

How UIU is building a research-driven university

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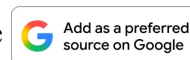
Nishat Tasneem Shahara



UIU has also invested in creating a campus environment that supports learning beyond the classroom. Modern laboratories equipped with simulation software, digital classrooms, open green spaces, student clubs and recreational facilities are designed to encourage creativity and student wellbeing.

As higher education increasingly shifts beyond classroom instruction, United International University (UIU) is positioning itself as a research-intensive institution by investing in advanced laboratories, renewable energy research and collaborative academic initiatives. Through its Institute for Advanced Research (IAR) and Centre for Energy Research (CER), the university has sought to strengthen both faculty and undergraduate student research while addressing national challenges through innovation.

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Established with support from the United Group, IAR has become the university's central platform for research funding and collaboration. Faculty members compete for research grants through a proposal-based system evaluated by experts, while researchers from other institutions are also encouraged to collaborate with UIU. The initiative has helped cultivate a stronger research culture, resulting in more than 150 funded research projects, with around 50 already completed, alongside a significant rise in research publications over recent years. "Our goal is to move towards a more research-oriented university," said Professor Emeritus Dr M. Rezwana Khan, noting that research has become an essential part of academic life at UIU.

Beyond academic publications, the university has also emerged as a key contributor to Bangladesh's renewable energy sector. Since its establishment in 2010, the Centre for Energy Research has worked closely with organisations including the World Bank and IDCOL to promote sustainable energy solutions. The centre has played a leading role in designing grid-connected solar systems across the country while providing consultancy, technical expertise and practical learning opportunities for students interested in renewable energy.

Looking ahead, UIU sees artificial intelligence and emerging technologies reshaping higher education. The university is exploring new approaches to teaching to prepare graduates for the demands of a rapidly changing world. Reflecting on the future of education, Professor Khan emphasised that universities must adapt rather than resist technological change. "Our conventional system will no longer work. It is high time that we rethink our teaching, evaluation and learning systems so they can keep pace with technological advancement," he said. He also calls for greater government support for research in both public and private universities, stressing that investment in research is ultimately an investment in Bangladesh's future.