

PRESS RELEASE

## **QEERI Technology and Innovation Event Attracts Global Experts**

*Participants discuss research and technology development ecosystem in Qatar*

A number of experts from Qatar and all over the world came together to explore the research and technology development ecosystem in Qatar at the second Technology and Innovation Workshop hosted by Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI), part of Hamad bin Khalifa University. The four-day event, attended by researchers, stakeholders and industry players, shed light on important topics including R&D as a driver for growth and market evolution, and the challenges and opportunities for R&D in Qatar and the region.

The workshop, held at the Researchery (formerly known as the HBKU Research Complex), emphasized the need for science to go beyond basic and fundamental research to focus on market -- and technology-driven -- research, development and innovation. The event featured talks, panel discussions, case studies and group activities, and saw the participation of dignitaries and guests including Dr. Mohammed bin Saif Al Kuwari, Assistant Undersecretary and Director of the Environmental and Municipal Studies Institute at the Ministry of Municipality and Environment. Also in attendance were Yousuf Abdulla Rebeeh, Chief Operations Officer at Qatar Petrochemical Company; Engineer Saleh Al Marri, Head of Renewable Energy Technology at Kahramaa; Dr. Salvino Salvaggio, Senior Director of Implementation at Qatar Foundation Research, Development and Innovation; as well as Dr. Marc Vermeersch, Executive Director at QEERI. Management and staff of the research institutes convened to gain further insights of the discussions and topics put forward.

The workshop was led by international experts including Dr. Ron Basu, Director at RB Consultants and a Visiting Fellow at the Henley Business School in the United Kingdom; as well as Professor Katte B. Akhilesh, President of the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Petroleum Technology in India. They were accompanied by Professor James Fenton, Director of the University of Central Florida's Florida Solar Energy Center (FSEC) and Joseph Walters, Program Director at FSEC at the University of Central Florida in the United States.

Commenting on the workshop, Dr. Al Kuwari, said: "The event is a unique platform that brings together several key players – researchers, industry, government representatives, and experts from the field -- to discuss an unprecedented transformation phase in the State of Qatar. We're continuously driven by the need to realize the Qatar National Vision 2030 in tandem with our common aspirations, which necessitates having tangible results and real world solutions for the grand challenges that face our country."

Addressing the multi-faceted subjects covered at the workshop, Engineer Al Marri, who also presented a talk on Research and Development and Industry Perspective in Qatar, said: "It is interesting to hear so

many different perspectives and experiences from the participants. Having events such as QEERI's Technology and Innovation Workshop will contribute towards well-informed and deliberate consideration of some the challenges we face ahead of us, and the ways to tackle them. This will enable us to redirect research to industrial needs, and in turn have a direct national impact."

Explaining his objectives for the workshop, Professor Akhilesh, said: "Demystifying research, development, engineering and technology helps in planning and coordinating various activities of the research and development function. Understanding the roles and responsibilities, structuring and functioning help in scoping of the activities and relate to other roles of management within an organization. And that is my overarching and intended goal through this workshop -- to enable participants to understand the various elements involved in transforming basic research into market and technology-driven research."

In his closing remarks, Dr. Rachid Zaffou, Technology Chair at QEERI, thanked the participants and guests, and stressed on the importance of staying committed. "Science in the form of knowledge is important, but more important is to drive scientific research to deliver innovative technological solutions, and in our case, this means the need to develop technologies that can benefit Qatar in addressing its challenges in energy, water, and environment. However, this translation of research to value creation can only happen if we are committed, passionate as well as disciplined in following and implementing R&D strategies, tools and processes."

The first edition of the Technology and Innovation Workshop was held in May 2018 and focused on ensuring scientists have the knowledge and the mindset to innovate and to approach science itself with an entrepreneurial mindset - this is key in driving ideas towards fruition in the form of value-creation. The next workshop is scheduled for March 2019.

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**About Hamad Bin Khalifa University**  
***Innovating Today, Shaping Tomorrow***

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF), was founded in 2010 as a research-intensive university that acts as a catalyst for transformative change in Qatar and the region while having global impact. Located in Education City, HBKU is committed to building and cultivating human capacity through an enriching academic experience, innovative ecosystem, and unique partnerships. HBKU delivers multidisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs through its colleges, and provides opportunities for research and scholarship through its institutes and centers. For more information about HBKU, visit [www.hbku.edu.qa](http://www.hbku.edu.qa)