

## **Sougata Roy – Social Media Chair**

My name is **Sougata Roy**, and I am a PhD student in Agronomy at Texas A&M University, specializing in Weed Science, with a research focus on precision and non-chemical weed management strategies. I earned my BS in Agriculture from Uttar Banga Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, India, and my MS degree in Agronomy from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi, where my academic training emphasized sustainable cropping systems and integrated weed management. Before joining Texas A&M, I served as a Senior Research Associate with the CGIAR system (International Potato Centre), where



I led and coordinated multi-country research and extension activities across India, Bangladesh, and Cambodia. Working closely with scientists, extension professionals, and farming communities strengthened my leadership skills and reinforced the importance of clear, inclusive, and impactful science communication. I was invited as a guest speaker at the Mekong Forum 2025 in Cambodia, sharing experiences on sustainable and low-input agronomic solutions.

At Texas A&M University, I currently serve as a Soil and Crop Sciences Ambassador, actively representing students, promoting academic programs, and increasing the visibility of agronomy and weed science research. I bring strong experience in digital outreach, with **4,000+ followers on [LinkedIn](#), educational [Instagram](#) content reaching 20,000+ views, and active engagement on [X \(Twitter\)](#).**

I aim to translate cutting-edge weed science research, including new modes and sites of action, herbicide resistance developments, innovative non-chemical strategies, and emerging weed management techniques, from research papers into clear, engaging, and accessible content for a global audience. As Social Media Chair, my goal is to amplify graduate student voices, highlight achievements, and strengthen connections within the weed science community globally beyond the borders.

## **Midhat Zulafkar Tugoo – Social Media Chair**

My name is **Midhat Zulafkar Tugoo**, and I am a PhD student in the School of Integrative Plant Science at **Cornell University**, working under the guidance of **Dr. Vipin Kumar**. My research focuses on developing **integrated weed management strategies** for managing **herbicide-resistant pigweed** in the Northwestern United States. Through my doctoral work, I actively engage with current weed science research, extension activities, and interdisciplinary collaboration. In addition to my research background, I bring strong **leadership, communication, and outreach**



**experience** that directly aligns with the responsibilities of the Social Media Chair. During my master's program at **Kansas State University**, I served as both **Social Chair** and **Graduate Student Representative**. These roles strengthened my ability to communicate information clearly, creatively, and responsibly to diverse audiences. I currently serve as a **Graduate Student Representative at Cornell University**, continuing my commitment to student advocacy, professional development, and community engagement. I am passionate about using social media as a tool to amplify weed science research, promote society activities, highlight member achievements, and engage students and early-career scientists. With my combination of weed science expertise, prior social media leadership, and dedication to professional service, I am well-prepared and highly motivated to contribute effectively as **Social Media Chair for the Weed Science Society of America**.

## **Nisith Nishank Purohit – Social Media Chair**

I am enthusiastic about serving as the **WSSA Graduate Student Organization Social Media Chair** because I am committed to strengthening communication, engagement, and visibility for graduate students within the Weed Science Society of America. My academic training in weed science, combined with leadership experience and science communication skills, aligns well with the goals of the WSSA GSO.

During the 2024–2025 academic year, I served as **Treasurer for the Department of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences at Auburn University**, where I managed financial records, supported departmental student activities, and worked closely with faculty and graduate students. This role required accountability, organization, and clear communication skills that are directly transferable to managing WSSA GSO social media platforms in a professional and consistent manner.

In addition to my leadership experience, I actively engage in science communication through my own **PhD-focused Instagram and YouTube platforms**, where I create content to motivate graduate students, share research experiences, and communicate agricultural and weed science concepts to a broader audience. Through this work, I have developed experience in content planning, visual storytelling, audience engagement, and maintaining an informative and inclusive online presence.

As Social Media Chair, I would work to highlight WSSA GSO activities, promote student awards and achievements, increase awareness of meetings and deadlines, and strengthen connections among graduate students across institutions. I am particularly interested in using social media to foster inclusivity, encourage student participation, and enhance the visibility of graduate student contributions within WSSA.

I would be honored to support the mission of WSSA GSO and contribute to an active, engaged, and connected graduate student community.



## **Connor Purvis – Social Media Chair**

Hi! I'm Connor, currently a PhD candidate at Michigan State University working on johnsongrass herbicide resistance mechanisms, hybridization, and the role of soil microbes in this invasive weed species. I've been a member of WSSA for three years and have always been passionate about sharing research with the broader weed science community. Especially now, effective communication is essential for science to address emerging environmental and social challenges. I feel apt for this position because of my experience as the social media chair for the Graduate Student Organization for Crop and Soil Sciences at Michigan State. In this role, I developed skills in creating content and engaging graduate students to highlight events and opportunities. My Canva skills have seen the largest improvement by far! As WSSA continues to grow, I'm excited to connect graduate students with opportunities and highlight the incredible work happening year-round. If selected, I would focus on continuing people spotlights, interactive posts, and sharing opportunities for students. I'd also love to introduce video spotlights to increase engagement and make our research accessible across our community. Social media is a powerful tool to share our work promoting science literacy but also building a strong, connected community. I would be honored to help share WSSA's mission through our network of graduate students.

