

QATARI PROJECT AMONG 2015 WISE AWARDS WINNERS

The WISE Awards Recognise Six Innovative Initiatives Addressing Key Education Challenges

Doha, Qatar, 15 September 2015: The World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE), a leading international initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) that is driving innovation and collaboration in education, has announced the six 2015 WISE Awards winning projects, including the Qatari project Al-Bairaq.

Since 2009, the WISE Awards have identified and promoted some of the most effective practices in tackling urgent global education challenges. The Awards are also a central pillar in achieving QF's mission of developing a knowledge-based economy by unlocking human potential and fostering a progressive and engaged society. A jury comprised of education leaders selected the winning projects from a shortlist of 15 finalists. The winning projects address education issues linked to literacy, special needs, access and employment.

The Qatari project Al-Bairaq is a non-traditional educational programme based at the Center for Advanced Materials (CAM) at Qatar University. Supporting innovation and entrepreneurship, Al-Bairaq immerses secondary students in hands-on science activities, builds appreciation for the work of scientists, and offers students new opportunities.

Dr Noora Jabor Al-Thani, Project Representative of Al-Bairaq, said: "Winning the WISE Award is a great honour, particularly as Al-Bairaq is the first Qatari project to be recognised since the inception of the Awards. I hope this recognition will help raise awareness about the need to develop new approaches to tackle education problems worldwide. Our programme has adopted innovative techniques to attract young people to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, and to show them the beauty and excitement of the world of science. I am really excited and confident that the WISE Award will encourage educators to rethink their teaching methodology, especially when it comes to these fields."

About the Other Winning Projects

Bridge International Academies in Kenya provides a standardised model of high-quality affordable education by designing cutting edge curricula, building schools and training teachers from the local community.

Egypt-based Nafham crowd-sources educational video content aligned to school curricula in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Algeria, and Syria, in order to fill the gaps in access, quality and infrastructure in education.

In Uganda, the Educate! Experience is partnering with schools to foster a culture of entrepreneurship among youth by tailoring an innovative and cost-effective education model to the skill requirements of the job market.

The Talking Book Program provides key health and agriculture related information to illiterate farming communities in rural Ghana through an affordable audio computer.

In Argentina, Videobooks for Deaf Children has revolutionised education for deaf people by providing trilingual video story books in Argentinian Sign Language. Each videobook also has a voice-over and subtitles, so that deaf children and their hearing families alike can enjoy stories together.

Commenting on the announcement of the 2015 WISE Awards winners, Dr. Asmaa Al-Fadala, Director of Research, WISE, said: "These projects show how concrete change can be achieved on the ground. They represent excellence in education that can inspire others and be replicated in other parts of the world, transforming not only the classroom but impacting whole communities and societies."

For further information about WISE and the WISE Awards, please go to www.wise-qatar.org or <http://www.wise-qatar.org/wise-awards>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the WISE Awards:

Each year the WISE Awards recognize and promote six successful innovative projects that are addressing global education challenges. Since 2009, WISE has received more than 2,000 applications from over 140 countries. Forty-two projects have now been recognized around the world from a variety of sectors for their innovative character, their positive contribution and for scalability and adaptability.

About the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE):

Qatar Foundation, under the leadership of its Chairperson, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser established the World Innovation Summit for Education in 2009. WISE is an international, multi-sectoral platform for creative thinking, debate and purposeful action. WISE has established itself as a global reference in new approaches to education. As a testament to QF's commitment to establishing a knowledge economy, WISE is promoting a range of on-going programs toward building the future of education through collaboration. WISE 2015 will take place 3-5 November in Doha.

About QF:

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. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. 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>