

Two Stars of Science Candidates Advance In Crucial Stage of Pan-Arab Competition on MBC4

Doha, 19 October 2014 – Audiences across the Arab world witnessed young innovators passionately defend their prototypes in order to stave off elimination in the second Engineering round of *Stars of Science*, Qatar Foundation’s popular “edutainment reality” program broadcast on MBC4. In the end, Walaa Aniba of Tunisia and Rania Bou Jaoudeh of Lebanon progressed to the Design stage, knocking out Ahmad Kurdi of Saudi Arabia and Ousama Dghaish of Jordan.

Stars of Science, now in its sixth season, pits innovators against each other in a competition to turn their ideas into reality. Twelve candidates aged 18 to 30 come to Doha, Qatar, where they are mentored by world-class engineering and design experts at the Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP). The innovators’ resilience, ingenuity and teamwork are tested in challenges throughout the show as they develop their inventions from concept to commercialization with the ultimate goal of winning funding for their projects.

During the Engineering stage, the candidates were tasked with turning their creative idea into a working prototype. Episode 6 featured Walaa’s Smart Headphones and Ahmad’s Pool Warning System. The Smart Headphones use sensors to monitor and analyze external sounds to stop music automatically when any risk is detected, while the Pool Warning System was designed to alert owners of unintended and possibly dangerous use.

The other two projects, Ousama’s Car Refueling Tester and Rania’s Automatic Zucchini Corer, focused on making existing tasks easier. The Car Refueling Tester monitors the quality of petrol in an automobile’s gas tank, and the Automatic Zucchini Corer is an ergonomic machine that greatly reduces the time and strenuous effort spent preparing a common staple of Arab cuisine.

After weeks of tinkering and testing, the young men and women faced an expert jury, who judged based on prototype performance (50 percent), product outlook (30 percent) and the resourcefulness and leadership shown by the candidate (20 percent). In the *Stars of Science* Engineering round, innovators with the two highest scores moved on in the competition while the candidates with the two lowest scores were eliminated.

The perennial jurors for the Engineering stage were Mr. Youssif Abdulrahman Al-Salhi, General Manager of Qatar Shell Research and Technology Center and Dr. Fouad Mrad, Executive Director of the United Nations ESCWA regional technology center. Stars of Science welcomed VIP jury member Mr. Suneet Singh Tuli, who as co-founder and CEO of DataWind designed the world's most affordable tablet computer to increase access to computing and the internet.

The jury wasted no time in challenging Walaa and Ahmad to demonstrate that their projects could improve safety without being too inconvenient for regular use. Dr. Mrad questioned the effectiveness of Ahmad's project, asking if normal pool use would set off his alarm. Mr. Tuli tried on Walaa's Smart Headphones and was satisfied when he heard for himself how sudden, unexpected noises paused the music playback.

Rania impressed the jury with the functionality of her Automatic Zucchini Corer, which performed flawlessly in front of them. She also got high marks for being persistent and tenacious despite experiencing setbacks throughout the engineering stage. Ousama gave a spirited defense of the reliability of his Car Refueling Tester and made a case for his inclusion in the Design round.

In the tense lead up to the jury's results, the candidates were nervous as they wondered if they would remain in the competition. The announcements of the final verdict prompted celebration from Rania and Walaa, who were overjoyed to make it to the Design stage. Inaccuracies in Ahmad and Ousama's prototype testing turned out to be a decisive factor in the jury's scoring, ending their SOS journey.

"I am encouraged and inspired by the way all candidates have collaborated with each other and the experts at QSTP throughout this competition," noted Mr. Al-Salhi. "It takes great skill, patience and teamwork to make breakthroughs and problem-solve effectively. These four bright minds have exhibited these qualities, setting a great example for young people interested in science and technology across the region."

On the next Stars of Science episode, to be shown on 25 October at 8:00 KSA time on MBC4, viewers will see four more candidates put their prototypes to the test in an effort to progress to the next stage. Season 6 of *Stars of Science* will culminate in a live final hosted by Khaled Al Jumaily & Haneen Al Naqdi



on MBC4 on 15 November at 8:00 PM KSA/ 5:00 PM GMT 2014. Voting from the public and the jury will determine the final outcome.

For more information please visit:

Website - 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 encourages the Arab world's aspiring science and technology innovators. In this sixth season, 12 candidates are challenged to prove their resourcefulness during critical stages of the innovation cycle with an expert panel of academic jurors and industry leaders. Eliminations take place in Engineering and Design episodes until only four projects remain. These four finalists vie for a share of a \$600,000 prize, determined by a jury and voting from the public.

The program airs from Saturday, September 13th to Saturday, November 15th 2014 on MBC4

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, www.alarabiya.net, www.shahid.net (the first free VOD and catch up portal in the Arab world) and www.actionha.net, and 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.