, Arzan Wadia, Narges Kakalia	Active
	Gain religious knowledge on any given topic by requesting a dasturji for information.	Arzan Wadia	In development
<b>Preserving cultural heritage</b>	Preserve our rich Parsi and Iranian cultural heritage through embracing customs and traditions at organised workshops and events. For example, cookery classes, Nataks and learning how to wear a saree workshop.	Shazneen Munshi	In development
<b>Gujarati, Farsi Language Learning Classes</b>	Organise Gujarati and Persian language classes in local Zoroastrian associations for Zoroastrians of all ages.	Shazneen Munshi	Ongoing
<b>Collective recording of oral history</b>	As a lot of our customs and traditions are lost through time and mostly passed on from generation to generation, we sometimes miss out and don't really know why we do what we do. To keep an oral recording and verifying it with the collective as to the accuracy of the information.	Jehaan Kotwal	Ongoing
<b>Zoroastrian Research Institute</b>	Take the top Zoroastrian scholars globally (priests and laity) and have healthy LIVE debates/discussions in front of a global audience. Collect all the information from our previous generation to give our future generations better direction. The purpose is to help bridge the gap between the orthodox and the liberals by having a unified understanding of our religion.	Jehaan Kotwal	Ongoing

### **Kshathra Vairya (Desirable Strength & Dominion)**

**To improve the way we collaborate globally**

<b>Zoroastrian Memory Project</b>	<b>Improve the richness of Zoroastrian memories through the written and visual collection of stories accessed easily via website.</b>	<b>Arzan Wadia</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>World Mobed Congress</b>	<b>Organise a meeting of mobeds from around the world to discuss the role they play in their religion. Similar to the WZYLFF held in March, 2018.</b>	<b>Jimmy Madon, Karl Desai, Sheherazad Pavri</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Empowering Mobeds Project</b>	<b>Conduct workshops and groom the current crop of priests. Also encourage youngsters to take up the profession and lead the community.</b>	<b>WZO, Athornan Mandal, Sheherazad Pavri</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>WZCC Youth Leadership</b>	<b>Empower the Youth Globally to achieve their highest potential. By offering platforms for Networking, Mentoring, Startup incubation, Industry exposure and Knowledge sharing.</b>	<b>Jehaan Kotwal</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

### **Spenta Armaiti (Bounteous Devotion)**

**To encourage greater engagement and participation**

<b>Zoroastrian Women's Forum</b>	<b>Foster the greater empowerment of Zoroastrian women for the vital role they play in preserving our religion.</b>	<b>Cainaz Vakharia</b>	<b>In development</b>
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## Ameretat (Immortality)

**To have a healthy and thriving Zoroastrian population**

<b>Contribute to Existing Networks and Programs</b>	<b>Contribute one's expertise to existing programmes, for example: HPY, XYZ, Zochild, Return to Roots, Individual Baug Programmes, Mayqueen Ball, Jiyo Mobed, FOZYA youth conferences, etc.</b>	<b>Shazneen Limjerwala, Sheherazad Pavri, Kayras Irani, Arzan Wadia</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>Youth leaders acting as mentors</b>	<b>Establishing a network of mentors to help youth run programs or initiatives that they are passionate about e.g. senior workshops, religion classes, recreation events for the youth and general community.</b>	<b>Kayras Irani, Sheherazad Pavri, Jim Engineer</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>Yoga Classes - Seattle Zoroastrians</b>	<b>Yoga + Meditation Classes: Offered to Seattle Zoroastrian members, once space and interest is gauged, to promote hauvatat (wholeness)</b>	<b>Diana Bharucha</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

## Haurvatat (Wholeness & Perfection)

### To achieve greater gender equality

<b>Celebrate youth achievements</b>	Identify global youth who are doing exceptionally well in their profession/business annually and award them at the WZCC Global AGM, thereby providing them a greater platform to excel. We are also going to start this at a local level soon.	<b>Jehaan Kotwal</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>Dedicated Youth Funding</b>	Create a sustained, dedicated fund to support youth activities. For example, a number of the projects listed here could benefit from seed funding.	<b>Benafsha Shroff, Layla Mazdayasni</b>	<b>In development</b>
<b>Global Zoroastrian Book Club</b>	Promote Zoroastrian authors and books with a global book club. The authors will be asked to participate, and will answer questions via email, or video conference call.	<b>Cyrus Rivetna</b>	<b>In development</b>
<b>Amesha Spenta Themed Dinners - Toronto</b>	A series of tasting menu dinners themed around the Amesha Spentas.	<b>Arash Shroff</b>	<b>In development</b>
<b>Professional and Career Support</b>	Support and connect youth or adults at personal and professional crossroads through facilitating networking and providing guidance.	<b>Shazneen Limjerwala</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Zoroastrian Community Centre - Auckland</b>	Working towards building a Zoroastrian community centre in Auckland, New Zealand.	<b>Tinaz Karbhari, Kayras Irani</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

## Vohu Manah (Good Mind)

**To accelerate tolerance and open-mindedness through wisdom**

<b>Community code of conduct</b>	<b>Support strong governance within all local organisations by distributing a charter outlining best practice code of conduct e.g. removing discrimination, empowering youth, promoting gender equality.</b>	<b>Benafsha Shroff, Karl Desai</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>Publications (online and print)</b>	<b>Keep our global community connected and well-informed by sharing Zoroastrian news stories from around the world</b>	<b>Arzan Wadia, Shazneen Limjerwala, Jim Engineer, Sanaya Master</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>Zoroastrian Documentary Film</b>	<b>A feature length documentary that will feature 4-5 key stories about Zoroastrians around the world, who are standing tall in the face of adversity and doing great things within the community - for the community.</b>	<b>Tanya Hoshi</b>	<b>In development</b>



# PHOTO GALLERY



# ATTENDEES & CONTACTS

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# 1st World Zoroastrian Youth Leaders Forum

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