

Qatar Science Leadership Program concludes its first workshop in the US

San Francisco, USA 19 February 2014 - A week after launching its seventh cycle, Qatar Science Leadership Program (QSLP) concluded its first workshop for participants studying outside of Qatar. Thirty QSLP students who are enrolled in American institutions studying various scientific research disciplines participated in the event, organised by QSLP in San Francisco, USA.

The workshop, the first of its kind, aims to support QSLP students in their scientific research pursuits by providing them with effective communication skills, crucial in developing their professional relationships with colleagues and research supervisors.

Established by Qatar Foundation's Research and Development in 2008, QSLP is a unique career development programme that has been designed for undergraduate and postdoctoral candidates, who are keen to build a fulfilling career in a wide range of science-related fields and to contribute to Qatar's national research agenda.

Dr Ayman Bassil, Head of Research Training & Development at Qatar Foundation's Research, explained the aims of the workshop. "The Qatar Science Leadership Program is keen to communicate with its members and support them throughout the year. As most of our students are pursuing their studies in the United States and the UK, we decided to organise this event outside Qatar. The workshop helps our students with their undergraduate and graduate educational pursuits."

The first day of the two-day workshop saw 15 students from QSLP's Research Undergraduate Track participate in sessions designed to help them achieve their educational goals. In addition, selected students made 10-minute presentations to clarify and explain their educational track.

On the second day, 15 Master's students and PhD researchers on the program's Research Scientist Track presented on some of the challenges they face in their work, and discussed potentially viable solutions.

Launch of the Seventh Cycle

QSLP recently announced the launch of its seventh cycle and expects to receive applications from students wishing to enlist on one of the program's four tracks. The new cycle will include a number of diverse events and training workshops aimed at nurturing students and honing their abilities.

"After joining one of the four tracks offered by the Qatar Science Leadership Program, students begin a new educational phase," said Dr Bassil. "During this phase, we emphasise scientific progression while providing advice and guidance that helps them achieve the best results."

Dr Wyatt Hume, Executive Director of Education, Training and Development within Qatar Foundation Research and Development, said, "The Qatar Science Leadership Program has proven its excellence and importance for the future of scientific research in Qatar. Today, we are reaping the rewards from the program, with more participants pursuing graduate studies and certificates in a multitude of fields. We have a lot of hope for this young generation of Qatari students, as they will lead the nation's future development."

QSLP, which aims to support and encourage scientific research, is a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. It includes a number of research programs in health, biomedicine, energy, environment, computer science, information technology, behavioural science and humanities. Up to now, 15 students have graduated from the program, while a further 100 participants continue to pursue studies in various fields. More than 83 percent of the program's participants are Qatari. The remaining 17 percent comprises other nationals who have graduated from Qatari universities.

QSLP provides participants with the freedom to choose one of the four scientific tracks available, based on their qualifications and interests.

The first track, the *Research Undergraduate Track*, caters to undergraduates who are keen to pursue higher education in scientific research fields and enables them to seamlessly join the *Research Scientist Track*, followed by the *Research Postdoctoral Track*.

In the second track, the *Research Management Track* allows trainees to gain hands-on experience in critical areas related to different aspects of research management and teaches them how to manage complex scientific projects.

The third track, the *Research Scientist Track*, is designed for Qataris who want to pursue a Master's or PhD degree and helps them champion specific areas of scientific investigation that are of strategic importance to the economic growth of Qatar. The programme focuses on the country's core research interests, and supports nationals by developing their skills and offering them the opportunity to take part in conferences and training sessions in Qatar and further afield.

Finally, the Research Postdoctoral Track is a highly technical path where participants are trained to champion an area of scientific investigation which is of strategic importance to the needs of Qatar and the wider MENA region. This track focuses on the fields of technology, biomedicine, energy, environment, information technology, behavioural sciences and social sciences.

In addition to summer training classes held at Qatar Foundation's research institutes, QSLP allows students to familiarise themselves with their future working environment, enhance skills and prepare for higher studies.

More information is available at: <http://www.qslp.org>.

Ends

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

Leading Qatar's vision to become an international center 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 commercialization, as well as the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), a globally renowned scientific research funding organization, and prominent research institutes operating at the frontiers of science, including Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI) and Qatar Energy and Environment Research Institute (QEERI).