

Dr. Naim Kittana, PhD

Associate Professor of Pharmacology & Molecular Medicine | Director, Medical & Health Sciences Research Center | Chair, Institutional Review Board

Nablus, Palestine | naim.kittana@najah.edu | LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/naim-kittana](https://www.linkedin.com/in/naim-kittana) | Google Scholar: scholar.google.com/citations?user=rBEIOQwAAAAJ

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Research and academic leader in pharmacology and molecular medicine with senior responsibilities in research governance, capacity-building, and translational biomedical research. Experienced in ethical oversight (IRB) and GCP-aligned research practices, multidisciplinary collaboration, and university–industry engagement. Active in applied AI-in-biomedicine education through co-supervision of capstone projects (clinical decision support, bioinformatics, and literature mining), ensuring clinically and biologically meaningful problem framing, data governance/ethics, validation, and translation into usable outputs.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Research governance & compliance: IRB leadership, ethics oversight, protocol review, GCP/ICH-aligned practices
- Research leadership & management: center operations, partnership building, capacity development, committees/boards
- Translational pharmacology & molecular medicine: cardiovascular pharmacology, drug delivery/biomaterials, pharmaceutical technology
- Scientific communication: manuscript development, medical/scientific writing and editing, presentations
- Applied AI (domain-led): clinical decision support concepts, biomedical NLP/literature mining, bioinformatics project supervision
- Tools: Microsoft Office (Word/PowerPoint/Excel), GraphPad Prism

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chair, Institutional Review Board (IRB) — An-Najah National University

Nablus, Palestine | Oct 2024 – Present

- Provide leadership for institutional research ethics and human-subject protections across university-affiliated studies.
- Guide investigators on protocol quality, informed consent, risk–benefit assessment, and research compliance.
- Support continuous improvement of review workflows and researcher training aligned with international ethics principles and GCP mindset.

Director, Medical & Health Sciences Research Center (MHRC) — An-Najah National University

Nablus, Palestine | May 2022 – Present

- Lead strategic direction and operations of a multidisciplinary research center spanning molecular medicine, clinical research, pharmaceutical technology, and drug analysis.

- Develop partnerships and research capacity-building initiatives and support grant development and collaborative projects.
- Enable translation of research outputs toward real-world implementation, including industry-relevant research support.

Associate Professor of Pharmacology & Molecular Medicine — Department of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, An-Najah National University

Nablus, Palestine | Jan 2021 – Present (Assistant Professor: Jan 2015 – 2021)

- Teach pharmacology and related biomedical sciences; contribute to curriculum development and postgraduate training.
- Lead and co-supervise student research projects, including applied AI capstones (protein–protein interaction prediction; AI-assisted patient triage; automated signaling pathway extraction from PubMed literature).
- Publish in peer-reviewed journals and collaborate with national and international research teams.

Head, Research Projects Committee (Doctor of Medicine Program) — An-Najah National University

Nablus, Palestine | Nov 2024 – Present

- Coordinate and oversee student research projects, supporting rigorous methodology, ethics alignment, and high-quality reporting.

Coordinator and Co-founder, Master of Pharmacology Program — An-Najah National University

Nablus, Palestine | May 2020 – Present

- Support program development and delivery, including postgraduate training, supervision, and academic quality processes.

CEO, An-Najah BioSciences Unit (NBU) — Contract Research Organization (CRO) — An-Najah National University

Nablus, Palestine | Oct 2021 – Jan 2023

- Led CRO-oriented activities supporting research services and quality practices; engaged academic and external stakeholders.
- Applied GCP-aligned training and documentation mindset to strengthen research operations.

Lecturer of Pharmacology (Full-time) — Faculty of Pharmacy, An-Najah National University

Nablus, Palestine | Aug 2008 – 2010

- Delivered pharmacology teaching and contributed to academic and quality initiatives within the faculty.

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

- Elected board member, Faculty of Graduate Studies (multiple terms)
- Board member, Scientific Centers, An-Najah National University (since Oct 2021)
- Committee member and co-founder, Master Program of Artificial Intelligence in Health Systems
- Reviewer, Dove Medical Press

EDUCATION

PhD in Pharmacology (Molecular Medicine Program), Georg-August-University Göttingen (UMG/HRCG), Germany

2011 – 2014

- Thesis: Role of Secretory Processes in Cardiac Fibroblasts in Heart Failure Development and Progression (Magna Cum Laude).

MSc in Pharmacology, University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

2006 – 2008

- Thesis: Chemoprevention of meloxicam and grapefruit juice against formation of colonic aberrant crypt foci in a rat model (GPA 3.75/4, Excellent).

BSc in Pharmacy, An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine

2000 – 2005

- Average: 89.4% (Very Good).

CERTIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- Good Clinical Practice (GCP) — NIAID / National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Data Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) Modules 1–3 — Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc.
- Clinical Trial Statistics for Non-Statisticians — European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC)

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

- DAAD Scholarship for PhD fellowship in Germany (2011–2014)
- DAAD Scholarship for MSc degree in Jordan (2006–2008)
- DAAD Re-invitation Program (3-month postdoc in Germany) (2018)
- Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education Fund (ANNU-MoHE-1819-Sc010) (2018)
- An-Najah National University Fund of Research Support (ANNU-1718-Sc-019)

RESEARCH PROFILE

- Selected public research profiles (for verification and publication lists):
 - An-Najah Staff Profile: staff.najah.edu/en/profiles/1428/
 - Medical & Health Sciences Research Center: najah.edu/en/research/scientific-centers/medical-and-health-sciences-research-center/
 - IRB Office: fmhs.najah.edu/en/education-admissions/research-department/institutional-review-board-irb-office/
 - Google Scholar: scholar.google.com/citations?user=rBEIOQwAAAAJ

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS (RECENT & REPRESENTATIVE)

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- N Kittana, S Hattab, A Ziyadeh-Isleem, N Jaradat, AN Zaid. Montelukast, current indications and prospective future applications. *Expert review of respiratory medicine* (2019)
- Kittana N. Calcium Signaling in Cardiac Fibroblasts: Roles in Fibrosis and Therapeutic Implications. *Cardiovascular Drugs and Therapy* (2025).
- Natsheh H, Qneibi M, Kittana N, et al. Transethosomal system for enhanced transdermal delivery and therapeutic effect of caryophyllene oxide. *International Journal of Pharmaceutics* (2025).
- Shaqour B, Natsheh H, Kittana N, et al. Modified Release 3D-Printed Capsules Containing a Ketoprofen Self-Nanoemulsifying System for Personalized Medical Application. *ACS Biomaterials Science & Engineering* (2024).
- Ghallab A, González D, Strängberg E, et al., including Kittana N. Inhibition of the renal apical sodium dependent bile acid transporter prevents cholemic nephropathy in mice with obstructive cholestasis. *Journal of Hepatology* (2024).
- Assali M, Kittana N, et al. Noncovalent functionalization of carbon nanotubes as a scaffold for tissue engineering. *Scientific Reports* (2022).
- Kittana N, Assali M, et al. Modulating the Biomechanical Properties of Engineered Connective Tissues by Chitosan-Coated Multiwall Carbon Nanotubes. *International Journal of Nanomedicine* (2021).
- Albrecht W, et al., including Kittana N. Prediction of human drug-induced liver injury (DILI) in relation to oral doses and blood concentrations. *Archives of Toxicology* (2019).
- Kittana N, Assali M, Abu-Rass H, et al. Enhancement of wound healing by single-wall/multi-wall carbon nanotubes complexed with chitosan. *International Journal of Nanomedicine* (2018)
- N Kittana. Angiotensin-converting enzyme 2–Angiotensin 1-7/1-9 system: novel promising targets for heart failure treatment. *Fundamental & Clinical Pharmacology* (2018)
- Jatho A, Hartmann S, Kittana N, et al. RhoA ambivalently controls prominent myofibroblast characteristics by involving distinct signaling routes. *PLoS ONE* (2015).

LANGUAGES

- Arabic (native)
- English (professional)
- German (very good)

References available upon request.