

Qatar Science Leadership Program Celebrates First PhD Scholar

Doha, 06 April 2014: Qatar Science Leadership Program (QSLP), a constituent of Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D), has celebrated the graduation of its first PhD scholar.

Ahmad Abushaikha, who was recently awarded a PhD in Petroleum Engineering from Imperial College London, joined QSLP upon its launch in 2008.

Regarding his accomplishment Abushaikha said: “I am so proud and honoured to be the first PhD graduate within this programme and hope to see more young people join QSLP so that they can be a part of the scientific renaissance underway in Qatar.”

The 33-year-old began his scholarly journey as an intern at the Total Scientific and Technological Centre for Exploration and Production, in the French city of Pau, where he earned his Master’s degree. Abushaikha then decided to join QSLP shortly after graduation.

“I believe QSLP is the only programme that offers education in some of the top universities around the world while providing participants with the stability and moral support to be creative and excel in their respective research.”

Abushaikha’s investigation focussed on uncovering new numerical methods to model the flow of fluids in oil and gas fields. These methods could eventually help energy companies in Qatar make precise predictions about the extraction of oil and gas.

In recent years, he has developed two promising numerical methods, the first of which was exhibited at the Europec/EAGE Annual Conference in Copenhagen in 2012. The second is due to be presented at the 6th European Conference on Computational Fluid Dynamics later this year in Spain.

Meanwhile, Abushaikha is now preparing to join Stanford University in the US through the QSLP Research Postdoctoral track. He eventually plans to return to Qatar and continue his research in collaboration with the Qatar Environment & Energy Research Institute.

“Qatar Foundation is working hard to support scientific research, and help young people enter this field,” he added. “The country is undergoing great scientific progress, which is evident in the immense activity at Qatar Foundation and its different research and development institutes. This is why QSLP is the perfect opportunity for budding researchers to realise their dreams.”

Dr Wyatt Hume, Executive Director of Education, Training and Development at QF R&D, expressed his pride in QSLP’s first PhD scholar to graduate and said: “This is a great moment for Ahmad, for the QSLP program, and for Qatar. Ahmed is the first among many highly talented young Qataris who will make great contributions to Qatar, thanks to the foresight of Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser and to the dedication of the great team who have supported QSLP and its students throughout its six-year history.”

“Ahmed’s success should serve as motivation for all talented young Qataris interested in a career in scientific research,” he added. “QSLP provides an opportunity for them to step forward and achieve their scientific ambitions, and to take an active role in Qatar’s development by being part of its new generation of young scientists.”

The QSLP includes a number of research programmes in health, biomedicine, energy, environment, computer science, information technology, behavioural science and humanities. To date, 15 students have graduated from the programme while a further 100 participants continue to pursue their studies in various fields. More than 83 per cent of programme participants are Qatari. The remaining researchers enrolled on the various QSLP tracks comprise expatriates who have graduated from Qatari universities.

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About Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D)

Leading Qatar's vision to become an international hub for research and development excellence and innovation, QF R&D is home to Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), a world-class hub for technology innovation and commercialisation. As well as the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), a globally renowned scientific research funding organisation and prominent research institutes operating at the frontiers of science. Including the Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), the Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI) and the Qatar Energy and Environment Research Institute (QEERI).