



QATAR FOUNDATION: TWO DECADES OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND SCIENCE AND RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGHS

QF Continues To Empower Qataris To Help Build The Nation's Future

Doha, 31 January 2015: Since its establishment in 1995, Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) has been dedicated to encouraging a culture of innovation and creativity in order to fulfil its overarching mission of unlocking human potential.

Over the last 20 years, the organisation has established centres and joint ventures across its core areas of education, science and research, and community development. Today, there are more than 50 QF entities working together to support the Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV2030) of transforming the nation from a hydrocarbon- to a knowledge-based economy.

Diverse and dedicated to serving the nation's future, Qatar Foundation is proud for its brand to be represented by the Sidra tree. The branches of the tree epitomise the many centres and joint-ventures at QF. The leaves, flowers and fruits signify the individual lives that QF is dedicated to fostering, and the seeds represent sustainability. Furthermore, the Sidra tree is deeply rooted in local tradition and stands for the gathering and exchanging of knowledge and opinions at the cornerstone of QF's vision and mission.

It is through the Foundation's education and research initiatives that QF is leading the human, social, and economic development of Qatar. Indeed, to date, over 2,500 students have graduated from QF's partner universities, and are working across a variety of public and private sector fields, including oil and gas, engineering, technology, communications, construction and finance as well as education and science.

Education Cycle

Qatar Foundation has successfully created a unique academic environment that engages students at every stage of their academic lives. From as early as six months, Qatar Foundation provides primary and secondary schooling, and higher education opportunities at undergraduate, graduate and doctoral candidate level. Currently, there are over 6,000 students enrolled across the different institutions.

Qatar Foundation houses eight pre-school, primary and secondary schools. Since the launch of Qatar Academy Doha in 1996, there have been 844 graduates. Last year there were 2,977 students enrolled across the five Qatar Academy schools, 70 per cent of which were Qatari.

Furthermore, of the 158 students at the Qatar Leadership Academy, 70 per cent were Qatari, and of the 338 students enrolled at Awsaj Academy, over nine-in-ten were Qatari.

QF's unique Academic Bridge Program, serves as an intermediary level between high school and university to help students overcome any language, academic or cultural challenges. It has witnessed the graduation of over 2,500 students since 2011. Nine out of ten of them went on to complete further studies in Qatar or abroad. In the most recent academic year, there were 198 students enrolled in the programme, with Qatari nationals making up four out of five pupils.

QF also encompasses a number of world-class universities. Home-grown, graduate-level Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) was created to continue fulfilling QF's objective of unlocking human potential, and is joined by eight more international partner universities based at Education City.

HBKU and the branch campuses offer specific higher education degrees that were hand-picked to promote the objectives underpinning the QNV2030 and include courses in art and design, medicine, engineering, computer science and business, international affairs, journalism and communications, executive education, museum studies, conservation, and archaeology.

With over 2,500 students enrolled across the institutions, Qataris are the largest group making up one-third of the student body. They are joined by nearly 90 nationalities that collectively provide a truly international learning and knowledge-sharing experience.

Research and Education Cycle

Qatar Foundation places an emphasis on Science and Research for students from an early age which prepares young men and women to become researchers in the fields of priority for Qatar and nurtures the next generation of scientists.

In 2008, the launch of the Qatar National Vision 2030 as the roadmap to transforming Qatar into a knowledge-based economy reinforced the importance of Qatar Foundation's mission.

Supporting the country's commitment to becoming a leading centre for excellence and innovation, Qatar Foundation's activities are advancing technological discoveries.

Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D) leads the science and research mission across the four research priority areas determined by the Qatar National Research Strategy launched in 2012. The aim of the Strategy is to transform Qatar into a leading centre for research and development excellence and innovation, and the four tracks include Energy and Environment; Computing and Information Technology; Health; and Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities.

Through its pillars, QF's efforts are fully-aligned with the National Development Strategy for Qatar 2016 that serves as a framework towards achieving the goals of the QNV2030 and is a demonstration of commitment to increasing the well-being of citizens.

QF's approach to research and development is unique. A comprehensive cycle of education, research and commercialisation helps to deliver economic diversification and innovative home-grown technology that will not only benefit Qatar but the rest of the world too.

The process begins with the development of students and researchers' ideas. These are encouraged through the Foundation's home-grown Research Institutes and other partners, and QF offers practical support by investing in people and their ideas, providing infrastructure, financial assistance and expert guidance.

Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), a member of QF R&D, is a centre tasked with fostering original, competitively selected research and has funded over 35 local entities undertaking research and more than 500 research entities from 50 different countries. It completed some 236 research projects in 2014. As part of its work, QNRF has launched three new programmes to support young researchers, including the Qatar Innovation Promotion Award, which aims to encourage creative ideas and technologies by innovators who wish to develop prototypes. In total, QNRF funds 10 programmes which cater to researchers.

The final stage of the process is commercialisation which is facilitated by Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP). As a free-zone, it serves as an incubator for start-up businesses and entrepreneurs that encourage companies and institutes from around the world to develop and commercialise their solutions in Qatar. Last year, one corporate research project was commercialised, and three-start-up companies were established.

QSTP provides exclusive services through the free zone to companies undertaking research and development, with nearly 40 companies of varying size working inside QSTP.

An example of an SME (small and medium-sized enterprise) supported by QSTP is iHorizons which has received backing in order to enhance Arabic content on social media sites such as Twitter. This is an exciting innovation taking into consideration the lack of technologies that presently have the capacity to monitor and analyse Arabic social media output. Whilst a report by the Economist Magazine found that Arabic content at the internet currently amounts to less than 1 per cent of total material, experts consider that the demand for Arabic-language digital content tools is increasing rapidly, especially in the local IT market.

Another firm supported by QSTP is Aman Information Security and Qatar Navigator, which has developed a highly sophisticated system to enhance information security in Qatar. This project provides a comprehensive system which identifies procedures that companies need to comply with in order to satisfy the requirements of the national information security policy.

Elsewhere, in order to support practical research, QSTP has supported the Green Gulf company which has been working inside the science park to develop an experimental institution to examine solar energy technologies and identify those most suitable to Qatar and the Arabian Gulf region.

An important tool in the QF R&D cycle is the Qatar Science and Leadership Program. Demonstrating the importance of education in science and research, the career-development programme was launched in 2008 by QF to support the development of nationals in the field of science and management. It is also an example of QF's on-going commitment to unlocking human potential.

Overwhelmingly successful, 18 students have already gone on to work in different QF entities following graduation. There are now 150 enrolled in the initiative with over 60 students in both the Research Undergraduate Track and Research Scientist Track, as well as over 20 signed up to the Research Management Track and two more in the Research Postdoctoral Track.

Community Development

Alongside Qatar Foundation's pioneering education and science and research programmes, the organisation is also committed to building strong, sustainable communities. With initiatives in art, heritage, literary learning, health, family development, policy research and sustainability, the Foundation is fostering a progressive society, while enhancing cultural life and protecting Qatar's heritage.

An example of this commitment is Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar's 'Sahtak Awalan; Your Health First'. The five-year campaign, launched in 2012 in association with the Supreme Council of Health, aims to educate members of the community on the importance of healthy lifestyles, and lower the risk of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

Also within the medical track is Sidra Medical and Research Center. Aiming to set new standards in patient care for women and children in Qatar, the Gulf region and internationally, Sidra recently announced its first patent application to the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The application, which is for the first non-invasive technique for monitoring cancer progression, could potentially improve treatment methodologies for patients.

Also demonstrating QF's commitment to the creation of a healthy and contented society is Qatar Biobank for Medical Research. The centre is working alongside the Supreme Council of Health, Hamad Medical Corporation and scientists from Imperial College London to enable vital medical research on prevalent health issues in Qatar by collecting samples and information about the health and lifestyles of large numbers of Qatar's population. The results from its two-year pilot stage were recently released.

Additionally, as part of on-going efforts to create a green urban environment, QF has been diligently applying the latest sustainability solutions in all its development projects, and adopted a number of programmes to help the public to integrate sustainability into their daily lives. As testament to QF's innovation on renewables and energy efficiency, the organisation will produce up to 85 per cent of Qatar's total solar energy.

Over the last two decades, Qatar Foundation has proven that dedication to unlocking human potential lies at the core of its various institutes, centres and initiatives in furthering the community, building a platform for innovation, and fostering a culture of quality and excellence. As it starts the next 20 years, QF looks forward to these bearing ever greater solutions to help diversify the nation into a knowledge-based economy.

-ENDS-

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. QF was co-founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Qatar Foundation's Chairperson. 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>.