Stanford

Zoha Zahid Fazal

Visiting Instructor, Ophthalmology Research/Clinical Trials

Bio

BIO

Zoha Zahid Fazal is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Sepah Lab at Stanford Medicine, where her work advances screening innovation and diagnostic automation for retinal degenerative diseases through cutting-edge research and artificial intelligence–driven tools. During her time at Stanford, she has collaborated across the Spencer Center for Vision Research, the Center for Digital Health, the Center for Artificial Intelligence in Medicine and Imaging, the Ocular Imaging Research & Reading Center, and the Mussallem Center for Biodesign—developing a multidisciplinary skill set at the intersection of medicine, applied coding, and computation.

Previously, as a predoctoral scholar, Zoha worked closely with the Director of the Global Health Dermatology Program at Yale School of Medicine, contributing to global training, research, advocacy, and field-based interventions addressing tropical and culturally contextual dermatologic disease. She also gained clinical and research experience through the Northwestern Medicine Adjunct Dermatology Program, supporting patient care, clinical education, and research in skin-of-color dermatology, autoimmune disease, and complex dermatopathies. Through these roles, she helped establish collaborative research initiatives linking U.S. academic centers with her home medical school in Pakistan.

Zoha earned her medical degree from Aga Khan University, graduating with honors in Community Health Sciences, and is recognized for her leadership and impact in community service. As part of AKU's community education efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, she co-authored and edited 'How Not to Go Viral', a student handbook, over 1,500 copies of which were distributed to libraries across Pakistan. For her contributions to poverty alleviation and pandemic relief efforts, she was awarded the Quadragon Member of the Year Award in 2020. She has also volunteered extensively in flood-relief operations and rural medical camps across Pakistan, experiences that exposed her to the limitations of resource-constrained health systems and paper-based medical records.

Zoha's interest in global health research and big-data analytics began early. She graduated with distinction from Cedar College, majoring in biological sciences and advanced mathematics, and spent formative summers working alongside nursing faculty and public health leaders at the institution that later became her medical school. She has since continued to build technical fluency in healthcare data analytics and research software through self-directed coursework. She served as a global research lead from Pakistan for the COVAD Collaborative, led by the NHS Foundation Trust (UK), where her work focused on patient safety, healthcare quality, and vaccine uptake among individuals with autoimmune diseases. As a medical student, she also led Gates Foundation–sponsored interventional studies aimed at improving maternal, neonatal, and child health outcomes in underserved settings.

Looking ahead, Zoha envisions a career as a clinician-scientist specializing in biomedical informatics. Her long-term goal is to design sustainable, scalable, and context-aware digital health systems for developing nations—systems that are grounded in local resources, cultural realities, and environmental constraints. Through human-centered digital health innovation, she aims to advance equitable, evidence-based care globally.