

PRESS RELEASE

## **HBKU's QBRI hosts annual IBRO-MENA-QBRI Neuroscience Conference and School**

Doha, November 26, 2016 – Hamad Bin Khalifa University's (HBKU) Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) hosted clinicians and researchers from across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region at the HBKU Student Center in Education City last week for an annual Neuroscience School.

Held in collaboration with the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO), the event enabled participants to share insights and discuss developments within the field of neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative disorders. The event followed the IBRO-MENA-QBRI Neuroscience Conference, held this year as part of 3<sup>rd</sup> Middle East Molecular Biology Sources (MEMBS) Annual Congress & Exhibition on November 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

The IBRO-MENA-QBRI Neuroscience School seeks to ignite the curiosity of students in unpacking scientific concepts and encourage these budding scientists to pursue careers in research and academia. This year, the event provided participants with a comprehensive understanding of neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative disorders through a series of lectures, workshops, and discussion sessions. The event shed light on the brain as an intricate physical organ and explored how its various components work together to help humans achieve cognition.

By continuing to host IBRO-MENA schools, QBRI seeks to help build human capacity in the field of neuroscience, educating and inspiring a generation of young scientists to take on careers within the sciences. The school equips students with tools, industry knowledge, and a collaborative, regional network to help pave the way for their success.

Dr. Omar El-Agnaf, Acting Executive Director of QBRI, noted that: "The Neuroscience School helps raise awareness of the latest scientific research being conducted in Qatar, while generating interest within the upcoming generation, regionally and locally, about the sciences. This year we welcomed participants from Algeria to Sudan to Qatar, and covered topics such as autism and neurodegenerative diseases."

Buthaina Saleh, a student participant in the Neuroscience School from Sultan Qaboos University in Oman where she works in the biochemistry labs, said: "I wish to start my Ph.D. soon and I'm hoping that it will be in neuroscience, so I came here to get ideas about new techniques and updates in the field. Participating in the school has been a great experience for me."

QBRI was also one of the sponsors of The 3<sup>rd</sup> MEMBS Annual Congress & Exhibition from the 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> of November. The national research institute that specializes in innovation for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases affecting the people of Qatar and the region sponsored a two day IBRO Neuroscience Conference specifically dedicated to focus on four Neuroscience topics, stem cells specifically dedicated for diabetes and structure biology session focused on newly developed technologies for understanding the mechanisms of human diseases.

The Neuroscience Conference's session on the first day focused on neurodevelopmental disease and synaptic function in health and disease. It featured a keynote address by Dr. Theo Lasser, Professor and Director of the Laboratory of Biomedical Optics at École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne in Switzerland. On the second day, Dr. Hans Hilger Ropers delivered a keynote address to the session on neurodegenerative disease. Dr. Roper is a Professor at The Max Planck Institute for Molecular Genetics in Germany. The second day also featured a keynote lecture by Dr. Magid Abu Gharbia, Associate Dean for Research at Temple University's School of Pharmacy in America, for the session on therapeutics.

Dr. El-Agnaf added: "At QBRI, we are committed to helping develop Qatar into a regional hub for healthcare innovation and research in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. By partnering with the International Brain Research Organization and hosting these regional events in Doha, the institute brings students, scientists, and industry veterans from around the Middle East together for knowledge-exchange and networking, while helping boost the profile of Qatar and encouraging further regional collaboration and research."

For more at information on QBRI please visit their website [www.qbri.org.qa](http://www.qbri.org.qa).

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#### **About Hamad bin Khalifa University**

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, is an emerging research university that is building its foundation upon unique collaborations with local and international partners. Located in Education City, HBKU delivers undergraduate and graduate programs through its College of Science and Engineering, College of Law and Public Policy, College of Health and Life Sciences, College of Islamic Studies, and its College of Humanities and Social Sciences. It also provides unparalleled opportunities for research and scholarship through its research institutes, and its Center of Executive Education delivers customized programs for the business community of Qatar and the region, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.