

## QATAR FOUNDATION WINS AWARD AT THE WORLD ARCHITECTURE FESTIVAL

*Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies Building Wins In 'Religion – Completed Buildings' Category*

**Doha, Qatar, 09 November 2015:** A Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) building has won an award at the World Architecture Festival (WAF), a prestigious global celebration of inspirational architecture, held last week in Singapore.

The QF building, which is home to the Education City Mosque and the Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies (QFIS), a college of QF member Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), won in the category of 'Religion – Completed Buildings', and was the only Islamic building to have been shortlisted. The building contains many symbolic and poetic references to Islam and its civilisation. The Mosque's structure for example rests on five large columns representing the five pillars of Islam, with each featuring a verse drawn from the Holy Qur'an.

The building reflects the Foundation's commitment to originality and innovation, and the new accolade is testament to QF's mission to promote Qatar around the world and to foster an engaged society appreciative of its Islamic and Arabic heritage. The building is a reinterpretation of the traditional model of the madrasa found in old Islamic Cities, where both education and worship are combined in one premise. The college also represents one of many institutions contributing to the comprehensive educational cycle offered by QF that provides quality learning to students to unlock their potential and foster a progressive society.

All winning projects in the different award categories were then shortlisted to take part in the selection for the World Building of the Year 2015, in which the QF building received high commendation from the Master Jury.

The judges praised the QFIS building, designed by Mangera Yvars Architects (MYAA), as a project representing "a cultural breakthrough where client and architect have produced a remarkable building."

The building was nominated to the WAF Awards by QF's Capital Projects Directorate (CPD), with the support of the architects of the building Mangera Yvars Architects (MYAA). Speaking about the project, Ameena Ahmadi, Technical Director at Qatar Foundation Capital Projects Directorate said: "QFIS building is a true manifestation that the architecture of the Muslim

world has its firm and timeless values, but the same can be interpreted through different models. The building is a continuous discovery of spatial qualities and pleasures, and a reminder to connect with one's inner self and surrounding nature at the same time. Winning the award is recognition to the innovative potentials of spaces for learning and worship."

Ahmadi Added: "This is a great achievement for Qatar Foundation and Qatar as a whole. We are proud to have had the opportunity to showcase this Qatari landmark on an international stage and to shed light on Qatar Foundation's work to foster a society that embraces and enhances Qatari culture and promotes global tolerance of Islamic values."

The QFIS building, officially opened in March 2015, was among 338 projects from 47 countries shortlisted in a range of categories. It was one of three projects in Qatar, and 10 throughout the GCC, to be shortlisted at the awards.

In selecting the shortlist for WAF, judges were asked to choose projects that reflect quality design and were also requested to look for evidence of innovation, imagination and expression, both within the terms of the category and in the potential contribution of the projects to architecture generally.

The QFIS building is a complex structure that boasts natural light, a calm and neutral palette of whites, representing notions of serenity and purity. Water is used throughout the building with four streams flowing through its exterior and interior.

The building includes the latest amenities that take advantage of modern innovations alongside a respect for environment, in addition to being an architectural masterpiece that exemplifies the beauty of Islam and its moderation.

WAF is the world's largest international architectural event and largest architectural awards programme and more than 2,000 architects from 60 countries attend the Festival.

To shed more light on this landmark, and other unique architecture built for education, the Qatar Foundation is organising a conference on the 27th and 28th of this month titled "Learning from Education City" where a number of signature architects and renowned thinkers will come to discuss buildings of Education City and the broader topic of space and learning. To find out more about the event you can visit [qf.org.qa/LearningFromEC](http://qf.org.qa/LearningFromEC).

## **Image Captions**

**Image 1:** Qatar Foundation delegates (far L, far R) with Ada Yvars (centre left) and Ali Mangera (centre right), architects of the building.

**Image 2:** An aerial view of the Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies building that won the award.

**Image 3:** The World Architecture Festival 2015 winners hold up their awards.

**Image 4:** The winning building houses the Qatar Foundation's Education City Mosque and the Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies.

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## **Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential**

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. QF was co-founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Qatar Foundation's Chairperson. QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>

### **About Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies (QFIS):**

The Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies was established to achieve intellectual plurality that emphasizes the richness and diversity of the Islamic heritage under the umbrella of Hamad Bin Khalifa University. The vision at QFIS is to become a locus of thought and dialogue that leads research and debate in all that relates to Islam and Muslims, be that contemporary concerns or issues of heritage; and that produces scholars who are strongly-grounded in Islamic faith, practice, and civilization, and who are open for engaging with all that their civilization produced, and with the wisdom and thought of other civilizations.

### **About World Architecture Festival:**

WAF is the world's largest international architectural event and largest architectural awards program, "dedicated to celebrating excellence via live presentations to delegates and international juries". More than 2,000 architects from 60 countries attend the Festival, as well as representatives from leading international architecture and design publications, clients, developers, project managers, engineers, and academics.

More information about WAF is at <https://www.worldarchitecturefestival.com>, including full shortlist details.