



cdpr

Consortium for Development
Policy Research



CDPR'S YOUNG POLICY SCHOLAR PROGRAMME

Pakistan's only pre-university programme that takes you through the complete lifecycle of evidence-based policy research - from research question to dissemination.

SUMMER 2026
LAHORE, PAKISTAN



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ABOUT CDPR

The Consortium for Development Policy Research (CDPR) is a non-profit research and dissemination organisation based in Lahore. Since 2013, CDPR has promoted evidence-based public discourse on Pakistan's key development challenges, working in partnership with the International Growth Centre and collaborating with leading institutions including LUMS, Lahore School of Economics, IBA Karachi, the World Bank, UK Aid and USAID.

CDPR's work spans cities, energy, environment and climate change, firms and state capacity. Our board includes individuals with extensive experience across leading universities, Government of Pakistan advisory committees and international development organisations. Our operations are led by a team of researchers educated at world-class institutions, supported by a global network of non-resident fellows and senior advisors.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Every year, thousands of Pakistani students apply to top universities abroad. Most have strong grades. Very few have what genuinely sets applicants apart: real research experience, a published piece of work and the ability to speak confidently about a policy problem they investigated themselves.

CDPR's Young Policy Scholar Program closes that gap. In four weeks, you will not just learn about research, you will do it. You will identify a development question that matters to you, work through the entire research process under expert guidance, produce a policy brief eligible for publication and engage directly with some of Pakistan's leading policy minds. It is a professional research apprenticeship, modelled on how CDPR's own researchers work.

The 2024 inaugural cohort, run with IB Diploma students from LGS-I, received exceptional feedback. Mentees described the structured, research-led experience as invaluable preparation for their IB Extended Essays and university applications. Graduates received offers from the University of Waterloo, Babson College, McMaster University and many others. The 2026 programme builds on that foundation with a broader four-week design.



WHO IS THIS PROGRAMME FOR?



YOU ARE THE RIGHT CANDIDATE IF

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You are a pre college student interested in building your profile
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You want to apply to universities abroad or top Pakistani institutions
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You are curious about economics, public policy or development
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You want a real publication and research credentials
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You want to understand why Pakistan's economy and governance work the way they do

WHAT YOU WALK AWAY WITH



Published Policy Brief

Your research, in your name, is eligible for publication on CDPR's website and disseminated to its network of policymakers, researchers and journalists.



Research Portfolio & CV Entry

List yourself as 'CDPR's Young Policy Scholar, 2026' on university applications, LinkedIn, and your CV, with a real, citable output and field research experience.



Real-World Work Experience

Gain hands-on, practical experience working through a live research project. You will engage with real data, real policy questions, and real feedback from working researchers.



Expert Network Access

Network directly with well known academics, globally recognised experts, and international development economists across CDPR's research and advisory network.



Recorded Presentation

A polished recorded presentation to share with admissions officers and to develop your communication and public-speaking skills.



Certificate of Completion

Formally issued by CDPR – a registered non-profit research organisation with a credentialed board and national policy presence.



University Application Edge

Concrete material for your personal statement, extended essay and admissions interviews that sets you apart.



Digital Dissemination Skills

Learn how to make research accessible and impactful beyond publication through social media, podcasts and other knowledge products.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Sessions run Tuesday to Thursday, 11:00 AM – 01:00 PM. Each session opens with an expert-led lecture, followed by a structured work sprint. Scholars will also get the chance to attend CDPR's flagship public policy dialogue as full participants, engaging with policymakers, academics and sector experts.

WEEK 1 - FINDING YOUR QUESTION: RESEARCH CONCEPTUALISATION AND DESIGN

DAY 1 TUESDAY

Introduction to CDPR's research themes. Explore the policy landscape and identify a development problem that genuinely interests you. Learn what makes a good research question.

DAY 2 WEDNESDAY

Learn how to conduct a systematic literature review: finding, reading and synthesising existing research. Identify where the gaps are, what remains unanswered, contested or under-studied in your chosen area.

DAY 3 THURSDAY

Learn about research methodologies: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Learn how to select the approach that best fits your question, data and constraints. Understand each method's limitations and how to be transparent about them in your work.

WEEK 2 - BUILDING YOUR EVIDENCE: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

DAY 4 TUESDAY

Introduction to secondary research: how to locate, evaluate and use existing datasets and official statistics. Hands-on practice with quantitative data: reading tables, interpreting trends and drawing defensible conclusions.

DAY 5 WEDNESDAY

Design a short survey or interview guide tailored to your research question. Learn best practices for primary data collection: question wording, sampling, and avoiding bias. Practice interview and facilitation skills through role-play exercises.

DAY 6 THURSDAY

Analyse and interpret the data you have collected: both quantitative and qualitative.

WEEK 3 - SHAPING YOUR ARGUMENT: WRITING, FEEDBACK AND EXPERT INSIGHT

**DAY 7
TUESDAY**

Submit your research proposal for peer and instructor review. Participate in a structured group critique session, give and receive constructive feedback. Revise your proposal based on feedback and begin drafting your policy brief.

**DAY 8
WEDNESDAY**

Guest session with CDPR's fellows and senior advisors. Hear directly about their research, the policy questions they work on and their career journeys. Open Q&A: seek guidance relevant to your own research and ambitions.

**DAY 9
THURSDAY**

Learn the anatomy of an effective policy brief: executive summary, background, key findings and recommendations. Review examples from CDPR's published work and apply the framework to your own draft.

WEEK 4 - COMMUNICATING YOUR RESEARCH

**DAY 10
TUESDAY**

One-on-one feedback session on your first full draft. Final revisions to prepare your brief for submission and potential publication.

**DAY 11
WEDNESDAY**

Learn practical strategies for communicating research beyond academic audiences. Introduction to CDPR's knowledge products: Lahore Policy Exchange, Podcast, Insights for Change briefs and others.

**DAY 12
THURSDAY**

Deliver a structured 10-minute presentation of your research, followed by a Q&A panel. Receive your Certificate of Completion.



APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applications Open** : 15 May 2026
- Applications Close** : 15 June 2026 – rolling basis, apply early
- Decisions Announced** : Mid of June 2026
- Programme Begins** : 30 June 2026
- Programme Fee** : 50,000 PKR (all-inclusive)



HOW TO APPLY

Submit your application via our online application form, including:

1. Your most recent school transcript
2. A cover letter (300 words) addressing three questions:
 - Why are you interested in this programme?
 - What development or policy problem interests you most, and why?
 - What do you hope to do with the skills you gain?



Scan the QR code to Apply!



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For queries please write us at

admin@cdpr.org.pk

