



## QATAR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY PARK LAUNCHES CYCLE 5 OF XLR8 PROGRAM

*Three-month intensive accelerator program empowers entrepreneurs to transform their business ideas into reality*

**Doha, Qatar, September 27, 2017:** Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), Qatar's primary incubator for technology innovation and tech-based entrepreneurship, recently launched Cycle 5 of its intensive accelerator program, XLR8.

The three-month XLR8 program provides aspiring entrepreneurs with training, guidance, and mentorship, helping them bridge gaps between ideation and commercialization, and transform their ideas into products that address market demands.

A total of 20 teams were selected for Cycle 5, representing a broad range of tech applications and innovations. One team, *Royability*, is creating a speech-generation app to help autistic children speak, while *Muhami* is establishing an online service for legal advice. Other innovations include drone delivery systems, a web platform for hiring and managing remote workers, and an automated cybersecurity solution.

Three teams have emerged as part of Challenge 22, a competition run by the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy for innovative ideas relating to the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Their ideas include a wearable dehydration detection system for workers, a central smart queuing system, and smart football shirts that can predict cardiac events such as heart attacks or angina.

Dr. Maher Hakim, Executive Director of QSTP, said: "Through programs such as XLR8, QSTP aims to foster a dynamic and sustainable technology startup ecosystem in Qatar and the wider region. We are delighted to welcome aspiring young entrepreneurs who will contribute to Qatar's journey towards a sustainable, diversified economy in line with the broader vision of Qatar Foundation's research and development strategy."

Cycle 5 of XLR8 focuses on three core themes: problem-solution fit; customer validation and market validation; and investment, go-to market strategy, and pitching. Participating entrepreneurs will learn how to identify potential customers, design a rough prototype, and solicit feedback from potential clients to revise the prototype accordingly. After verifying that their idea is commercially viable, participants will learn how to pitch their idea to potential investors.

A network of mentors and coaches, who specialize in the commercialization of tech-based innovations, will guide entrepreneurs, enabling them to create commercially viable products and services that transform their ideas into reality. This cycle's mentors come from some of Qatar's leading public and private institutions, including ADGS

Computer Systems, iHorizons, and Sidra Medical and Research Center.

Since the program's inception in 2015, 50 teams and 124 individuals have graduated from XLR8. Emad Al-Khaja, CEO of INJAZ Qatar and a Cycle 4 graduate, said: "I went to XLR8 with an idea and they helped me develop it, and learn more about the business aspect, which was very useful because I was focused on the R&D aspect at the same time."

Through the initiative, QSTP, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, endeavours to foster an innovation ecosystem in Qatar and the region.

For more information on the program, please visit [qstp.org.qa/home/innovation/qstp-XLR8](http://qstp.org.qa/home/innovation/qstp-XLR8)

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

Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), part of Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D), is Qatar's primary accelerator & 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)

### **Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D)**

Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D) is charged with the Qatar National Research Strategy, dedicated to making Qatar a leading centre for research and development excellence and innovation. QF R&D is home to Qatar National Research Fund, a leading scientific research funding organization, and Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), an international hub for technology innovation and commercialization.

### **Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential**

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development.

QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development.

QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global research and development challenges. By promoting a culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>

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