

Pathum Egodawatta

Type designer, Cultural entrepreneur & Educator

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I am a type designer from Sri Lanka with over a decade of experience in supervising and managing type design projects for multinational clients.

As an entrepreneur focused on cultural work I have organised conferences, built brands and rallied communities with focus on cultural exchange and knowledge generation. As an educator I have directed and led significant international and local typography initiatives, including conferences, seminars, and heritage projects. As a thinker I spend time pondering about future of South Asian knowledge and culture.

Interests

- Encoding, fonts and typography of South Asian writing systems
- AI, design and education
- Decolonisation

Scripts engaged

Latin, Sinhala, Tamil,
Thaana, Thai

Technical proficiency

- Font engineering and Encoding
- AI for Design and Culture

Research areas

- Multiscript typography
- Language as infrastructure
- Cultural exports and design
- AI in creativity

Educational qualifications

2016 MA Typeface Design (2015–2016), University of Reading, UK

Graduated with Distinction

2013 BA (Hons) in Graphic Design (2010–2013), Academy of Design Colombo

Northumbria University, UK

Graduated with First class, Valedictorian

Professional experience

2017– Director, Mooniak (Managing partner)

Running typography and type design consultancy service

2017– Visiting lecturer on typography at the Academy of Design, Colombo

2017– Faculty member at CraftingType.com on South Asian Scripts

2015 Font engineer, Rossetta Type Foundry (Part time – Oct 2016–January 2017)

2014 Consultant to Google Fonts (Contract – April 2014–July 2015)

Leading Google Fonts Sinhala web font development with an international team that included Latin, Tamil and Sinhala type designers, font engineers and software engineers, and spanned type design, font engineering, software development of build processes and substantial contributions to open source font editor applications.

2013 Junior Art Director, Grant McCann McCann Worldwide, Sri Lanka

(Full time – Oct 2013–April 2014)

2013 Teaching Assistant-Graphic Design , Academy of Design , Sri Lanka

(Full time – June 2013–Sep 2014)

Organisations and contributions

Director of Institute of Typography

Developing latest update to the Sri Lanka Standard for Information Interchange

Contributions to Unicode Standard (December 2017–)

Member of Lanka Local Languages Working Group currently collaborating with Unicode editors on rewriting Unicode Standard Core Specification for Sinhala.

GNU GPL font licensing (December 2017–April 2018)

Advising Free Software Foundation on font exception in GNU General Public License and font embedding related technologies in PDF files.

Hanthana Linux (December 2017–April 2018)

Notable technical projects

SLS 1134: Fourth Revision draft (January 2025–)

Developing latest update to the Sri Lanka Standard for Information Interchange.

Contributions to Unicode Standard (December 2017–)

Member of Lanka Local Languages Working Group currently collaborating with Unicode editors on rewriting Unicode Standard Core Specification for Sinhala.

Sinhala Generation Panel - ICANN (December 2017–April 2018)

Member of the Sinhala Generation Panel for Root Zone Sinhala Lable Generation Rules (SinhalaGP)

GNU GPL font licensing (December 2017–April 2018)

Advising Free Software Foundation on font exception in GNU General Public License and font embedding related technologies in PDF files.

Contributions to Fontforge (2014–2018)

Maintained the issue tracker and contributed to major revamp of UI. Updated the website and documentation.

Unified Font Repository and related projects (2019–)

Contributions to various font packaging standards and open source projects for font distribution.

Knowledge projects

Typoday 2017

I led the international Typoday 2017 event, successfully securing funding, partnerships, and global promotion. This initiative created new opportunities and collaborations in typography for Sri Lanka, ultimately leading to the formation of the Akuru Collective.

The Typography Educators Forum 2017

I conceived and led The Typography Educators Forum, which successfully fostered new teaching techniques for undergraduate design courses. Through this initiative, I empowered graphic design educators to develop fundamental tools for improving typographic execution and crafting skills.

Dutch–Ceylon Typographic Heritage Project

I directed a heritage project dedicated to exploring the shared typographic and printing history between Sri Lanka and The Netherlands. This initiative specifically highlighted 18th-century Sinhala and Tamil type-making by the Dutch Press, fostering significant cultural exchange and knowledge.

Galle Font Project

I led the Galle Font Project, focusing on developing a digital typeface based on 18th-century Dutch Press letterforms for cultural preservation. I directed the initial research and proof-of-concept design, preparing for the open-source release of this historical font revival.

AkuruCon 2018

I orchestrated AkuruCon 2018 in collaboration with the Dutch Embassy, celebrating 280 years since the introduction of movable type in Sri Lanka. This event featured impactful workshops and seminars on shared typographic history, engaging diverse participants from design and public sectors.

ATypI Working Seminars 2019

I directed the ATypI Working Seminars 2019, a ground breaking event and the first of its kind in 27 years, with an exclusive focus on typography education. This orchestration fostered advanced learning in typography and typeface design teaching within the region.