



THE NORTHERN ASIAN POWERLIST 2022

Celebrating the Contribution of Asian Influence and
Impact Across the North of England

#NAPowerlist

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Introduction

The Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 showcases the prominent businesses, professionals, influencers, women, media, politicians and change makers across the Northern Powerhouse.

Our Supporters

We would like to thank our key supporters who have contributed their time and energy to this project from its inception.



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We are celebrating the brilliance of people across all of our towns and cities in the north of England. British Asians have made a substantial contribution to our places and identities, and this is about recognising them and their stories. We want these brilliant people to be role models, inspiring people of all backgrounds to strive, to achieve and to be their best.

The Asian community has, for decades, provided a powerful and varied contribution to the UK and, in particular, the north of England. Often silently, the Asian community has supported our communities in every town and city across the north of England. The Northern Asian Powerlist is a timely and important recognition and celebration of this contribution, and seeks to tell the multitude of stories that have come to light during the development of this Powerlist.

We are excited to showcase the Asian community's talent for doing brilliant things across the north of England. We are keen to ensure that we bring to the surface these examples of accomplishment and achievement across the north of England, not only to highlight the brilliant things happening in the north, but also to act as an encouragement to the next generation.

Our Powerlist categories reflect the eclectic mix of contributions to the north of England and the UK more widely.



Sharon Jandu

Project Director

T +44 7807 474885

E sharon@yaba.uk.com

This year's categories include:

- Business Leaders
- Cultural Icons
- Digital and Technology
- Emerging Talent (Entrepreneurs and Leaders)
- Food and Drink
- Inspiring Professionals
- Politics and Diplomacy
- Social Changemakers
- Thought Leaders
- Women in Business

Introduction to Pioneers

Our report acknowledges the British Asian pioneers who have paved the way for others and those that are doing amazing work now. Throughout this report, you will see profiles on the pioneers who made it possible for the Asian business community to be where it is now.



parklane group



pink elephant





Message From Lord Bilimoria CBE DL

It gives me great pleasure to support the celebration of the contribution and impact British Asians are having across the North of England. Since the publication of the last Northern Asian Powerlist in 2020, the world has endured serious challenges and huge uncertainty. However, these challenges brought to light the sense of solidarity and compassion that is innate to the British Asian community. In my industry, for example, of the thousands of curry restaurants that were forced to close, many would open their kitchens and, unprompted, prepare hundreds of meals and deliver them to their local hospital.

Not only is the British Asian community a force for good, but it also plays an integral role in Britain's economic prosperity, generating around 10% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) despite making up only 4% of the population, according to research published by the CBI. Moreover, the upcoming conclusion of the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations will see the bond between South Asia and Britain continue to strengthen, as the FTA is expected to more than double India-UK bilateral trade by 2030.

As the birthplace of the industrial revolution, the North has a long history of fostering innovation. Contributing to nearly 19% of the UK's GDP, the North represents over 15 million people and more than one million private sector businesses. Over the past year, the British Asian community of Northern England has reinforced its status as a true powerhouse of ingenuity, making its presence felt in every field – ranging from media and the arts, to science, technology and medicine. The Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 has profiled the achievements of the top Asian businesses, professionals, influencers and politicians. This list not only highlights the achievements of a diverse UK, and the North in particular, but also acts as an inspiration for generations to come.

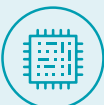
Lord Bilimoria CBE DL

Founder and Chairman, Cobra Beer

Independent Crossbench Peer, House of Lords

Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 Overall Winners

It is an honour and a privilege to present our overall winners. These individuals topped the 2022 list of the most influential people of Asian heritage across the Northern Powerhouse.

Category	Name	Title and Organisation	Profiles
Business Leaders 	Sandy Chadha	Managing Director, Supreme Plc	Sandy Chadha is the Managing Director of Supreme Plc, a manufacturer and wholesaler of a wide range of branded fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), such as batteries, lighting, wellness, vitamins and sports nutrition supplements, and baking products. The company sells to 45 countries and has over 3,000 business customers that together operate over 10,000 retail branches. It has transitioned from being a second-generation family business to now being a quoted one.
Cultural Icons 	Shanaz Gulzar	Artist	Shanaz Gulzar is a British visual artist. She specialises in stage design and digital and installation work, and has been a producer at the Manchester International Festival. She was born in Keighley, West Yorkshire, and gained a degree in fine art at Leeds Metropolitan University in 1995. She is an associate artist of the National Theatre Wales. In 2020, she was appointed to lead Bradford's bid to become the UK City of Culture in 2025; the bid was successful.
Digital and Technology 	Farooq Hakim DL	Vice President, Strategic Clients & Cloud Transformation, Oracle	Farooq Hakim DL has over 20 years' involvement in the delivery of complex business transformation programmes with executive roles as chief operating officer, vice president, chief information officer and chief technology officer. Farooq has used his experience and expertise to drive digital transformation in a community focused way, working with the North East LEP and the University of Sunderland.
Emerging Talent: Leaders 	Advita Patel	Director, Comms Rebel	Advita Patel helps organisations cultivate an inclusive culture by helping them communicate effectively to their workforce so all colleagues can belong and thrive in their work. Advit was named in the Northern Asian Top 100 powerlist in 2020 and the Global Top 101 list for employee experience.
Emerging Talent: Entrepreneurs	Vishay Karia	Founder, Project Student Housing	Vishay Karia is the founder of Project Student Housing. His vision was based on the neglect and general low level of students' satisfaction with housing, alongside providing landlords with direct access to students at a lower than market rate of management. He came up with the idea during the pandemic, when he decided to avoid social media.
Food and Drink 	Mahboob Hussain	CEO, Icestone Gelato	Mahboob Hussain is the founder and CEO of Icestone Gelato, a very successful dessert franchise that has opened multiple stores across the UK, and with a flagship store in Bradford.

Category	Name	Title and Organisation	Profiles
Inspiring Professionals 	Dr. Zahid Chauhan OBE	Founder, Homeless Friendly	Cllr Dr. Zahid Chauhan is a respected GP, committed health and social care activist, local councillor and appointee to several boards with oversight of regional health and social care service provision. Zahid was appointed cabinet member for Health and Social Care at Oldham Council in 2018, having built a reputation as a committed campaigner on improving medical provision for the homeless, combatting superbugs prevalent in UK hospitals and championing the values of the Trade Union movement in health and social care, as well as opposing outsourcing and the Anti-Trade-Union legislative agenda.
Politics and Diplomacy 	Salma Arif	Councillor, Leeds Council	Councillor Salma Arif is the first female British Asian member of Leeds Council. She is the executive member for Public Health and Active Lifestyles, and is the Labour & Co-operative Party Councillor for the Gipton and Harehills ward.
Social Changemakers 	Naz Kazmi	Chief Executive, Keighley Association Women and Children's Centre	Naz Kazmi works tirelessly to support women experiencing domestic abuse and in leaving abusive relationships, often at great personal risk to herself. She has been shunned by many in the community as a home-wrecker, when in actual fact she is saving the lives of women and children from further abuse and mental health. She is highly motivated by her cause and dedicated to the difference she makes to others.
Thought Leaders 	Zoë Hingston	Head of Inclusion, Newcastle United Football Club	Zoë Hingston is a proud Northerner, and passionate about inclusion and supporting diversity, in particular those from under-represented groups and communities within organisations, making sure that everyone has a voice even in the most challenging of circumstances, and that they can thrive.
Women in Business 	Nisha Katona MBE	Founder Mowgli Street Food	Nisha Katona is the founder, CEO, executive chef and development chef of Mowgli Street Food restaurants and founder of the Mowgli Trust charity. Nisha received an MBE in the 2019 New Year Honours List for services in the food industry. Nisha used all her savings to open the first Mowgli Street Food restaurant in the city of Liverpool. Since giving up the security of a 20-year career as a full-time barrister, Nisha has grown Mowgli Street Food to 18 restaurants across the UK, with an aim to continue growing restaurants and jobs in order to fulfil the mission of Mowgli: to enrich lives in the cities she goes to.



Message From Mayor Tracy Brabin

The Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 is a superb initiative, which celebrates the top 100 inspirational and influential British Asians from across the Northern Powerhouse.

I am proud to be the mayor of West Yorkshire – a place where diverse businesses thrive. There are some exceptional business and cultural leaders of Asian heritage who are inspiring creativity, driving innovation and entrepreneurship, and accelerating the economic growth of our region.

The Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 representatives are all championing the North, strengthening international partnerships, and helping tell our powerful story to the rest of the world.

The substantial Indian subcontinent diaspora population in West Yorkshire gives so much to our communities. As this report highlights, they are passionate and use their skills and experience to make a difference. For example, this community was instrumental in supporting Bradford to win the hotly contested UK City of Culture 2025 competition, a celebration of rich and vibrant culture and the young, ethnically diverse population of leaders and changemakers.

Culture plays a key role in delivering a stronger economy and more inclusive communities, and that is why the creative and cultural industries are front and centre of our region's strategy for economic recovery.

I am delighted that West Yorkshire is one of the key partners of the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 and I look forward to working with the winners to champion our region and the Northern Powerhouse.

Tracy Brabin

Mayor of West Yorkshire



Pioneer Profile: Nirmal Singh MBE

Nirmal Singh MBE arrived in the UK in 1967 as a 15-year-old boy from Punjab. He then started his business at the tender age of 17, and married his wife Harmesh Kaur at 21.

When he first came to Bradford, he had only £3 in his pocket and found the extreme change in climate strange to begin with. He began looking for work straight away, but faced discrimination due to his turban and long hair, the outward expressions of his deep faith, which he did not want to compromise. However, as he needed a job, he decided that it was a necessary sacrifice that he had to make to have a recurrent chance in the harsh job market, only then to find out he was too young to work there. This led him to immense melancholia, as the turban is considered a symbol for honour, nobility and self-respect in the Sikh religion.

His first job was at a bedding firm and he worked there for three years, after which he used his hard-earned knowledge to start his own company with his wife. They commenced a successful textile business, Nirmal Razai Mart & Company Ltd, and achieved recognition throughout the UK for their textile products.

The bedding company, which soon employed over 100 machinists, mainly women working from home, stocked its products in just under 700 outlets in the country. It was well known for its floral patchwork quilts. With the growth of his business, Mr. Singh began to invest surplus funds into property, and by 1994 the property portfolio had overtaken his textile empire. Son Iqbal Singh Sekhon, a solicitor, joined his father at the helm of the business. Now the group holds some 800 commercial and residential tenants and is the biggest single landowner of Little Germany in central Bradford. In 1999, Mr. Singh was awarded an MBE for services to community relations in Bradford. He also acts as a spokesperson between Bradford's communities and public sector bodies, such as the Police, Fire Service, Bradford Council and the Department for Education.



Business Leaders: Winner and Shortlist

The Business Leaders category showcases the contribution of the leaders of Asian businesses to the UK economy, from SMEs to major listed companies.

Our shortlist demonstrated exceptional leadership, driving forward strong business growth and innovation strategies, with people who are prominent role models within their sectors.

Overall Winner	Sandy Chadha, Managing Director, Supreme Plc
North East	• Mohammed Khaliq, Co-Founder, Gainford Group • Susan Khaliq, Co-Founder, Gainford Group • Imran Khaliq, Director, Gainford Group • Meenu Malhorta DL, Chairman, Malhotra Group PLC • Tarun Sehgal, Founder and MD, Shell Franchisee/Fuel Convenience Retail Ltd
North West	• Asif Ghafoor, CEO, Be.EV. Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, and Co-Founder, Iduna • Ayesha Nayyar, Senior Solicitor/Director, Nayyar Solicitors • Juwad Nayyar, Director of Marketing and Business Development, Nayyar Solicitors
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Asma Iqbal, Partner, Chadwick Lawrence • Bobby Thandi, Founder and CEO, XR Games • Veena Soni DL BEM, Director of EAL and Diversity Solutions

"The Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 is a celebration of the incredible and diverse business community across the North. These inspirational business and cultural leaders have had a tremendous impact on the Northern Powerhouse's economy and international profile. I am delighted to be chairing the judging panel for the Business Leaders category. We had some fantastic nominations and faced tough deliberations to decide the winner."

Sir Roger Marsh OBE DL

"I am honoured and delighted to be part of the Northern Asian Powerlist judging panel for 2022. We have so much talent, passion and success to celebrate. It is right that those who give so much are recognised for their hard work and contribution to UK Plc."

Nicola Chance-Thompson DL

"I welcomed the opportunity to support the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022, joining the exceptional judging panel for the Business Leaders award, chaired by Sir Roger Marsh OBE DL. The calibre and impact of nominees is exceptional and showcases the innovation, leadership, diversity and sustainable strength of businesses in the North. These are leaders who illuminate the path ahead and allow us to celebrate our diverse and powerful offering as part of UK Plc. The winners shine a light on opportunity for all at a critical time for our economy."

Jason Longhurst, Chair



Pioneer Profile: Nazir Ahmed

Nazir Ahmed was born in Malawi to parents of Punjabi descent and undertook his early education in the country before completing his studies initially in Karachi and then Tanzania.

On completion of his studies, he worked as an accountant and progressed rapidly to managing the small office in which he worked. He then became successful in working for a larger commercial firm, where he worked for 10 years in the capacity of general manager.

In 1961, Nazir married Razia, whom he had known since their school days, and they went on to have four children. In 1976, he emigrated with his family to England, a year later investing in his first property, the origins of what we know today as the Parklane Group. Integral to this success has been Razia, who played a pivotal role as his business partner while simultaneously bringing up the family.

Over the last four decades, the business he founded has become a market leader in property and leisure with a substantial property holding in the UK – but throughout, the strong family values Nazir embedded have remained at the heart of everything the company undertakes.

Now a multimillion-pound business of real estate and hotels, the outstanding group, now run by his children, has won numerous awards and accolades. Forty-three years later, Nazir still has a passion for the company and continues to visit the office regularly.

He is passionately active within the Park Lane Foundation he established in 2005. Keen to benefit wider society, his philanthropic activities ensure that the success he has encountered benefits others. Since inception, the foundation has donated hundreds of thousands of pounds to charitable causes in the UK and overseas.

Remaining true to his roots, he has instigated micro finance, water irrigation and housing projects to assist poor and homeless communities in Malawi and he continues to generously donate to lifesaving projects.

A humble but truly inspirational figure, his legacy will undoubtedly continue to inspire both his family and others, and he remains the epitome of the Quaid's core values of excellence, boldness and quality in everything he does.



Message From Mayor Ben Houchen

The Northern Asian Powerlist is once again highlighting the invaluable contribution that our innovators, job creators and entrepreneurs in the British Asian community are making right across the North. In all sectors, in many different ways, these champions are going above and beyond to underpin our economic success.

Their diverse voices offer a wealth of perspectives, which only serve to enrich our landscape. Recognising and applauding their achievements will encourage future generations of go-getters within their communities to go on to bigger and better things.

As the world continues to adjust to the new normal following the pandemic, and our outward-looking region grabs the benefits of Brexit with both hands, opportunity is rife. These influential business leaders, cultural icons, thinkers and ambassadors are the key to unlocking further connections, investment and possibilities that will drive an even more prosperous North.

I would like to offer my congratulations to each and every one of the people named in this Powerlist and thank them for their tireless dedication to our region.

Ben Houchen

Mayor of Tees Valley



Pioneer Profile: Murad Ali

Murad Ali started Al-Murad Tiles Ltd., from simply buying a few tiles and then here we are, nearly 40 years later.

Al-Murad is now one of the UK's largest independent ceramic tiles and natural stone importers and retailers with over 40 stores and online presence. It employs over 300 people and has an annual turnover of £40 million.

Al-Murad Head Office is based in Morley, Leeds, where the main warehouse and distribution hub is located, in a 120,000-square-foot floor space. It has the capacity and infrastructure to distribute over 10 million tiles annually across the UK.

Murad is renowned for his charitable work in the community through the Murad charitable foundation Al-Murad Trust Limited, which contributes to good causes as part of its wider social responsibility in the UK and abroad, particularly in India, where Murad was born. In the UK, it has supported hundreds of people who are homeless, or in fuel and food poverty, as well as supporting young children and young adults gain independence and hope for the future.

In India, Murad's family donated their land, developed and now run an orphanage that not only supports hundreds of homeless children of any faith and background with food, clothing and shelter, but also caters for their education and, most importantly, with the tools to face a better future.



Message From Kully Thiarai

In 2020, I was honoured to be announced as the winner of the Cultural Icons award for the inaugural Northern Asian Powerlist and I am delighted to have been asked to be one of the judges this year.

Culture is such an important part of our cities, towns and neighbourhoods, and can be a strong driver for economic transformation and growth. Cultural and creative endeavour is a powerful means by which we are able to share our stories, celebrate our individual and collective rituals, and find ways to be seen and heard. We have much to celebrate in the North with extraordinary creative talent everywhere, just waiting for some recognition, profile and opportunity to shout about itself. It is, therefore, particularly pertinent that we are able to celebrate the changemakers and cultural leaders as part of these important awards and showcase not only the winners, but also those nominated for all the work they do.

Kully Thiarai

Creative Director and CEO at Leeds 2023



Cultural Icons: Winner and Shortlist

The Cultural Icons category features prominent individuals who help nurture and showcase culture and creative talent.

These creatives have much to celebrate beyond business and trade, making waves with their iconic performances and thought-provoking narratives.

“Celebrating the contribution of the Asian diaspora in the North of England is electrifying, discovering and celebrating the hidden gems who make priceless contributions to the North. I am incredibly inspired and humbled to be contributing to the process of judging for the Northern Asian Powerlist.”

Muzahid Khan DL

Overall Winner	Shanaz Gulzar, Artist
North East	• Dr. Hari Shukla CBE, Campaigner • Tahmina Begum, Founder, Tahmina Arts • Vikas Kumar MBE, Founder and Director, Gemarts
North West	• Qasim Akhtar, Actor • Saqib Mahmood, Cricketer, Lancashire Cricket Club • Sunetra Sarker, Actress
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Anita Rani, Journalist and Broadcaster • Aqib Khan, Actor

“I am delighted to be a judge for the Cultural Icons category of this year’s Northern Asian Powerlist. This is a really important initiative celebrating Asian talent and influence in the North of England, and the contribution these individuals make to the cultural fabric of our communities. I am very pleased that I am able to support these awards.”

Helen Featherstone

“It is an absolute honour to be part of this great initiative. It is important to recognise and celebrate the people making a real difference to the communities they live in. I have always been incredibly impressed with the wealth of Asian talent in the North of England and proud of the impact they have made in culture, enterprise and education. I look forward to being inspired by these great people who will help truly shape the North as a powerhouse of talent and enterprise.”

Khalid Saifullah MBE DL





Pioneer Profile: Ikram Butt

In August 1990, Ikram Butt started his professional rugby career in England for Featherstone Rovers. He played five excellent seasons for Featherstone and in his fifth season, he would be presented with his first cap for England.

In 1995, Ikram made history by becoming the first British Muslim to represent England at either code of rugby, dispelling the myth that physical sports do not appeal to those of Asian heritage. While being a captain on the field, since retiring from professional rugby, he has gone on to be an even greater leader, becoming a widely known, highly praised and greatly admired community figurehead and charity ambassador.

Ikram has risen to become an iconic role model on the international stage, especially in the Asian and Muslim community, inspiring a generation of young people to overcome prejudice and pursue their dreams. After retiring from rugby, Ikram set up the British Asian Rugby Association (BARA) in 2004. The aim of BARA is to encourage more young people, particularly Asians, to participate in sport and benefit from the values it instills. As a result of its success, he has become a regular visitor to the House of Commons, a pioneer of development work in the UK and abroad, and is recognised as one of the most influential Asian role models in the country.

In 2011, Ikram was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Leeds Beckett University and in 2016 was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Bradford College. He has been acknowledged at the British Muslim Honours ceremony at the House of Lords, and has won The Muslim News Awards and the Power 100 Awards, to name a few.



Message From Ammar Mirza CBE

It is a true privilege and honour to be asked to support the judging of the prestigious awards. Having been a previous finalist, I know firsthand the immense and significant impact of the Asian community from across the North of England.

This is, without a doubt, a major challenge to single someone out, out of so many wonder men and women who are challenging the status quo and transforming lives and livelihoods. Sharon Jandu is THE Northern Powerhouse and we should all be so very grateful to Sharon for shining a light on so many worthy people, while remaining in the shadows.

Well done to the whole Northern Asian Powerlist team and supporters for helping make the magic happen!

Ammar Mirza CBE

Private Sector Board Member, Chair of Business Growth Board

North East Local Enterprise Partnership



Pioneer Profile: Khalid Pervaiz

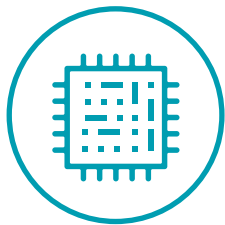
Mr Khalid Pervaiz was born in Pakistan on 1 April 1954. He moved to the UK in 1962, following his own father who had moved in 1957, settling first in Ravensthorpe. He had a good education at Ossett High School and Dewsbury College, and gained an AIT in textiles

His first job was at a wool mill, where he worked in the textiles industry, but he left to begin driving taxis. He created his own firm and had a few cars and drivers. He then began working with his dad at his grocery shop, which was the first Asian-run shop to provide Halal food, and they delivered to places such as Oldham and Manchester.

After seeing the need for transportation, they moved into the trucking business, and started with just one truck that they grew into a business. After his dad had an accident, Mr. Pervaiz continued to work as a truck driver for another year, before being inspired to begin his own textile company and buying a mill of his own. Mr. Pervaiz started with second-hand machines and sold to local markets, and went from two machines to 12, hitting the limit for the space he had at that time. He then bought another mill, this time in Huddersfield, and had a combined 130 machines.

Throughout this entire journey, Mr. Pervaiz has also been a landlord, and in the 90s, his sons, Saj and Zeb, joined the textile company after earning their places. Mr. Pervaiz then sold the business to his sons, but to this day remains involved and continues to mentor not only his sons, but others as well.

As a child, Mr. Pervaiz faced a lot of racism, but he persevered through with an ideology of "If the person above you can do it, why can't you?" He always pushes himself and those around him to be better, and supports and sustains those he works with. He places high value on education and tells his sons and daughter that "One thing no one can take away from you is your education."



Digital and Technology: Winner and Shortlist

The Digital and Technology category shines a spotlight on the individuals who are riding the technology wave from fintech to artificial intelligence (AI) and blockchain.

Overall Winner	Farooq Hakim DL, Vice President, Strategic Clients & Cloud Transformation, Oracle
North East	• Dr. Ram Senasi, Chairman, Imperial Medical Solutions
North West	• Kam Kothia OBE DL, Chief Executive Officer, E-business UK • Mohammed Hannan, Head of Digital Innovation, Johnson & Johnson • Tahir Mohsan, Founder, Time Computers
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Jag Panesar, Director, Xpand • Tarique Sheikh, Studio Manager, Prime Focus Technologies • Zeshan Sattar, Senior Director of Learning & Skills Certification, CompTIA

"It is an honour to be part of the judging panel for the Digital and Technology category of the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. We had some fantastic nominees in this category who are driving innovation in digital transformation and having a transformative impact on this sector in the UK."

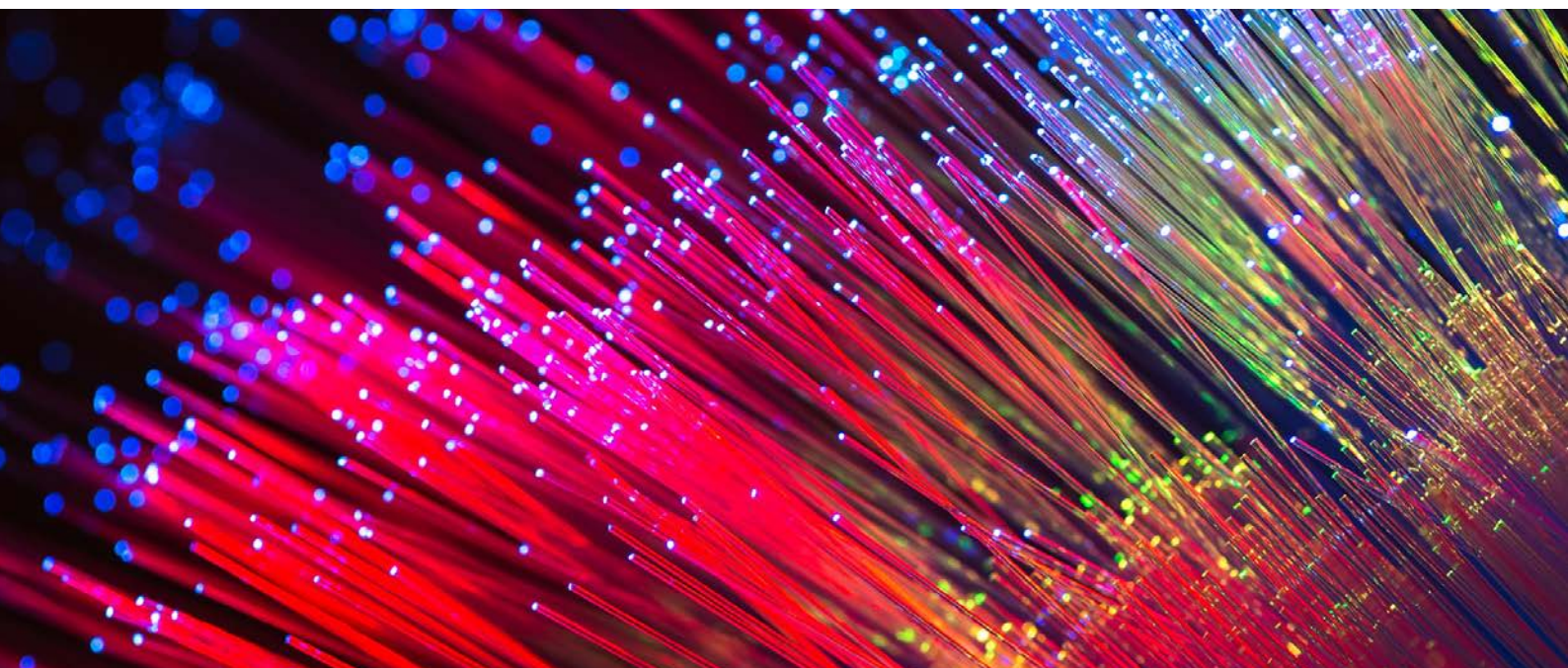
Jennie Holdstock

"I am delighted to be among an illustrious panel of people that hold the exciting yet unenviable challenge of judging some fantastic entries on this list. All deserve recognition in their own right and the calibre of entrants demonstrates that the North of England really has a collective business power."

James Mason

"The Northern Asian Powerlist empowers diversity across a wide range of businesses and is a great way to shine a light on talent across the Asian community. It is a privilege to be on the judging panel for the Digital and Technology award, and to work alongside great influencers in businesses across the North, as well as past winners of the awards."

Furqan Alamgir





Pioneer Profile: Baroness Sayeeda Warsi

Baroness Sayeeda Warsi is the second daughter of five in an immigrant family from Pakistan. Safdar Hussain, her father, is the owner of a bed manufacturing company, with a turnover of £2 million a year. He started life as a mill worker and a bus driver. Sayeeda Warsi used her father's success to inspire and adopted Conservative principles. She decided to become a solicitor for the crown prosecution service, but in 2004 she would leave this role to stand for election to the House of Commons.

This stand would turn out to be unsuccessful. However, this would be the beginning of her journey into politics. On 2 July 2007, Sayeeda Warsi was appointed shadow minister for community cohesion. She was the first Muslim woman to be selected by the Conservatives to run for Parliament. Sayeeda became the youngest member of the House of Lords and received the title Baroness Warsi of Dewsbury.

2010 was an excellent year in politics for her, as she was appointed chairman of the Conservative Party and became a member of the Privy Council and the first Muslim to serve as a British cabinet minister.

In 2012, she advanced in her political journey to become senior minister of state at the Foreign Office, and minister for faith and communities.



Message From Heather Waters

It gives me so much pleasure to contribute to the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 and by doing so help celebrate the vast and varied success stories of Asian businesses across every community in the North of England.

As the UK's leading business bank, NatWest, we strive to remove any barriers to enterprise, with a focus on supporting under-represented groups, using our size, scale and expertise to help entrepreneurs to achieve their ambitions. This is why initiatives such as the Northern Asian Powerlist are so important – and rewarding – for us to be involved in.

This year, NatWest partnered with The Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CREME) for the Time to Change report, which revealed that with the right support, ethnic minority-led businesses could increase their contribution to the UK economy from £25 billion a year to £100 billion.

But we know that for many, starting out is harder than it should be. So, with this in mind, we aim for at least 20% of the places on our 13 nationwide accelerator hubs to be for ethnic minority entrepreneurs and, in 2021, we were thrilled to achieve 26%.

We are excited to see what these young entrepreneurs do next and, hopefully, some may even feature in the Northern Asian Powerlist in years to come.

The Powerlist does not just showcase the incredible impact of the inspirational Asian business and cultural leaders across the North – it is also a chance to hear and celebrate stories of determination, innovation, achievement and success.

By sharing these stories, the Powerlist serves to highlight the huge variety of ways that the Asian community and its business leaders are breaking down barriers and contributing to positive change across the North, both now and for generations to come.

In sectors from the media to technology, architecture and medicine, the Asian community is already making a powerful contribution in every town and city in the North and in the UK. We are honoured to have played a part in the journey so far, and excited to see what lies ahead.

Congratulations to everyone recognised in, and nominated for, the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 – you are all truly inspirational.

Heather Waters

Regional Enterprise Manager, NatWest



Pioneer Profile: Abdul Malik

Abdul Malik arrived in the UK in July 1973, and four years later (aged 16) he started work as an unskilled labourer at Manor Mill. He worked his way up, becoming a supervisor and later a foreman, but after eight years decided to move on to running his own business.

Abdul started with small contracts for minor work, and then progressed to building extensions and houses, before eventually moving onto larger projects. His company built the first Indian purpose-built restaurant in Greater Manchester outside of the Rusholme Curry Mile, The Millon, in Westwood.

From the early 1990s, Abdul became increasingly involved in community affairs as the Bangladeshi community developed, largely focused in Westwood. In 1995, as a prominent businessman and employer in the area, he was asked to become the secretary of the Oldham Bangladeshi Association, and in the same year he was asked to chair the Westwood Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) Board – an £11 million, publicly funded, five-year initiative to revitalise the rundown Westwood area that was hailed as England's most successful SRB area in 1999.

In 2010, he was elected as a councillor for the Coldhurst Ward in Oldham. In 2011, he was elected to chair the District Partnership Board for West Oldham. It was Abdul's business drive that took him from being an unskilled mill worker to being a major influence in Oldham's economic, community and political life.

Today, the Malbro Building Company is run by his sons, but Abdul remains as contracts manager. His main involvement is now outside his business interests with the community.



Emerging Talent (Leaders and Entrepreneurs): Winner and Shortlist

In our Emerging Talent category, we focus on the ones to watch and the next-generation role models across business, commerce or third sector.

We recognise those who have exceeded their initial targets for growth and already show importance within their sector or industry through significant product/service innovation and leadership.

"Absolutely humbled and honoured to be a judge on this great list of candidates. Each candidate, in their own capacity, is a winner, as it takes bucket loads of entrepreneurship, hard work, sweat and tears to even get shortlisted."

Zeb Pervaiz

Emerging Leaders

Overall Winner	Advita Patel, Director, Comms Rebel
North East	• Kainat Javed, Women's Safety in Public Places Project Lead, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria • Sanjee Ratnatunga, Director, Ideas for Change Consulting
North West	• Hasin Amin, Solicitor, Harrison Drury Solicitors
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Kamal Khan, Owner, Beauty Sleep Beds • Sasha Bhat, Head of Commissioning – Mental Wellbeing, NHS Bradford District and Craven Clinical Commissioning Group

"The Northern Asian Powerlist represents a momentous tribute to the capacity, ingenuity and determination inherent within the Asian business community, serving as an uplifting force to the UK economy. Recognising this exceptional talent through these awards reinforces the extraordinary characters who have achieved success despite the many challenges the business community faces. I am extremely honoured to be a judge in this process and I am keen to see these awards have a positive impact on the entire business community, locally, regionally and nationally."

Amir Hussain

"It is an honour to be a judge for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. The North of England's Asian community has much to celebrate, given that it has highly talented members from almost every walk of life. As major parts of the Indian subcontinent usher in the 75th year of Independence this year, this feels to be the right time for this list, and to celebrate and to recognise the tremendous contribution the Asian community in the UK's North has made to Britain."

Shehla Hasan



Emerging Entrepreneur

Overall Winner	Vishay Karia, Founder, Project Student Housing
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Omar Bahadur, CEO and Founder, Faraday Drinks • Habiba Desai, Publishing and Partnerships Director, Fox and Windmill • Harpreet Banwait, Managing Director, Banwait Group Holdings • Radha Kaushal-Bolland, Chef, The Spicy Flexitarian • Sara Razzaq, Submissions Director, Fox and Windmill

"Having been involved with the inaugural Northern Asian Powerlist awards, I was honoured and delighted to be invited to be a judge for this year's awards. The North of England's Asian community displays exceptional talent across diverse sectors of society and business, and it is humbling to be asked to help celebrate its success at a time when the recognition of everyone's contribution is ever more important. I am particularly excited to be involved with the Emerging Entrepreneur category and the opportunity to highlight the growth and leadership being demonstrated within young, innovative businesses."

Steve Bennett

"I proudly represented the North in 2020, winning the inaugural Emerging Entrepreneur award. It is my absolute honour to be one of the judges for this year, in helping to discover the next emerging talent. It is vital to recognise rising stars to nurture and support their ambitions by providing a network of influential connections that NAP and YABA have been instrumental in developing."

Sonya Bachra-Byrne

"It is great for the Federation of Small Businesses to be involved in these awards. I am so pleased to be able to join this celebration and recognition of these brilliant businesses that make such an important contribution to towns, cities and communities in the North of England."

Barney Mynott

"YABA is an extraordinary organisation whereby the company provides the platform to celebrate the achievements of past, present and future Asian businessmen and women. I have been a panel judge in 2020 and now in 2022 for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. I have been impressed with the diversity of businesses' innovation and our emerging entrepreneurs' ambition across the Yorkshire region. The nominations have been outstanding, and it has been very difficult to choose an outright winner. May I congratulate those nominated, and share with them and YABA how privileged, honoured and inspired I am to be part of the voting this year. I wish everyone involved with the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 the best and hope this event continues and the YABA brand and this prestigious event grow yearly."

Milton Brown





Pioneer Profile: Mohammed Ashraf

Mohammed Ashraf was a qualified telephone engineer working in Pakistan, before moving to Oldham in 1968 following his arranged marriage. His first home was a rented bedroom and shared kitchen in Cheetham, Manchester.

He began working with unskilled labouring on night shifts in a factory, but as his spoken English improved, Mohammed was able to find skilled work with the General Post Office to continue his trade as a telephone engineer, which was daytime work and better paid. He was able to study television engineering at evening classes, and after four years he started working for companies in Oldham and Rochdale undertaking TV repair and then video repair. He had 18 years of electronic engineering experience by 1984, when he decided to start his own business.

With the help of the £40 a week Enterprise Allowance scheme, he set up Video Direct, which was advertised through the Oldham Chronicle. Mohammed's business was one of the first Asian businesses to serve local white customers, not solely the Asian community. By 1999, he had disposed of Video Direct and established Mobile Direct, one of the earliest mobile phone suppliers and retailers in the area. In 2005, Mohammed sold Mobile Direct to go into semi-retirement.

His businesses were among the first "mainstream" Asian businesses, and Mobile Direct was one of the first Asian businesses to join the Oldham Chamber of Commerce in 1996.

Asian businesses asked to set up their own section, but were urged to use the existing Chamber services. Many Asian businesses did not like to come into the Chamber offices and speak only English, which led to the setting up of an Asian Business Association (ABA) office with an Asian advisor.

ABA was for Asian people who wanted to start a business. They would come to the ABA for advice on where to get loans, where to get stock and how to start a business. ABA helped a lot of people to start their own businesses – lots of businesses starting and doing very well.



Message From Karen French

Having been part of the project since its inception and judging the inaugural Powerlist, seeing such a vast range of talent vying for a place in the 2022 Powerlist is just phenomenal. It is genuinely a humble experience to be asked to be a judge again and to be a patron to this highly regarded project.

In particular, the Food and Drink category was a hotly contested category with such fabulous businesses and people working in this sector across the whole of the North of England. Despite such challenging times, we are seeing great effort, hard work, innovation and ideas in this space.

Karen French

Partner, Squire Patton Boggs



Food and Drink: Winner and Shortlist

The Food and Drink category showcases the individuals who champion the food and drink sector.

Overall Winner	Mahboob Hussain, CEO, Icestone Gelato
North East	• Nagma Ebanks Beni, Commercial Director, Prima Cheese • Shah Choudhry, Director, Zeera Indian Cuisine
North West	• Nisha Katona MBE, Founder, Mowgli Street Food • Tahera Patel, Founder, Tayybah Bakery • Yaqoob Patel, Founder, Tayybah Bakery
Yorkshire and Humber	• Dr. Amjad Pervez, Owner, Seafresh Adams • Harpreet Kaur, Co-Founder, Oh So Yum

"I am really excited and honoured to be part of the judging panel for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. It is amazing to see so many successful Asian businesses not only thriving, but also making a real difference to the local community. The food and drink industry in the North East has experienced a huge change in the last few years, but has adapted to meet the new challenges head on. This shows just what can be achieved in these hard times and demonstrates real determination, knowledge, skills and business experience."

Mohammed Ishaq MBE

"It is truly an honour to be a judge for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. I am delighted to be part of this process, and it is great to hear about all the hard work going on in the North!"

Younis Chaudhry





Message From Lee-J Walker

Since its conception, *TheBusinessDesk.com* and I have been proud supporters and partners of the Northern Asian Powerlist. With a long-standing relationship with Sharon and the Yorkshire Asian Business Association, we know that championing Asian businesses in the North and supporting diversity and inclusion only makes for a better and stronger Northern business community.

I personally enjoyed judging and seeing the great entrepreneurship and business acumen of the shortlists, and we look forward to seeing extensive coverage across the well-read *TheBusinessDesk.com* Yorkshire & North West emails and pages. Best of luck to all and a special thank you to Sharon for leading this.

Lee-J Walker

Managing Director Co-Owner, TheBusinessDesk.com



Inspiring Professionals: Winner and Shortlist

The Inspiring Professionals category shines a light on the Northern Powerhouse role models in the workplace who inspire the next generation of professional talent.

Overall Winner	Dr. Zahid Chauhan OBE, Founder, Homeless Friendly
North East	• Aman Sehgal, Solicitor, Aman Sehgal Legal • Anu Kaura, Head of Legal and Group In-House-Lawyer, Malhotra Group • Colonel Ben Banerjee, Consultant Vascular Surgeon, South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
North West	• Dr. Sumona Mukhuty, Principal Lecturer, Manchester Metropolitan University • Srosh Khan, Journalist, BBC
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Harleen Kaur, Martial Artist Champion and Founder of Club Ekta CIC • Kash Rafiq, Principal, Moor End Academy • Natasha Nauth, Director, NatWest • Asma Iqbal, Partner, Chadwick Lawrence

"It is an honour to be the chair of the Inspiring Professionals judging panel for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. It is so important to recognise, highlight and celebrate British Asian excellence in the Northern Powerhouse!"

Kashif Ashraf

"This will be my first time judging for the Northern Asian Powerlist and I am really looking forward to reading the shortlist for inspiring professionals. I am sure it will be a very difficult pick for the winner."

Alex Golledge

"I am so delighted to be a judge for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. Winning the cultural award on behalf of Bradford Literature Festival in 2020 meant a huge amount and I am so pleased to be returning this year to contribute to such a fantastic judging panel celebrating Asian businesses from across the region."

Syima Aslam

"Having been previously showcased in the Northern Asian Powerlist 2020, I am honoured to now be part of the judging panel, and look forward to reviewing all of the excellent nominees."

Munir Mamujee MBE





Pioneer Profile: Raja Mohammed Mushtaq Ahmed

At the age of 22, Raja Mohammed Mushtaq Ahmed was living in the Punjab region of Pakistan. Having heard about the fortunes to be earned in England, his mother withdrew the payment of a 2,500 rupee security bond for permission to travel and 1,818 rupees for air fare from the family's life savings, and such was her power that, as an obedient son, Raja had no option but to leave his wife and obey.

He arrived in England in August 1961, before finding his way to a compatriot from his hometown living in Whalley Range. He shared a three-bedroom house with 21 others from his hometown who had moved to England. His first job was in the card room at Durban Mill, Hollinwood, but he was soon laid off. Raja spoke enough English to get a labourer's job on a site in Droylsden. Several building site jobs followed, but this work dried up.

While searching for work, he persisted in calling into the largest cotton mill in the area, the Ashton Brothers mill in Hyde. After hearing nothing back, he staged a sit-in at the works reception, demanding to see the manager, which led to the job of trainee spinner. After learning the trade and switching to night shift work for an extra pound a week, Raja ended up at Wellington Mill in Greenfield, Saddleworth, in June 1963. He was eventually able to afford a place with his wife and daughter. He settled quickly into his new trade as a wool spinner. After eight months, he was offered the post of foreman of the winding night shift department that employed a mixed workforce of Asian and English people.

It was his language skills that helped Raja to progress his career in textiles. Raja was in demand to liaise between Asian and English workers in other mills. Promotion to management positions followed. In 1969, the Oldham Pakistani Community Council was established, reflecting the growth and development of the Asian community in Oldham and its need for representation. Raja was elected the first president, meaning Raja was in demand to translate and liaise on behalf of non-English speaking immigrants. Raja's exceptional communication proved monumental in solving a 1970 murder, which led him to be set up on a formal basis and with a professional fee structure that acted as a building block for the Greater Manchester Police interpreter service.



Message From Philip JJ Turnbull

It has been an honour and a privilege to represent the Association of International Accountants (AIA) as a member of the judging panel for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022.

AIA is passionate about highlighting the business activities, initiatives and opportunities within the region and as part of this, we believe that it is crucial to recognise, value and celebrate those outstanding culturally diverse individuals within the business and finance industry who play such an integral role in the economic success for North of England business.

The past 24 months have been like no other, with unprecedented challenges on a global scale, so it is refreshing that the Northern Asian Powerlist allows us the opportunity to take a step back, albeit for a short period, and shine a light on the diverse array of exceptional and inspirational leaders who have played, and continue to play, a key role in financially guiding the Asian business community through these turbulent times.

Congratulations not only to the deserving award winners, but also to everyone who has been nominated. You truly do inspire the next generation of business professionals with your commitment and ongoing pursuit of excellence.

Philip JJ Turnbull

Chief Executive, Association of International Accountants



Politics and Diplomacy: Winner and Shortlist

The Politics and Diplomacy category celebrates the movers and shakers who shine in the field of politics and diplomacy.

These are some of the most energetic and dynamic individuals representing strategic relations in the political arena. These can be people who are well known or those who work quietly behind the scenes.

Overall Winner	Councillor Salma Arif, Leeds City Council
North East	• Councillor Habib Rahman, Newcastle Labour Party • Councillor Nirmal Sehgal, Ponteland Town Council
North West	• Afzal Khan, Labour MP for Manchester, Gorton • Pasha Shah OBE, Assistant Director at Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Local Government
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Naz Shah, MP for Bradford West and Shadow Minister for Crime Reduction

"It is an honour to be a judge for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 and to recognise the most influential people of Asian heritage from the North who have made a real difference to our diverse communities. This is a place where businesses continue to thrive, boosting the UK economy and productivity. The vast range of experiences, skills and talent we have from across the North and beyond is incredible and deserves to take the spotlight."

Mo Isap

"I am honoured to have been chosen to be on the judging panel for Politics and Diplomacy. There is so much taking place quietly behind the scenes that we rarely get to hear about, as we got to see. We had some excellent nominations to choose from and it was a tough call. We realised it is not just about whose name is out there most or who we think is powerful. Every one of those nominated has an amazing track record of success."

Ranjana Bell MBE





Pioneer Profile: Salim Yusuf Mirza

Mrs. Salim Yusuf Mirza arrived in the UK in the late 1950s and single-handedly built herself a property portfolio while simultaneously working 18-hour days and raising six children on her own.

Throughout her life, she showed grit and determination and even when her whole property portfolio was lost through compulsory purchase orders after the housing market crashed in the early 1990s, not long after she had managed to pay all of her properties off, she refused to give up. She went on to work tirelessly to do exactly the same, building a further property portfolio.

Throughout her entire life, she supported and led local women's groups to improve the lives of all, and represented illiterate Asian females. She also provided career advice and support to young Asian females, and taught local women how to sew and gain independence. Salim was a tireless champion of the Asian female community, and supported a number of Asian females across Tyne & Wear, at a time when Asian females were not offered the same respect or opportunities as they are now. Whenever she could, she donated and supported local communities, and never gave up. Her inspirational life and journey is what enabled her son, Ammar Mirza CBE, to reach the heights he has and become the person he is today.



Message From Dr. Joanna Berry

I am honoured and humbled to be asked to participate again in this important and high-profile event. Every day, I go to work in a diverse, international community of scholars and students, and I know how important it is to highlight and applaud the efforts of those who strive to raise the bar, every year, standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before. It is not always easy to find some of these hidden gems.

We know, in the North East, that “shy bairns get nowt”, but that does not stop some of our community from hiding their light under buckets of bushels! But we also know how to celebrate and I was delighted to judge the category of Social Changemakers – the category of Social Changemakers – the person who has really dug deep in themselves, and for their community, to make a significant, lasting and meaningful difference.

Dr. Joanna Berry

Associate Professor (Entrepreneurship), Durham University Business School



Social Changemakers: Winner and Shortlist

Overall Winner	Naz Kazmi, Chief Executive, Keighley Association Women and Children's Centre
North East	- Nadeem Ahmad, Regional Partnerships Manager, North East Strategic Migration Partnership - Yasmin Khan, Director, Halo Project
North West	Anwar Ali OBE, Co-founder and MD, Upturn Enterprise
Yorkshire and the Humber	- Azim Kidwai, CEO, Mercy Mission - Farrah Qureshi, CEO, Global Diversity Practice - Halima Khan, Area Director, Street Games Yorkshire

"It is an honour to be a judge for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 and to recognise the most influential people of Asian heritage from the North who have made a real difference to our diverse communities. This is a place where businesses continue to thrive, boosting the UK economy and productivity. The vast range of experiences, skills and talent we have from across the North and beyond is incredible and deserves to take the spotlight."

Kate Hainsworth

"I am delighted to be a judge for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022. The award is about recognition and celebration of the brilliant achievements and contribution that showcases the Asian community's enormous talent for doing brilliant things across the North of England. The entries this year are of a very high standard, which has made the judging difficult, but what it demonstrates is the level of talent within the Asian community in the North of England."

Paul Brown





Pioneer Profile: Veena Soni DL

Veena Soni DL arrived in England in the 1960s, after a three-week boat journey from India with her mother and no knowledge of the English language and culture. She eventually became a teacher, always aiming to ensure all of the children had opportunity, confidence and support to reach their full potential. She set up learning programmes for mothers, as she felt they spent more time with their children. However, in many cases, they often felt they were not capable of supporting their children.

For Veena, education has always been about the whole family as opposed to just the child, and the programmes she developed have helped thousands of people. She has a passion for supporting international and intercultural opportunities for children and young people, and actively supports links and exchanges for children and young people, and school partnerships globally.

Veena is director of EAL and Diversity Solutions and delivers training, leads on British Council projects and is a specialist in equality, diversity and community relations, as well as working strategically across local and central government and in partnerships to promote change and inform future policy and decision-making.

Over her career, spanning 35 years, she has advised, guided and supported so many people and established great connections with diverse cultural and faith communities and organisations in Newcastle and the North East.



Message From Leeds Beckett University

We are proud to be sponsors of the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 – and honoured to celebrate the achievements of all the winners and shortlisted nominees. The Asian community makes an exceptional contribution to Yorkshire and the North – and it is exciting to play a part in this second Powerlist, which continues to showcase the extent and value of this contribution.

From politics to culture, technology to food and drink, entrepreneurialism to social change, this report is testament to the outstanding impact the Asian community is having across the North. At Leeds Beckett University, we are proud of our northern location and we pride ourselves on being an anchor institution for the city and for Yorkshire, driving economic growth and supporting business success.

We are delighted to celebrate the achievements of everyone on the Northern Asian Powerlist – each nominee is a role model for our students, staff and business community, helping us to raise the aspirations of our students and show them the standard of opportunities available to them here in the North.

I was delighted to have the opportunity to chair the judging panel for the Thought Leaders category – innovative thinking and collaborative working is central to all that we do at Leeds Beckett University and all of our shortlisted candidates are outstanding examples of how these can be used to achieve brilliant things. Congratulations to everyone named in the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022!

Canon Simon Baldwin

Associate Director for Knowledge Exchange, Leeds Beckett University



Thought Leaders: Winner and Shortlist

The Thought Leaders category recognises those for whom an innovative way of thinking is the norm.

From academia and healthcare to policy and innovation, these thought leaders have been championing closer collaborations through their relentless research and commitments.

Overall Winner	Zoë Hingston, Head of Inclusion, Newcastle United Football Club
North East	• Dr. Hari Shukla MBE, Equality Campaigner and Humanitarian • Vasant Oswal, Emeritus Consultant Otolaryngologist H&N Surgeon, James Cook University Hospital UK
North West	• Amjed Khan, British Medical Association • Dr. Nighat Awan OBE, Chief Executive, Shere Khan Group • Dr. Ayaz Bhuta MBE PLY, GB Wheelchair Rugby Athlete and 2x Paralympian • Noushin Hussain, Chairperson, AAWAZ Womens Charity
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Noushin Raja, Founder and CEO, Moonlight Trust • Sharena Lee Satti, Poet • Rashik Parmar, MBE, Leeds Enterprise Partnership Board Member

"Now more than ever, we need to recognise the immense contribution made by people of colour and these awards do just that."

Nazir Afzal OBE

"I am honoured to be part of the judging team. It is important to identify and honour those leading the way as thought leaders, doing as well as thinking, and creating a difference. We need more role models so that those coming up behind can see how they too can take risks, come out of their comfort zone and make a difference."

Paula Grizzard





Pioneer Profile: Akhtar Zahid

In 1967, Akhtar Zahid (aged 20) was sent to England to find a better life. He had received a basic education in Pakistan, including five years of English language study, but this only provided a very limited understanding of English as it was spoken in Oldham. Akhtar shared a two-bedroom house with seven other men, sleeping in shifts and using the public baths.

After two years of unskilled work, mostly spent on night shifts (at a chrome-plating factory, cotton spinning at Rome Mill, and foam-cutting at Vitafoam in Middleton), Akhtar successfully applied for a job with Oldham Corporation Transport, working as a bus conductor or driver. He earned £16 a week, working 40 hours, but with overtime he could earn as much as £23 a week. By living frugally, he was able to regularly send money back to his family in Pakistan and eventually buy his first house on Manchester Road, Oldham.

As the years passed, Akhtar started to save up his annual holidays so that he could return to Pakistan. It was during a visit in 1976 that Akhtar's life changed direction again. At that time, bus driving in Pakistan was seen as a low-status job and his father had ambitions beyond bus driving for his son, challenging him to take up a higher-skilled trade. Akhtar returned to Oldham in 1977, driving buses and earning about £100 per week with lots of overtime.

In 1978, now married with a child, he resigned from the buses and spent six months working for free and studying part time for qualifications to become a car mechanic. Once qualified, he took up work as a mechanic with a Manchester motor dealer, but after nine months he spotted an opportunity and left to start his own business. By the 1990s, A & S motors was a thriving car repair business with a second garage in Hollinwood and the A & S Motor Factors car parts supplier on Manchester Road.

Today, three of his sons run the garages and motor factor shop, and his other children, now grown up, work as an accountant, a solicitor, a pharmacist, an interpreter and a social worker. Akhtar is very aware of how far he has come since leaving Pakistan.



Women in Business: Winner and Shortlist

Celebrating the women behind the headlines at some of the most prominent and high-achieving companies, and those who own and run successful businesses.

Overall Winner	Nisha Katona MBE, Founder, Mowgli Street Food
North East	• Ponchi Kantt-Neaz, Commercial Director, Fujifilm • Anu Kaura, Head of Legal and Group In-House-Lawyer, Malhotra Group • Shareen Qureshi, Founder, SportsTech Global Conference
North West	• Kavita Basi, Founder and CEO, Ration.L • Tasnim Khalid, Managing Partner, Private Client Solicitors
Yorkshire and the Humber	• Fatima Khan Shah, Associate Director, Long Term Conditions and Personalisation, West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership • Fatima Patel, Managing Editor, Asian Sunday • Sarah Khan-Bashir MBE, Founder and Solicitor, SKB Law

"I was honoured to win the Women in Business category at the inaugural Northern Asian Powerlist 2020. It is now a pleasure to be able to shine the spotlight of these awards on another woman within this community who is representing and continuing to forge a path for those yet to come. Growing up, I craved role models that I could relate to, so now to be supporting and promoting such an important message is very close to my heart. Generations to come will see successful admirable individuals that they can also relate to thanks to the voice of these awards."

Karina Jadhav

"It is a privilege to once again be invited to act as a judge on the Northern Asian Powerlist. The standard of the submissions last year was incredible. I am so excited to review the nominations in the category of Women in Business, as there are remarkable women achieving great things across all sectors."

Lt Col Andy Black

"I am delighted to again support this amazing campaign to unearth role models from across the North in the Northern Asian Powerlist. The more we can shine a light on individuals using their power and influence for good, the better."

Simone Roche MBE



Northern Asian Powergroup 2022 Highlights

Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 Programme Launch

In March, we held our official programme launch event for the Northern Asian Powerlist 2022 at the House of Lords. We loved having this event, which was hosted by Baroness Warsi, and featured guest presentations from Lord Karan Bilimoria CBE DL, Lord Ranger CBE, Sir Roger Marsh OBE DL, Rt Hon Jake Berry MP, Ammar Mirza CBE, Sonya Bachra-Byrne and Karen French.

International Women's Day Global Women

On the same day in March, we also hosted the Celebrating International Women's Day Global Women – Global Trade UK, Northern Powerhouse and the Commonwealth Roundtable. It was an educational and enlightening discussion hosted by Lord Ranger and moderated by Fleur Butler, CWO Chairman.

A huge thanks to all those who were part of the panel:

- Gaitri Isser Kumar, HE High Commissioner for India (now former)
- Mrs. Saroja Sirisena, HE High Commissioner for Sri Lanka
- Ms. Saida Muna Tasneem, HE High Commissioner for Bangladesh

We were also joined by Nicola Chance-Thompson DL, CEO of The Piece Hall, Dr. Roopinder Oberoi from the University of Delhi and Devapriya Khanna, the Founder of Connexus. Closing remarks came from the former Secretary of State for International Trade, the Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP.

Northern Asian Power Policy Think Tank Launch

In July, we hosted the Powering up the North, Northern Asian Power Policy Think Tank launch meeting at the House of Lords, where we brought together leading experts to discuss this topic of vital importance. This inspiring conversation was chaired by Lord Rami Ranger CBE FRSA, with panel speakers Ammar Mirza CBE, Sharon Kaur Jandu, Karina Jadhav and Naveen Ahmed inputting their views. A special thanks to Karen French for the closing thoughts and Squire Patton Boggs for sponsoring this lovely event.

We are grateful to Paul Scully, the Minister for Levelling Up, for his attendance and inspiring words. We were delighted to see all who attended and took part in this enlightening roundtable discussion, including Younis Chaudhry, Simone Roche MBE, Daniela Douse, Jennie Holdstock, Tony Lloyd, David Potts MICA, Heather Waters, Smruti Patel, Mohammed Hussain, Lisa Pearmain, Bethany Featley and Ronan Scott.



Meet Our Judging Panel

Our independent judging panel had the unenviable task of deciding who made the Northern Asian Powerlist from over 250 entries. The judges based their decisions on leadership, innovation, impact, success and community contribution.

Name	Role and Organisation	Category
Alex Golledge	Agent, Yorkshire & The Humber, Bank of England	Inspiring Professionals
Amir Hussain	Chief Executive, Yeme Architects	Emerging Talent
Ammar Mirza CBE	Chair of Asian Business Connexions, SME CoFE Group & Northeast LEP Business Growth Board and Hon. Col. 101 Regiment RA	Digital and Technology
Asghar Ali	CEO, MyLahore (British Asian Kitchen)	Food and Drink
Barney Mynott	Development Manager, Federation of Small Businesses	Emerging Entrepreneur
Canon Simon Baldwin	Associate Director for Knowledge Exchange, Leeds Beckett University	Thought Leaders
Daniela Douse	Business Development Manager, Squire Patton Boggs	Emerging Talent
Dr. Joanna Berry	Director, Business, Innovation and Enterprise: Durham Energy Institute, & Associate Professor (Entrepreneurship), University of Durham	Social Changemakers
Fatima Patel	Managing Director, RF Media & Publishing Ltd	Social Changemakers
Furqan Alamgir	Founder and Chief Executive, Connexin	Digital and Technology
Gill Laidler	Managing Director and Editor, TopicUK Magazine & Yorkshire Businesswoman	Politics and Diplomacy
Heather Waters	Regional Ecosystem Manager, NatWest Business	Women in Business
Helen Featherstone	Executive Director, Yorkshire Sculpture Park	Cultural Icons
James Mason	CEO, West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce	Digital and Technology
Jason Longhurst	Chair, UK Business Council for Sustainable Development	Business Leaders
Jennie Holdstock	International Markets Development Manager, West Yorkshire Combined Authority	Digital and Technology
Karen French	Partner, Squire Patton Boggs	Food and Drink
Karina Jadhav	Managing Director of Menagerie Restaurant	Women in Business
Kashif Ashraf	Founder, Asian Business Leaders	Inspiring Professionals
Kate Hainsworth	CEO, Leeds Community Foundation	Social Changemakers
Khalid Saifullah MBE DL	Managing Director, Star Tissue UK Ltd	Cultural Icons
Kully Thiarai	Creative Director, Leeds 2023	Cultural Icons
Lee-J Walker	Joint Managing Director, TheBusinessDesk.com	Thought Leaders
Lt Col Andy Black	Senior Engagement Officer at MOD 4 Infantry Brigade and HQ	Women in Business
Milton Brown	Chief Executive, Kirklees Local TV	Emerging Entrepreneur
Mo Isap	Founder & CEO, IN4 Group	Politics and Diplomacy
Mohammed Ishaq MBE	Managing Director, Punjab Kitchen	Food and Drink
Munir Mamujee MBE	International Education Recruitment	Inspiring Professionals
Muzahid Khan DL	Founder, Asian Business Leaders	Cultural Icons
Nazir Afzal OBE	Former Chief Crown Prosecutor for Northwest England	Thought Leaders

Name	Role and Organisation	Category
Nicola Chance-Thompson DL	Chief Executive, The Piece Hall Trust	Business Leaders
Paul Brown	Director, Government & Public Sector at EY	Social Changemakers
Paula Grizzard	Founder, SheBusiness	Thought Leaders
Philip J J Turnbull	Chief Executive, Association of International Accountants (AIA)	Politics and Diplomacy
Ranjana Bell MBE	Director, rba Equality and Diversity Equality and Diversity	Politics and Diplomacy
Shehla Hasan	Executive Director, Manchester India Partnership	Emerging Talent
Simon Arora	Chief Executive, Officer of B&M Group	Business Leaders
Simone Roche MBE	Founder & CEO, Northern Power Women	Women in Business
Sir Roger Marsh OBE DL	Chair, NP11, and The Piece Hall Trust	Business Leaders
Sonya Bachra-Byrne	Co-Founder and Creative Director, AVIE	Emerging Entrepreneur
Steve Bennett	Founder and MD, Business of Science	Emerging Entrepreneur
Syima Aslam	Managing Director and Artistic Director, Bradford Literature Festival	Inspiring Professionals
Younis Chaudhry	Owner, Regal Food Products Plc	Food and Drink
Zeb Pervaiz	Managing Director, SKA Textiles Ltd	Emerging Talent

Comprehensive Northern Asian Powerlist

Name	Title and Organisation	Category	Location
Advita Patel	Director, Comms Rebel	Emerging Talent: Leaders	North West
Afzal Khan	Labour MP for Manchester, Gorton	Politics and Diplomacy	North West
Aman Sehgal	Solicitor, Aman Sehgal Legal	Inspiring Professionals	North East
Amjed Khan	Consultant Cardiologist, British Medical Association	Thought Leaders	North West
Anita Rani	Journalist and Broadcaster, BBC	Cultural Icons	Yorkshire and Humber
Anu Kaura	Head of Legal & Group, In-House Lawyer, Malhotra Group	Inspiring Professionals Women in Business	North East
Anwar Ali OBE	MD, Upturn Enterprise	Social Changemakers	North West
Aqib Khan	Actor	Cultural Icons	Yorkshire and Humber
Asif Ghafoor	CEO, Be.EV. Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, and Co-Founder, Iduna	Business Leaders	North West
Asma Iqbal	Partner, Chadwick Lawrence	Business leaders above inspiring professionals	Yorkshire and Humber
Azim Kidwai	CEO, Mercy Mission	Inspiring Professionals	Yorkshire and Humber
Ben Banerjee	Colonel, Consultant Vascular Surgeon, South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust	Social Changemakers	North East
Bobby Thandi	Founder and CEO, XR Games	Business Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Dr. Amjad Pervez	Owner, Seafresh Adams	Food and Drink	Yorkshire and Humber
Dr. Hari Shukla CBE	GP, Equality Campaigner and Humanitarian	Cultural Icons	North East
Dr. Nighat Awan OBE	Chief Executive, Shere Khan Group	Thought Leaders	North West
Dr. Ram Senasi	Chairman, Imperial Medical Solutions	Digital and Technology	North East
Dr. Sumona Mukhuty	Principal Lecturer, Manchester Metropolitan University	Inspiring Professionals	North West
Dr. Zahid Chauhan OBE	Founder, Homeless Friendly	Inspiring Professionals	North West
Farooq Hakim DL	Vice President, Strategic Clients & Cloud Transformation, Oracle	Digital and Technology	North East
Farrah Qureshi	CEO, Global Diversity Practice	Social Changemakers	North West
Fatima Khan Shah	Associate Director West Yorkshire & Harrogate Health Care Partnership	Women in Business	Yorkshire and Humber
Fatima Patel	Managing Editor, Asian Sunday	Women in Business	Yorkshire and Humber
Habib Rahman	Former Labour Councillor, Labour Party	Politics and Diplomacy	North East
Habiba Desai	Publishing and Partnership Director, Fox and Windmill	Emerging Talent: Entrepreneurs	Yorkshire and Humber
Halima Khan	Area Director Development, Street Games Yorkshire	Social Changemakers	Yorkshire and Humber
Harleen Kaur	Founder Club Ekta CIC, Team Great Britain	Inspiring Professionals	Yorkshire and Humber
Harpreet Banwait	Managing Director, Banwait Group Holdings	Emerging Talent: Entrepreneurs	Yorkshire and Humber
Harpreet Kaur	Co-Founder, Oh So Yum	Food and Drink	Yorkshire and Humber
Hasin Amin	Solicitor, Harrison Drury Solicitors	Emerging Talent: Leaders	North West
Imran Khaliq	Director, Gainford Group	Emerging Talent: Leaders	North East
Jag Panesar	Director, Xpand	Digital and Technology	Yorkshire and Humber
Juwad Nayyar	Director of Business Development, Nayyar Solicitors	Business Leaders	North West
Kainat Javed	Women's Safety in Public Places Project Lead, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria	Emerging Talent: Leaders	North East
Kam Kothia OBE DL	CEO, E-business UK	Digital Technology	North West

Name	Title and Organisation	Category	Location
Kamal Khan	Owner, Beauty Sleep Beds	Emerging Talent: Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Kash Rafiq	Principal, Moor End Academy	Inspiring Professionals	Yorkshire and Humber
Kavita Basi	Founder, SportsTech Global Conference	Women in Business	North West
Mahboob Hussain	CEO, Icestone Gelato	Food and Drink	Yorkshire and Humber
Meenu Malhorta DL	Founder and Chairman, Malhotra Group PLC	Business Leader	North East
Mick Chandsoor	Mayor of West Yorkshire, Bradford 2025	Emerging Talent: Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Mohammed Hannan	Head of Digital Innovation, Johnson & Johnson	Digital Technology	North West
Mohammed Khaliq	Co-founder, Gainford Group	Business Leaders	North East
Nadeem Ahmad	Regional Partnerships Manager, North East Strategic Migration Partnership	Social Changemakers	North East
Nagma Ebanks Beni	Commercial Director, Prima Cheese	Food and Drink	North East
Natasha Nauth	Director, NatWest	Inspiring Professionals	Yorkshire and Humber
Naz Kazmi	Chief Executive, Keighley Association Women and Children's Centre	Social Changemakers	Yorkshire and Humber
Naz Shah	MP, Bradford West and Shadow Minister for Crime Reduction	Politics and Diplomacy	Yorkshire and Humber
Nirmal Sehgal	Councillor, Ponteland Town Council	Politics and Diplomacy	North East
Nisha Katona MBE	Founder, Mowgli Street Food	Food and Drink Women in Business	North West
Noushin Hussain	Chairperson, AAWAZ Womens Charity	Thought Leaders	North West
Noushin Raja	Founder, Moonlight Trust	Thought Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Omar Bahadur	CEO and Founder, Faraday Drinks	Emerging Talent: Entrepreneurs	Yorkshire and Humber
Pasha Shah OBE	Assistant Director, Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Local Government	Politics and Diplomacy	North West
Ponchi Kantt-Neaz	Commercial Director, Fujifilm	Women in Business	North East
Qasim Akhtar	Actor	Cultural Icons	North West
Radha Kaushal-Bolland	Chef, The Spicy Flexitarian	Emerging Talent: Entrepreneurs	Yorkshire and Humber
Rashik Parmar MBE	Board Member, Leeds Enterprise Partnership	Thought Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Salma Arif	Councillor, Leeds Council	Politics and Diplomacy	Yorkshire and Humber
Sandy Chadha	Managing Director, Supreme PLC	Business Leaders	North West
Sanjee Ratnatunga	Founder and Director, Ideas for change consulting	Emerging Talent: Leaders	North East
Saqib Mahmood	Cricketer, Lancashire Cricket Club	Cultural Icons	North West
Sara Razzaq	Submissions Director, Fox and Windmill	Emerging Talent: Entrepreneurs	Yorkshire and Humber
Sarah Khan-Bashir MBE	Founder and Solicitor, SKB Law	Women in Business	Yorkshire and Humber
Sasha Bhat	Head of Commissioning – Mental Wellbeing, NHS Bradford District and Craven Clinical Commissioning Group	Emerging Talent: Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Shah Choudhry	Director, Zeera Indian Cuisine	Food and Drink	North East
Shanaz Gulzar	Artist	Cultural Icons	Yorkshire and Humber
Shareen Qureshi	Founder Sports, Tech Global Conference	Women in Business	North East
Sharena Lee Satti	Poet	Thought Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Srosh Khan	Producer/Researcher, BBC	Inspiring Professionals	North West
Sunetra Sarker	Actress	Cultural Icons	North West
Susan Khaliq	Co-founder, Gainford Group	Business Leaders	North East
Tahera Patel	Founder, Tayybah Bakery	Food and Drink	North West

Name	Title and Organisation	Category	Location
Tahir Mohsan	Founder, Time Computers	Digital and Technology	North West
Tahmina Begum	Founder, Tahmina Arts	Cultural Icons	North East
Tarique Sheikh	Studio Manager, Prime Focus Technologies	Digital Technology	Yorkshire and Humber
Tarun Sehgal	Founder & MD, Shell Franchisee/Fuel Convenience Retail Ltd	Business Leaders	North East
Tasnim Khalid	Managing Partner, Private Client Solicitors	Women in Business	North West
Vasant Oswal	Emeritus Consultant Otolaryngologist and Head and Neck surgeon, James Cook University Hospital	Thought Leaders	North East
Veena Soni DL BEM	Director of EAL, Diversity Solutions	Business Leaders	Yorkshire and Humber
Vikas Kumar MBE	Founder and Director, Gemarts	Cultural Icons	North East
Vishay Karia	Founder, Project Student Housing	Emerging Talent: Entrepreneurs	North East
Yaqoob Patel	Founder, Tayybah Bakery	Food and Drink	North West
Yasmin Khan	Director, Halo Project	Social Changemakers	North East
Zeshan Sattar	Senior Director of Learning & Skills Certification, CompTIA	Digital and Technology	Yorkshire and Humber
Zoe Hingston	Head of Inclusion, Newcastle United Football Club	Thought Leaders	North East

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POWERLIST