

### ***Stars of Science's* Search for Arab Innovators Begins on MBC 4**

**Doha, 15 September, 2014** – *Stars of Science*, Qatar Foundation's "edutainment reality" TV program broadcast on MBC4, launched its search for the best innovators in the region in a consequential first episode that saw aspiring candidates pitch their ideas to the jury. *Stars of Science* kicked off its international casting tour by screening potential candidates at two prominent regional institutions of higher education and technology. Audiences across the Arab world were introduced to many talented, young innovators vying for a place in the program.

For its sixth season, *Stars of Science* debuts a new format aimed at increasing competition, pitting small groups of innovators against each other for the chance to turn their project ideas into reality. Following the competitive selection process, 12 candidates aged 18 to 30 from across the Arab world will be selected to come to Doha, where they are mentored by engineering and design specialists from across the globe. The innovators' resilience, ingenuity and teamwork are tested in challenges throughout the program as they develop their potential products from concept to working prototype with the ultimate goal of winning a share of \$600,000 in prize money.

The international casting tour started in Alahsa, Saudi Arabia, where large numbers of students, entrepreneurs and young professionals from different Arab countries were shortlisted to present their ideas to the *Stars of Science* jury at King Faisal University (KFU). Joining as a local jury member was Dr. Mohammed bin Saleh Al Awaid, Dean of Student Affairs at KFU. On the tour's next stop, the United Arab Emirates, a diverse group of young men and women pitched their ideas to *Stars of Science* at the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology. There, Mrs. Suaad Al-Shamsi, a well-known aircraft engineer, helped evaluate and give feedback for a second time as a local jury member.

Aspiring candidates submitted a range of diverse and inventive ideas. Potential projects included a welding machine for electronics, an automatic sidewalk painter, a prayer alarm bracelet, a phone to phone battery charger, a health diagnostic bracelet and a mobile UV sanitizer.

"*Stars of Science* is a platform to identify and improve upon the region's most innovative ideas to make them known to a global audience," noted Dr. Fouad Mrad, perennial juror and Executive Director of the UN ESCWA regional center for technology in Amman, Jordan. "The high quality of young people who are participating in this casting tour is evidence that the Arab world is developing the human capital necessary to innovate in the fields of science and technology."

Potential projects were evaluated by their usefulness to society, potential for marketability, time needed to develop the idea and the possibility of obtaining a patent. In the next two episodes, *Stars of Science* will continue its casting tour in Qatar, Morocco and Lebanon. Young innovators from these countries and others like Jordan, Kuwait, Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Oman, Sudan and Algeria will present their best ideas to the jury in hopes of landing a ticket to Doha, Qatar. *Stars of Science* will announce the selected candidates in the fourth episode.

*Stars of Science* has launched a new website that allows fans to enrich their viewing experience with web exclusives, episode recaps and candidate profiles. The website is an interactive hub for technology-related discussion and helps Arab innovators connect with resources and each other. Every Saturday - between 8pm KSA and 11pm KSA, online visitors can join the lively discussion group that will have members of the jury, SOS alumni and program producers taking part in the discussions and answering questions. A live chat feature with a technical advisor for all those wishing to apply to the program will also be on hand.

Khaled Al Jumaily is reprising his role as host of *Stars of Science* for Season 6. For the first time, he is joined by Haneen Al Naqdi, who is co-hosting the program. The next episode of *Stars of Science* will be shown on 20 September 2014 at 9 PM KSA/ 6 PM GMT on MBC4.

For more information please visit:

Website - [www.starsofscience.com](http://www.starsofscience.com)

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/StarsofScienceTV>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/starsofscience>

Youtube- <http://www.youtube.com/user/Starsofsciencetv>

Instagram- starsofsciencetv

## **Stars of Science**

*Stars of Science* is an original TV format, initiated by Qatar Foundation, which empowers the Arab world's next generation of science and technology innovators. In this sixth season, 12 young entrepreneurs are challenged to prove their resourcefulness during different stages of the innovation cycle with the support of engineering and design mentors. In a series of competitive challenges, candidates develop the engineering and design aspects of their projects while being evaluated by an expert panel of jurors. Over the course of the season, candidates are eliminated until only four remain in the competition. These finalists vie for a share of a \$600,000 prize, determined by a combination of a jury deliberation and voting from the public.

**The program airs from Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 2014 on MBC4 at 9PM KSA/6 PM GMT**

## **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 a carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world.

Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

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 commercializing 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>*

## **About MBC Group**

MBC Group is the first private free-to-air satellite broadcasting company in the Arab World which was launched in London in 1991 and later moved to its headquarters in Dubai in 2002. Over the past 23 years, MBC Group has grown to become a well-established media group that enriches people's lives through information, interaction and entertainment. Based in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, MBC Group includes 18 television channels: **MBC1** (general family entertainment); **MBC2 and MBC MAX** (24-hour western movies); **MBC3** (children's edutainment with a mix of both local productions and western acquisitions); **MBC4** (entertainment for young families with women at its core while leaning more towards local content productions); **MBC Action** (an indigenous adrenaline-packed channel targeting young males with local and homegrown productions); **MBC Variety** (Western general entertainment and movie channel broadcasting uninterrupted premium western films and series); **Al Arabiya** (the 24-hour Arabic language news channel); **Al Hadath** (an extension of Al Arabiya News Channel with specific focus on actual happening events in the Arab world and beyond); **Wanasah** (24-hour Arabic music channel); **MBC DRAMA** (24/7 Arabic Drama); **MBC MASR** (general family entertainment channel geared towards the Egyptian family); **MBC + Drama** (paid channel on OSN and a joint channel between MBC & OSN); **MBC Bollywood** (delivering the freshest in Bollywood content geared towards the region via an Arabized interface); and most recently 4 sports channels- **MBC PRO SPORTS** (geared towards Saudi Football League fans in the Kingdom).The Group also includes two radio stations: **MBC FM** (Gulf music), and **Panorama**

**FM** (contemporary Arabic hit music); as well as **O3 productions**, a specialized production unit. Furthermore, the Group includes online platforms: [www.mbc.net](http://www.mbc.net), [www.alarabiya.net](http://www.alarabiya.net), [www.shahid.net](http://www.shahid.net) (the first free VOD and catch up portal in the Arab world) and [www.actionha.net](http://www.actionha.net), and [www.mbcprosports.net](http://www.mbcprosports.net) among others. As of July 2011, seven of MBC Group's channels began to air in HD across the MENA Region: MBC 1 HD, MBC 2 HD, MBC 4 HD, MBC Action HD, MBC Drama HD, MBC Max HD and Al Arabiya HD News Channel. In 2013, MBC 3 HD was added to this bouquet, and in 2014 MBC Variety was also added.