

# Dr. M. Usman Maqbool Bhutta

POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATE · COMPUTER VISION AND SENSING SYSTEMS (COVISS), ABE, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

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“Do it with passion or not at all!”

## Summary

Dr. M. Usman Maqbool Bhutta is currently a Postdoctoral Associate at the Computer Vision and Sensing Systems (COVISS) lab, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering (ABE), at the University of Florida. His research focuses on long-term place recognition for autonomous systems and spatio-temporal detection and tracking. He received his B.Sc. degree in Mathematics and Physics from Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan. He studied for his M.Phil. in image processing and communication and his M.Sc. in Electronics from the Department of Electronics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan. He received his Ph.D. in Electronic and Computer Engineering from the Robotics and Multi-perception Lab (RAM-LAB) at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), which was ranked 18th in Engineering and Technology in the QS World University Rankings 2020. During his Ph.D. studies, he worked on projects related to place recognition at ETH Zurich. He has published five journal papers in top-tier journals with a combined impact factor of 31.2, as well as numerous conference papers in venues such as ICRA, IROS, CYBER, IDITR, IST, and ICALIP. He received the Best Student Paper Finalist Award at IEEE CYBER 2018 (IEEE Int. Conf. on CYBER Technology in Automation, Control, and Intelligent Systems) in Tianjin, China, in July 2018. He is passionate about research and development and enjoys turning ideas into reality. He has extensive experience in startup ventures and has received several awards. His research interests lie in robotics and AI. As an entrepreneur, he previously served as the co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of Lisee Technology Corporation Limited in Hong Kong, a startup that provided indoor navigation services using visible light communication technology. In May 2018, he won the Best Proposal Audience Award in the Campus Challenge - Transportation at HKUST. His full profile can be visited at: <https://usmanmaqbool.github.io>.

## Work Experience

### Research (Computer Vision Technologies and Robotics System)

#### Computer Vision and Sensing Systems (COVISS) Lab, UF/IFAS, ABE

UF, US.

Postdoctoral Associate

Aug. 2023 - Present

• Supervisor: [Prof. Henry Medeiros](#), Director of Computer Vision and Sensing Systems (COVISS) Lab, University of Florida UF, United States.

##### • Research Projects

**Long-term Visual Place Recognition:** Worked on a graph-based image feature representation to address the dynamic nature of regions. Utilized semantic information for enhanced place recognition.

**Calibration-free Multi-view Detection and Association:** Focused on the importance of occlusion in improving MODA and MODP in multi-view object detection. Implemented attention networks to enable calibration-free optimization of multi-view detection.

**End-to-End Detection, Segmentation, and Tracking:** Aiming to surpass state-of-the-art (SOTA) methods for the MOTs challenge through this project.

• Co-supervised the ABE Robotics team participating in the ASABE Robotics Student Design Competition, 2024, in Anaheim, California.

• Managed project documentation and code versioning, with all projects being trained on the UF HiPerGator.

#### C3 Robotics Laboratory (C3RL), Department of Mechanical and Automation Engineering

CUHK, Hong Kong.

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

May 2021 - Jun. 2023

• Supervisor: [Prof. Darwin Lau](#), Director of C3 Robotics Laboratory (C3RL), The Chinese University of Hong Kong CUHK, Hong Kong.

• **Research** in place recognition, AR/VR and inspection robotics for construction

**Place Recognition:** Working on the light-weight representation of images and making better use of previously trained models.

**AR/VR:** Research in AR/VR Platform design, multi-agent mixed reality, assistive prosthetics for the handicapped persons, teleoperated robots, human-robot interaction.

**Inspection:** Deep learning based research for the robotic presurface inspection for the construction.

• **Multi-agent collaboration:** For indoor vegetation and painting robotics application.

#### Autonomous Systems Lab (ASL)

ETH Zürich, Switzerland.

Academic Guest

Oct. 2019 - Mar. 2020

• Supervisor: [Prof. Roland Siegwart](#), Director of Autonomous Systems Lab (ASL), ETH Zürich, Switzerland.

• Co-Supervisor: [Dr. Cesar Dario Cadena Lerma](#), Senior Researcher at ASL, ETH Zürich, Switzerland.

• **Research in Place Recognition:** I've worked for making the better place recognition for the better scene understanding. Furthermore, I've also introduced light weight representation of key-frames for better channel utilization.

#### Robotics and Multi-Perception Lab, Robotics Institute

HKUST, HK

PhD

Sep 2016 - Feb 2021

• PhD Supervisor: [Prof Ming Liu](#), Director of Robotics and Multi-Perception Lab (RAM-LAB)

• **Research Contributions as First Author**

**Place Recognition:** Our work makes a leap towards hierarchical deep learning-based place recognition for multiagent SLAM systems.

We introduce a probabilistic layer to constrain the local representation along with the global representation of images. The global description of the pre-trained model and the local consistency introduced in our work enables the system to yield good performance at large-scale.

*Development Using:* MATLAB, Python, Jupyter, Nvidia CUDA, Docker, Deep learning, Matconvnet

**Multi-Agent SLAM:** I've produced Loop-box for the multi-Agent Direct SLAM Triggered by Single Loop Closure for Large scale semi dense 3D reconstruction /large-scale structure from motion. This work is accepted for publication in IEEE Transactions on Cybernetics (IF= 11+)..

*Development using:* C++ 11, ROS, OpenCV, OpenGV, Paraview, EVO, UGV, LSD-SLAM, Monocular Camera.

**SLAM:** I've worked mainly for the multi-agent SLAM system. To find the scale difference and excellent relative transformation between difference agents. I've produced **PCR-Pro** work. This work got best student paper finalist award at IEEE-CYBER 2018.

*Development using:* C++ 11, ROS, OpenCV, OpenGV, Paraview, EVO, Monocular Camera, Plotly

**Automation (Inspection):** For smartphone glass inspection, I've introduced **Smart-Inspect** work. This work is accepted in IROS 2020. The patent is also under-review in the US.

*Development using:* Python, Jupyter, Nvidia CUDA, K-Means, Docker, Machine learning (ML)

## Department of Electronics

**QAU, Pakistan**

MPhil

Mar. 2010 - Jun. 2012

- M.Phil. Supervisor: **Prof Hasan Mahmood**, Department of Electronics, QAU.
- **Research in Image Processing (CNN):** I've introduced CNN-based license plate recognition of Pakistani's Cars. This work has been published in IEEE-ICALIP 2014.

## Industry and Entrepreneurship

### Lisee Technology Corporation Limited

**Central, HK**

COO

Jan 2018 - Jan 2021

- Won funding support for company | TSSSU Support HK\$ 300,000 (Jun 19 - May 20).
- Indoor Navigation for Libray using Lisee Technology | PCF Support HK\$ 160,000 (Jun 18 - May 19).

### Friends Corporate Technologies

**Islamabad, PK**

CEO

Feb 2013 - Aug 2015

50+ Projects | Electronics/ Electrical Engineering, R&D, image processing, Web Applications Development, MVC Applications

### Federal Government of Pakistan

**Islamabad, PK**

Scientific Officer

May 2012 - Feb 2013

Electronics/ Electrical Engineering, R&D, image processing

### Server4Sale, LLC

**Islamabad, PK**

PHP Developer

Dec 2009 - Mar 2010

Php web application development for Joomla and Zend frameworks.

## Academic (Teaching)

### Department of Computer Science

**BZU-Sahiwal, Pakistan**

Lecturer (Visiting)

Feb 2016 - Jun 2016

Teaching MCS and BS-CS courses

### Department of Physics

**GPGC Sahiwal, Pakistan**

CTI

Oct. 2015 - May. 2016

Teaching BS physics (Electronics related courses + Labs + Projects)

### Department of Electronics

**QAU, Pakistan**

Instructor

Aug. 2010 - Dec. 2010

'PHP Web Development' (a short course) offered in Department of Electronics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

## Education

### Ph.D. in Robotics and AI at **RAM-LAB, Robotics Institute**

**HKUST, Hong Kong**

Department of Electronic & Computer Engineering, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Sep 2016 - Jun 2021

- **Thesis:** "Towards A Swift Multiagent SLAM System For Large-scale Robotics Applications", June 17, 2021
- PhD Supervisor: **Prof Ming Liu**, Director of Robotics and Multi-Perception Lab (**RAM-LAB**)
- Exchange Supervisor: **Prof. Roland Siegwart**, Director of Autonomous Systems Lab (**ASL**), **ETH Zürich**, Switzerland.
- Exchange Co-Supervisor: **Dr. Cesar Dario Cadena Lerma**, Senior Researcher at ASL, **ETH Zürich**, Switzerland.
- Got PEEF CCMS PhD scholarship from Pakistan and overseas research award (ORA).
- Research: Multi-Agent SLAM System, Place Recognition, Autonomous Car and Deep Learning for automation industry. Hand on experience on RGB-D 3D reconstruction, Multi-view stereo, python and C++ development experience, multi-threaded coding, 3D mesh registration, paraview and parameterizations. Moreover, I've deep understanding of data structures and algorithms. Experience with software development on Linux open-source stack. Calculus, linear algebra and geometry related courses have been taken.

## M.Phil. in Electronics

Department of Electronics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

QAU, Pakistan

Mar 2010 - Jun 2012

- **Thesis:** "A Feature Based Algorithm for Automobile License Plate Detection and Recognition in Pakistan", Mar, 2012
- M.Phil. Supervisor: **Prof Hasan Mahmood**, Department of Electronics, QAU.
- Research: Signal and Image Processing

## M.Sc. in Electronics

Department of Electronics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

QAU, Pakistan

Sep 2007 - Jun 2010

- **2nd position** in batch
- Projects: completed 9+ projects related to C++, Verilog/HDL and Micro-controller programming.

## B.Sc. in Mathematics and Physics

Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan Pakistan

BZU, Pakistan

Sep. 2005 - Aug. 2007

- Grade: 1st Division

## Honors & Awards

July, 2021	<b>Educational Technology Innovation: Gold Award</b> , The Teaching and Learning Innovation Expo, CUHK	CUHK, Hong Kong
July, 2021	<b>Pedagogical Innovation: Silver Award</b> , The Teaching and Learning Innovation Expo, CUHK	CUHK, Hong Kong
July, 2018	<b>Best Student Paper Finalist Award</b> , IEEE Int. Conf. on CYBER Technology in Automation, Control, and Intelligent Systems	Tianjin, China
May, 2018	<b>Audience Award</b> , Campus Challenge - Transportation, HKUST	HKUST, HK
Nov, 2017	<b>Best Mapper Award</b> , Robotics and Multi-Perception Lab, HKUST	Shenzhen, China
May, 2017	<b>Completion Award</b> , The Graduate Teaching Assistant Training, HKUST	HKUST, HK
Dec, 2016	<b>Best External Award</b> , Robotics and Multi-Perception Lab, HKUST	Shenzhen, China
Nov, 2016	<b>Completion Award</b> , Author Workshop, Elsevier Publishing Campus	HKUST, HK
Sep 2016	<b>CCMS PhD Scholarship</b> , Won Chief Minister Marit Scholarship (CCMS) scholarship award by Punjab Government (PEEF), Pakistan for pursuing my PhD studies at HKUST, HK	Lahore, PK
Sep 2013	<b>Participant</b> , Painting for peace (Pakistan-India-Afghanistan) event, a part of the Harmony initiative	Islamabad, PK
Apr 2013	<b>Participant</b> , Case Spark in business plan competition	Islamabad, PK
Apr 2013	<b>Participant</b> , Case EPICA	Islamabad, PK
Apr 2013	<b>Participant</b> , How to be a Better Playwright Workshop by PNCA and US Embassy Pakistan	Islamabad, PK
Oct 2012	<b>Participant</b> , Punjab Youth Festival	Lahore, PK
Oct 2011	<b>Participant</b> , Int'l Youth Conference and Festival	Islamabad, PK
Sep 2011	<b>Participant</b> , Asian Youth Conference and Peace Festival	Lahore, PK
Apr 2011	<b>Completion Award</b> , Acting and Directing Theater Workshop by PNCA and US Embassy Pakistan	Islamabad, PK
Dec 2011	<b>Participant</b> , National Drama Festival	Islamabad, PK
Dec 2010	<b>Instuctor of short Course</b> , PHP Web Development' at the Department of Electronics, QAU	Islamabad, PK
Apr 2013	<b>Completion Award</b> , Running River Rafting course by Adventure Foundation of Pakistan	Mansehra, PK
Apr 2013	<b>Completion Award</b> , Paragliding course by QAU Adventure Club	Islamabad, PK
Dec 2008	<b>Award of Honor</b> , Finance Secretary of Electronics Student Society (ESS) at QAU	Islamabad, PK

## Presentation

### Navigating Academia Research & Industry, ITCN Asia 2023

Pak-China Friendship Centre,  
Islamabad

#### Panelist

Feb. 2023

- 'I emphasize taking the voluntary initiative by the tech industry first. Companies should realize that they need academic involvement to grow at a swift pace. Most VPs of big companies belong to academia.
- 'In return, companies would at least solve their quality hiring problems. Usually, universities need more funding for R&D and IP filings, etc. In a broader view, both could get huge benefits.

### Teaching and Learning Innovation Expo 2021

CUHK, Hong Kong

#### Posters Presentation

Jul. 2021

- 'Mixed Reality in Hands-On Learning of Robotics' by Xinyan Zhao, Sabrina Lam, M. Usman M. Bhutta, Darwin Lau and Jimmy Lee.
- 'Online Robotics Laboratory Framework for Interactive and Group Hands-On Learning' by Ken Hui, Ken Kwok, M. Usman M. Bhutta, Darwin Lau and Jimmy Lee.

## IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems [IROS, 2020]

Las Vegas, USA

Presenter as author

Oct. 2020

- Introduced **Smart-Inspect** for the micro scale localization and classification of smartphone glass defects for industrial automation.

## Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities (TSSSU)

HKUST, Hong Kong

Presenter as COO Lisee Technology Corporation Company Limited, Hong Kong.

Jan. 2019

- Introduced Lisee technology in front of selection committee panel and won TSSSU 2019-20 funding of the amount of HK\$300,000.

## IEEE Int. Conf. on CYBER Technology in Automation, Control, and Intelligent Systems [IEEE-CYBER 2018]

Tianjin, China

Presenter as author

Jul. 2018

- Introduced **PCR-Pro** for the estimation of information matrix and scale difference for pose graph SLAM.

## IET-Young Professionals Exhibition and Competition (IET-YPEC) 2018

CityU, Hong Kong

Presenter as COO Lisee Technology Corporation Company Limited, Hong Kong.

Jul. 2018

- Introduced Lisee technology at IET-YPEC 2018.

## Campus Challenge @ HKUST Transportation

HKUST, Hong Kong

Presenter as participant

May 2018

- HKUST got 80+ proposals for this competitions, and arranged a roadshow. My proposal got selected for the audience award after getting maximum votes.

## High Tech Innovation and Entrepreneurship

HKUST, Hong Kong

Presenter as Entrepreneur

Dec. 2017

- Introduced my study related to the flying cars.

## World First Youth Robotics Development Forum 2017

Shangri-La Shenzhen, China.

Presenter as author.

Nov. 2017

- Introduced my work related to multi-agent SLAM system.

## Scientific Review Services and Academic Services

### Journal Referee Services

TJS	<b>Peer Reviewer</b> , The Journal of Supercomputing	2024
RA-L	<b>Peer Reviewer</b> , IEEE Robotics and Automation Letter	2024, -23, -22
TC	<b>Peer Reviewer</b> , IEEE Transactions on Cybernetics	2022

### Conference Referee Services

IROS	<b>Peer Reviewer</b> , IEEE/RSJ RA-L and International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems	2024, 23, 21, 20, 18
ICRA	<b>Peer Reviewer</b> , IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Robotics and Automation	2024, 23, 22, 21, 20
UF, US	<b>Poster Judge</b> , UF/IFAS Agricultural and Biological Engineering Poster Symposium	2024

### Teaching Assistant Positions

HKUST, HK	<b>Teaching Assistant</b> , EESM 5547 - Multimedia Signal Processing	S 20, S 19, S 18
HKUST, HK	<b>Teaching Assistant</b> , ELEC4820 - Medical Imaging	F 18
HKUST, HK	<b>Teaching Assistant</b> , ELEC 1010 - Electronic and Information Technology	S 17

## Skills

<b>Robotics and Computer Vision</b>	Ubuntu, ROS, PCL, Docker, Catkin, OpenCV, OpenGV, Ceres Solver, g2o, Libpointmatcher
<b>Machine Learning / Deep Learning</b>	Jupyter, Pytorch, Tensorflow, Keras, CUDA, Cluster (Hipergator)
<b>Programming</b>	Python, C/C++, Matlab, git, LaTeX, FPGA, Verilog, Slurm
<b>Web</b>	mkdocs, Hugo, Jekyll, PHP, MYSQL
<b>Languages</b>	English, Urdu

## Research

G: [Google Scholar](#) | [ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3512-4279](#)

### Journal Publications

#### In-Sensor Visual Perception and Inference

Journal

Yanan Liu and Rui Fan and Jianglong Guo and Hepeng Ni and M. Usman Maqbool Bhutta

Jul 2023

2023 Intelligent Computing

**Robust mobile robot navigation in cluttered environments based on hybrid adaptive neuro-fuzzy inference and sensor fusion** Journal (IF: 8.8+)  
 Muhammad Husnain Haider, Zhonglai Wanga, Abdullah Aman Khan, Hub Ali, Hao Zheng, Shaban Usman, Rajesh Kumar, M. Usman Maqbool Bhutta, Pengpeng Zhi Aug 2022  
 2022 Journal of King Saud University-Computer and Information Sciences.

**MAFNet: Segmentation of Road Potholes with Multi-modal Attention Fusion Network for Autonomous Vehicles** Journal (IF: 5.3+)  
 Zhen Feng, Yanning Guo, Qing Liang, M. Usman Maqbool Bhutta, Hengli Wang, Ming Liu, and Yuxiang Sun Aug 2022  
 2022 IEEE Transactions on Instrumentation & Measurement

**Why-So-Deep: Towards Boosting Previously Trained Models for Visual Place Recognition** Journal (IF: 5.4+)  
 M Usman Maqbool Bhutta\*, Yuxiang Sun, Darwin Lau and Ming Liu Jan 2022  
 IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters (RA-L)/ICRA, 2022

**Loop-box: Multi-Agent Direct SLAM Triggered by Single Loop Closure for Large Scale Mapping** Journal (IF: 11.7+)  
 M Usman Maqbool Bhutta\*, Manohar Kuse, Rui Fan, Yanan Liu and Ming Liu Oct 2020  
 2022 IEEE Transactions on Cybernetics

**Efficient Reset Design Techniques** Journal Paper  
 Qamar, Zoha, Bushra Yaseen, and Usman Maqbool 2015  
 Published in Science International Lahore

### Conference Proceedings

**CaMuViD: Calibration-Free Multi-View Detection** Conference Paper  
 Amir Etefaghi Daryani, M Usman Maqbool Bhutta, Byron Hernandez, Henry Medeiros Under Review  
 Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR), 2025

**Autonomous Mobile Robot Navigation using Adaptive Neuro Fuzzy Inference System** Conference Paper  
 Muhammad Husnain Haider and Hub Ali and Abdullah Aman Khan and Hao Zheng and M. Usman Maqbool Bhutta and Shaban Usman and Pengpeng Zhi and Zhonglai Wang May 2022  
 2022 International Conference On Innovations And Development Of Information Technologies And Robotics (IDITR), 2022

**Scale-Adaptive Pothole Detection and Tracking from 3-D Road Point Clouds** Conference Paper  
 Wu, Rigen and Fan, Jiahe and Guo, Libo and Qiao, Lei and Bhutta, M. Usman Maqbool and Hosking, Brett and Vityazev, Sergey and Fan, Rui Aug 2021  
 2021 IEEE International Conference on Imaging Systems and Techniques (IST), 2021

**Smart-Inspect: Micro Scale Localization and Classification of Smart Phone Glass Defects for Industrial Automation** Conference Paper  
 M Usman Maqbool Bhutta\*, Shoaib Aslam, Peng Yun, Jianhao JIAO and Ming Liu Oct 2020  
 IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS 2020)

**Multiple Lane Detection Algorithm Based on Optimised Dense Disparity Map Estimation** Conference Paper  
 Han Ma, Yixin Ma, Jianhao Jiao, M Usman Maqbool Bhutta, Mohammud Junaid Bocus, Lujia Wang, Ming Liu and Rui Fan Dec 2018  
 Accepted in IEEE International Conference on Imaging Systems and Techniques (IST 2018)

**PCR-Pro: 3D Sparse and Different Scale Point Clouds Registration and Robust Estimation of Information Matrix For Pose Graph SLAM** Conference Paper  
 M Usman Maqbool Bhutta\* and Ming Liu Jul 2018  
 Presented in IEEE Int. Conf. on CYBER Technology in Automation, Control, and Intelligent Systems (IEEE-CYBER 2018), and won **Best Student Paper Finalist Award**.

**An intelligent approach for robust detection and recognition of multiple color and font styles automobiles license plates: A feature-based algorithm** Conference Paper  
 M Usman Maqbool Bhutta\*, Hasan Mahmood, and Haroon Malik Jan 2015  
 Published in IEEE International Conference on Audio, Language and Image Processing (ICALIP 2014).

## Patent

**Semi-Supervised Learning Approach for Smart Phone Glasses Defect Inspection** US Patent  
 Muhammad Usman Maqbool Bhutta, Jianhao Jiao, Peng Yun, Yuan Wang, Xuebin Sun, Ming Liu Jan 2020  
 U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/974,937, Filing Date 01/06/2020.

## Automatic Surface Defect Detection System for Smart Phone Glass Based on Deep Learning

US Patent

Yuan Wang, Jianhao Jiao, Peng Yun, Muhammad Usman Maqbool Bhutta, Xuebin Sun, Ming Liu

Jan 2020

U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/974,938, Filing Date 01/06/2020.

## References

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### Prof. Hafiz Malik

Professor · Director of Information Systems, Security, and Forensics (ISSF), Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Michigan-Dearborn, MI, USA.

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Research Supervisor

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### Prof. Henry Medeiros

Associate Professor · Director of Computer Vision and Sensing Systems (COVISS) Lab, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering University of Florida, FL, USA

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Postdoc Supervisor

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### Prof. SUN Yuxiang

Assistant Professor · Department of Mechanical Engineering City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

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PhD Co-Supervisor

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