



## **EDUCATION AND RESEARCH ARE KEY TO UNLOCK HUMAN POTENTIAL, EXPERTS SAY ON DAY 3 OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE PARKS CONFERENCE IN QATAR**

*Qatar Foundation Research & Development's Qatar Science & Technology Park Hosts Premier Event In Capital City Doha*

**Doha, Qatar, 21 October 2014:** High-level government and private sector officials stressed the critical importance of universities and science parks as 'knowledge creators' on day three of the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation World Conference (IASP 2014 Doha) taking place in Qatar this week.

The four-day annual event, hosted by Qatar Foundation Research & Development's Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), is being staged in the Arab world for the first time.

In Tuesday's opening plenary session, officials from Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Spain, Taiwan and South Africa gathered to discuss and explore new models of collaboration, indicating that strong links between universities and science parks will be essential to the success of research outcomes and innovation in the region and around the world, both now and in the future.

Experts agreed that universities, in close collaboration with international science parks, can be 'solvers' in the innovation value chain, ensuring that science-driven innovation from universities is diffused into the economy through science parks.

The conference supports the mission of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development to build and develop capacity for creativity and critical thinking through research in education and science, hence the importance of QSTP to promote QF's mandate.

Hamad Al Kuwari, Head of the IASP 2014 Doha Organising committee and Managing Director of Qatar Science and Technology Park, said: "High-level discussions with our colleagues from the region and across the world are precisely what is needed to chart a course forward for technology innovation so we can take on the challenges and seize market opportunities in the region."

QSTP and Qatar Foundation have put Qatar and the Arab region on the map globally by leading an ambitious research mission in Qatar. The organisations are also maintaining a long-standing commitment to supporting Arab expatriate scientists and innovators in Qatar and across the world.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) last [Science Report](#) cited Qatar as an example of an Arab state tackling regional challenges by setting up a science park and implementing a national research strategy in close collaboration with universities.

Professor Haitham Lababidi, Assistant Vice President for Research at Kuwait University; Josep Piqué, CEO of the Office of Economic Growth at Barcelona Activa; Mr Gerard Verhoef, Science Park Project Manager at South Africa's University of the Free State; and Andrea T.J Hsu, Director of the Investment Services Division at Southern Taiwan Science Park Bureau all spoke at the event.

"Our experience is applicable to many countries around the region – a mission to develop sustainable solutions for all," said Professor Lababidi during his presentation.

IASP 2014 Doha runs until 22 October. In Qatar, the event is backed by businesses such as Qatar Airways, which serves as the Official Carrier.

IASP 2014 Doha has garnered interest and support from the international innovation community, with The Skolkovo Innovation Centre – a high technology business park near Moscow, Russia – signing on as IASP 2014 Doha's Gold Sponsor.

A full list of conference speakers can be found at [www.iasp2014doha.com/speakers-list](http://www.iasp2014doha.com/speakers-list). Follow @QSTP on Twitter for live updates from the event.

### **Photo Caption**

#### **Image 1:**

Gerard Verhoef, Science Park Project Manager South Africa

#### **Image 2:**

Josep Piqué, CEO, Office of Economic Growth, Spain

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Notes to Editors:

### **About IASP 2014 Doha**

IASP 2014 Doha is the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual World Conference of the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation, supported locally by Silver Sponsor Qatar Petroleum. In 2012, Qatar Science & Technology Park won a competitive bid to host the

conference, marking the first time it will take place in the Arab world. QSTP was selected because of its vision to create a vibrant culture of innovation and entrepreneurship – part of a wider and profound transformation of Qatar’s national economy. Hundreds of innovation leaders representing 54 countries will attend the event.

### **About Qatar Science & Technology Park**

Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), part of Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D), is Qatar’s primary incubator for technology development, fostering the environment required for accelerating commercialisation of research and supporting innovation and entrepreneurship. QSTP focuses on four themes as per the Qatar National Research Strategy (QNRS) announced in 2012; Energy, Environment, Health Sciences and Information & Communication Technologies. QSTP is located in Qatar Foundation’s Education City and has access to the resources of its cluster of leading research universities.

Members within the QSTP Free Zone include SMEs, international corporations and research institutions, which have collectively committed to investing in new programs, creating intellectual property, enhancing technology management skills and developing innovative new products in line with the QNRS. QSTP supports QF R&D’s economic and human development objectives for Qatar and is increasingly being recognized as an international hub for applied research, innovation, incubation and entrepreneurship.

For more information, please visit the QSTP website at [www.qstp.org.qa](http://www.qstp.org.qa).

### **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 commercialisation, 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).

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