

GULF TIMES Special Supplement

He the Minister of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) Butthaina bint Ali Al Jabr Al Nuaimi affirmed that education is one of the core pillars laid out in Qatar National Vision 2030 to build a diversified knowledge-based economy and provide a promising future to citizens through building a global educational system that offers exceptional opportunities and high quality training.

On the margins of the forum, the President of the Republic of Tatarstan Rustam Minnikhanov met with HE Al Nuaimi



HE Al Nuaimi headed the State of Qatar's delegation at the forum that was held during June 7-9, which was intended to discuss the most critical issues for the development of the education sector, provide an opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices in the field of technical and vocational education and training, formulate the directions of the global vision in building the future, and develop digital skills in the educational field in the context of digital transformation.

The announcements came at the first educational forum organised by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education at its headquarters last year on the occasion of the start of the new academic year. In her speech at the forum, HE the Minister said "The first axis of this system involves students, who we aspire to be lifelong science students, armed with knowledge and characterised by flexibility, passion, curiosity and creativity, by enhancing their achievements and ensuring their continuity, equipping them with the skills of the 21st century, instilling the

HE al-Nuaimi said "The fourth axis focuses on the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, "which we aspire to turn into a center that builds and develops innovations and capabilities, through the development of institutional capabilities, while ensuring the highest level of transparency and accountability; in addition to building partnerships with families, the public and private sectors, to achieve efficiency, equality, inclusiveness, growth and innovation in the educational system, and the establishment of a quality assurance framework, characterised by accuracy and transparency through unified standards and control mechanisms."

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professional educators, who are interested in gaining the knowledge, skills and competencies to work as Educators/ Trainers/Lab Instructors/Experiential Learning Facilitators in education environments utilizing STEM/TVET curricula and industrial training settings.



Dr. Salem Al-Naemi, President of UDST said: "At UDST, we continuously strive to provide world-class education and offer our students programs that give them real-life experiences and prepare them to lead the careers of the future. We are pleased with our increasing number of students which has reached 7000 so far, and we are happy to see that the new generation and their parents have become more aware of the importance of applied education. Our students learn in simulated environments and get the chance to experience the professional world through our partners' network as well. It is through a critical and integrative learning experience that UDST builds graduates with employable skills."

Both Qatari citizens and children of Qatari women are exempt from tuition fees for undergraduate programs. Academic entry criteria differ according to programs, nevertheless students need to present a high school graduation certificate, with an overall average of minimum 60% or an equivalent required score or higher on the UDST English Placement Test, or an equivalent; and completion of the Math Placement Test. Applicants who do not meet the entrance requirements may be considered for the Foundation Program designed to help them acquire the needed skills to enter their program of choice.

UDST has designed its curriculums based on the Qatar National Qualifications Framework and international accreditation bodies. All programs are delivered using hands-on applied experiential learning methodologies and include 40-70% applied components and practical experience related to one or more occupational field(s) of practice. The programs are led by qualified academics in technology-rich classrooms, workshops, state-of-the-art laboratories, and simulated environments. The University has transformed the education and work landscape of Qatar, distinguishing itself as a destination in the state for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and a source of top-notch talent.

University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) is the first national university that specializes in academic applied, technical, and professional education in the State of Qatar. UDST has over 64 Bachelor's and Master's degree programs, diplomas, and certificates. The University houses five colleges: The College of Business Management, the College of Computing and Information Technology, the College of Engineering Technology, the College of Health Sciences and the College of General Education in addition to specialized training centers for individuals and companies. UDST is recognized for its student-centered learning and state-of-the-art facilities. Its world-renowned faculty and researchers work on developing the students' skills and help raise well-equipped graduates who are proudly

Marine Engineering, Smart Manufacturing Engineering, Software Engineering, and Midwifery. In addition to a post-diploma Bachelor in Midwifery, a Master's program in Sustainable Tourism Management, a post-graduate diploma in Interprofessional Neonatal Intensive Care, and a post-graduate diploma in STEM/TVET Education. All new programs are available for the Fall 2023 semester and are open for admission.

UDST revealed the uniqueness of some programs shedding light on each and every aspect of them. The Marine Engineering Program is the first, occupationally dedicated undergraduate program in Qatar and exclusive to UDST. While the program meets international standards and accreditation, it relies on a customized curriculum to answer local needs, codes,



indispensable in the emerging era of automation, which is impacting almost all industries and businesses.

Admissions are open for Fall 2023 until June 23, 2023

The Master's program in Sustainable Tourism is designed to attract students who wish to develop specialist skills in managing sustainable tourism, eco-tourism, and heritage tourism. After the successful organization of the FIFA World Cup, Qatar is becoming the destination of choice for both business and pleasure and a hub for international tourists, hence, the demand for such a program is very high.

The midwifery program is inaugural to Qatar and addresses the country's need to develop "homegrown" midwives who can contribute to its vision for healthy women leading to healthy pregnancies. The program is aligned with the International Confederation of Midwives standards of education that will prepare midwives to provide skilled, knowledgeable and compassionate care for childbearing women, newborn infants and families across the continuum from pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, birth, postpartum and the early weeks of life.

The interprofessional neonatal intensive care program is developed in response to Qatar's workforce needs for specialty

education to prepare health professionals working with high intensity care neonates in neonatal intensive care units. The program will be offered through micro-credentialing to support working health professionals to return to upscale their specialized knowledge and skills to care for vulnerable babies,

The STEM/TVET Education program is designed for Bachelor's degree graduates, industry professionals, and qualified



serving different sectors of the economy and contributing to the achievement of human, social, and economic development goals both nationally and internationally.

8 New Programs for the Fall Semester 2023

University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) has recently launched 8 new programs created to address the market needs and contribute to economic growth in Qatar and the world. The list of programs includes Bachelor's degree in

and practices in Qatar, particularly related to LNG shipping. The marine engineering will support the mega expansion of LNG production and shipping in the State of Qatar.

The smart manufacturing engineering program is also unique and a necessity in a rapidly evolving economy and will prepare students to integrate high-level skills in managing smart manufacturing and design processes. Furthermore, the software engineering program will produce highly skilled software experts who are

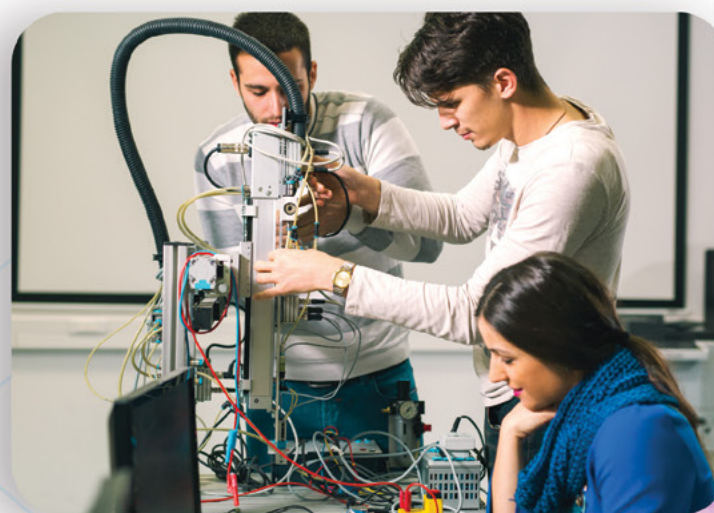
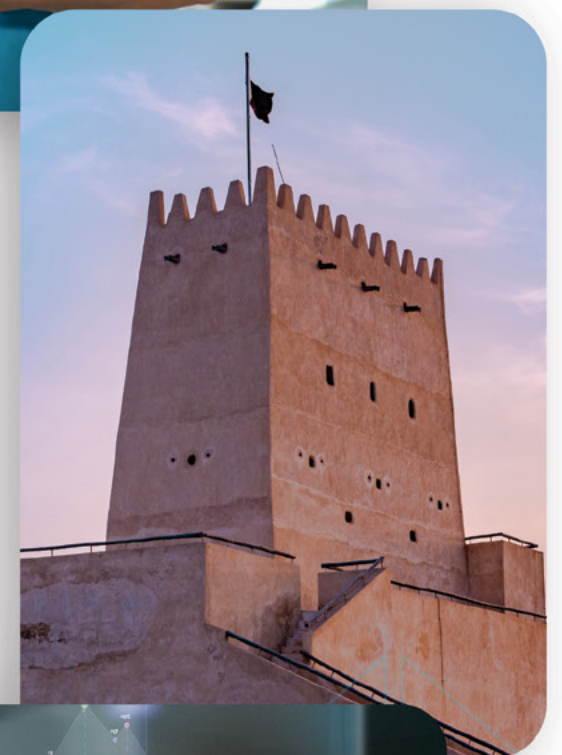




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Qatar’s quest for excellence in higher education

Qatar’s focus on higher education is a testament to its unwavering commitment to nurturing talent, fostering innovation, and driving societal progress

In recent years, the State of Qatar has emerged as a global hub for education and research, placing a strong emphasis on advancing its higher education system. This small but mighty nation, nestled in the Arabian Gulf, has made remarkable strides in fostering a culture of innovation and academic excellence. Through significant investments, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to nurturing talent, Qatar has positioned itself as a leading destination for higher education. This feature article delves into Qatar’s journey, exploring its focus on higher education and the key factors contributing to its success.

Visionary Investments in Education

Qatar’s visionary leadership recognized the vital role that education plays in the nation’s development and set forth a comprehensive plan to transform its higher education sector. The establishment of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development has been instrumental in this pursuit. Through generous funding, the foundation has attracted top-tier international universities to establish campuses in Education City, a vibrant educational hub in Doha. This initiative has not only enhanced the accessibility of higher education but has also facilitated cross-cultural exchanges and collaboration among students and researchers from diverse backgrounds.

Global Partnerships and Collaborations

Qatar’s commitment to higher education is exemplified by its strategic partnerships with renowned educational institutions worldwide. Qatar has collaborated with leading universities from the United States, Europe, and other regions, fostering knowledge exchange and sharing best practices. These partnerships have enabled Qatari students and researchers to access world-class education, cutting-edge research opportunities, and mentorship from distinguished faculty. Additionally, these collaborations have facilitated the transfer of expertise, helping Qatar develop its own academic programs and research centers.

Focus on Research and Innovation

Recognizing the pivotal role of research in driving societal progress, Qatar has prioritized the advancement of scientific inquiry and technological innovation. Research institutes such as Qatar Computing Research Institute, Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute, and Qatar Biomedical Research Institute have been established to address pressing global challenges. Qatar’s commitment to research is further bolstered



by the generous funding allocated to research grants, scholarships, and state-of-the-art infrastructure. These initiatives have attracted top researchers and scholars, fostering a vibrant research ecosystem and paving the way for groundbreaking discoveries.

Nurturing Talent and Empowering Students

Qatar’s focus on higher education extends beyond infrastructure and research. The nation recognizes the importance of nurturing talent and empowering its students. Efforts

have been made to enhance the quality of education across all levels, ensuring that Qatari students receive a holistic and rigorous academic experience. Scholarships and financial aid programs have been introduced to promote inclusivity and enable talented individuals to pursue their educational aspirations, regardless of their socio-economic background. Qatar also places emphasis on equipping students with the necessary skills to succeed in the rapidly evolving global job market, encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation.

Cultural Renaissance

Qatar’s commitment to higher education is deeply intertwined with its broader vision for cultural advancement. The nation understands the transformative power of knowledge and its ability to shape societies. Qatar has thus invested in cultivating an intellectually stimulating environment, hosting numerous international conferences, exhibitions, and cultural events. By attracting renowned scholars, artists, and intellectuals, Qatar has become a platform for intellectual discourse and cultural exchange, enriching the educational landscape and inspiring a new

generation of thinkers and innovators.

In short, Qatar’s focus on higher education is a testament to its unwavering commitment to nurturing talent, fostering innovation, and driving societal progress. Through visionary investments, global partnerships, a strong emphasis on research, and a student-centric approach, Qatar has carved a distinct niche for itself in the realm of higher education. As the nation continues to champion education, it is poised to make significant contributions to the global knowledge economy and shape a brighter future for its citizens and the world at large.

Ministry prepares students for global scientific challenges

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), represented by the Science Department of the Educational Guidance Department, organised a meeting to introduce the International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO 2023), and the student scientific training camp, which is an initiative centred on digital knowledge, financial sciences, mathematics, science, technology and engineering (STEMFD).



The meeting was attended by Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs Maha al-Ruwaili, Assistant Undersecretary for Special Education Affairs Omar al-Nama, principals of public, international and private schools, and more than 50 male and female students and their parents, in addition to educational mentors and teachers and the teachers of the science clubs in public schools.



Al-Ruwaili stressed the importance of the ministry’s strategy, which identifies ways to build advanced educational systems that provide citizens with opportunities to develop their skills and provide various areas for preparing them for success, enabling them to enter the global competitiveness and preparing them for the global market.

She said that the ministry had taken executive steps and practical measures to achieve the objectives of its strategy, as the “Training Camps” programme witnesses the launch of its first preliminary steps to implement the “scientific camp for training students.”

She said that this initiative carefully brings together learners and teachers to ensure a balanced education, practical experience, and life skills, as well as an opportunity

to build a community of learners who can scientifically solve life problems.

Al-Ruwaili noted that these camps provide an open challenge for learners in tasks that require designing, creating and applying solutions to life problems of concern to the world, by adopting the principles of sustainability, as the six components of STEMFD are integrated, namely: science, technology, engineering, mathematics, financial sciences, and digital sciences.

Head of the Science Department Fatima al-Rashed reviewed the objectives of the IJSO, which will be held next October in Bangkok, Thailand, represented in discovering outstanding students, developing their capabilities, refining their skills and enriching their experiences, and helping them to identify their scientific orientations. It also helps

students to define their future goals, and fuel the spirit of competition in science and knowledge in order to achieve the quality of achievement among students and enhance confidence in their abilities.

She stressed the importance of forming the initial nucleus of the Qatari student team in international competitions, to achieve honourable results at the global level in science in the IJSO.

Al-Rashed said that the IJSO is an international competition in science for students aged 15 (less than 16 on Dec 1, 2023). It is held annually in one of the participating countries that are chosen according to certain bases, where students compete with each other for Olympic medals, paving the way for them to have the best options and future opportunities.

During the meeting, al-Ruwaili inaugurated the slogan of the scientific camp for training students, which was designed by the students of Hamzah Preparatory School for Boys, in preparation for the start of work in the camp at the Scientific Club and Kahramaa.

The students explained the components of the slogan, which represents a coherent and harmonious process in an integrated path without dividing boundaries for the student’s learning experience, which included the integration of modern fields of science, the requirements of learning in the 21st century, keeping pace with the rapid and successive changes in life, and meeting the goals, objectives and principles adopted by the Qatar National Vision 2030.

This year, students will be trained on projects that include food preservation, water security, and green energy.

MIE SPPU Institute of Higher Education in Qatar

Bridging Education and Industry for a Thriving Future



MIE is the short form of Milestone International Education, which is a part of the DPS Group of Institutions in Qatar. MIE in partnership with Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) has formed the MIE-SPPU Institute of Higher Education which is the offshore campus of Pune University in Qatar. SPPU comes with a rich history in higher education and prides itself on a high world ranking of 500 in the QS world rankings for universities. MIE SPPU Institute of Higher Education, Doha Qatar offers five undergraduate programs and one postgraduate program and started its operations in 2021.



"The vision was to bring not only Indian School Education through the DPS Brand, which is already a household name in Qatar, but also to bring Indian Higher Education at an affordable cost to citizens and residents of Qatar",

says the President of MIE SPPU Mr Hasan Chougule who was instrumental in moving the State Government of Maharashtra in India to approve the opening of the Savitribai Phule Pune University campus in Qatar.



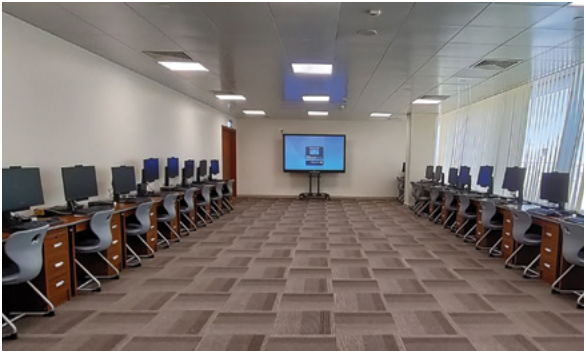
"We are catering to the needs of the community by making education affordable and relevant to what the business community and government sector want from future graduates who will pass out from the University and seek jobs in Qatar. The government initiatives to channel the career opportunities in Qatar to local graduates of universities and colleges from Qatar will help our graduates place themselves in jobs locally after they finish their undergraduate programs," said Mr Chougule.

"We have ensured that the undergraduate programs are relevant for the community in Qatar and hence we offer Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of

Commerce, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Education programs", says Prof Dr Bimalendu B Nath who is the Director of the Institute in Qatar, a Professor Emeritus from Pune University in India. "Our teaching faculty are totally engaged with the students to not only make them career ready but also get them interested in academia and research", says Prof Nath.



"We are moving all our industry and government contacts to strike partnerships that can help our students to get placed in the industry in Qatar as soon as they finish our undergraduate programs", says Yasir Nainar, the Vice President of MIE SPPU Institute of Higher Education, Qatar. "Companies such as Cisco, LuLu Hypermarkets, Intertec Group and SkipCash have already struck professional partnerships with the institute seeing its amazing growth in the higher education space. There are more companies that will soon be signing up potential cooperation partnerships with us to ensure that our graduates can get placed after work and for them to get involved in the academic research that we do", says Mr Nainar.



When questioned about the growing need for executive education for working professionals, Mr Dinesh Bakshi, the Head of Administration, has highlighted the availability of an Executive MBA for business professionals and a B.Ed program for teachers. "These two programs will be conducted after working hours so that the targeted audience of working professionals and teachers can conveniently attend the sessions", said Mr Bakshi.

MIE SPPU Institute of Higher Education is located conveniently in The Commercial Avenue, Industrial Area Road in The Arkan Buildings. It is well connected to the Metro transportation services through a shuttle bus service that the college itself offers for its students.



The teaching faculty was also very impressed with the healthy student numbers that were seen growing year-on-year. All of them expressed complete satisfaction and appreciation for the facilities available at MIE SPPU Institute of Higher Education in Qatar, which has become their new home after leaving their academic life in India. The facilities are better if not as good as teaching and learning at Pune University in India. "We are really blessed to have visionary management and great leadership towards achieving educational excellence in Higher Education", they all said.

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GULF TIMES

THE VITAL ROLE OF MUSEUMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Museums have always been considered repositories of history, art, and culture. However, their significance goes beyond being mere showcases of artifacts and exhibits. In recent years, museums have emerged as invaluable resources for higher education institutions. They play a pivotal role in enhancing the educational experience, fostering critical thinking skills, and promoting interdisciplinary learning. This article explores the multifaceted role of museums in higher education and how they contribute to the intellectual growth and holistic development of students.

Experiential Learning

One of the greatest advantages of museums in higher education is their ability to facilitate experiential learning. Students have the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities, interactive displays, and immersive simulations. This experiential approach stimulates curiosity, encourages exploration, and fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Students can analyze primary sources, conduct scientific experiments, or even participate in live performances, bringing their learning to life in a meaningful and memorable way.

institutions embrace the transformative power of museums, it is crucial to continue fostering partnerships, expanding access, and utilizing these invaluable resources to enhance the educational journey for generations to come.

The Role in Sustainability and Wellbeing

At a time when awareness of environmental challenges and the need for sustainability is being heightened, the role of museums in bringing about positive change is being increasingly recognised.

And in light of the role that museums play in protecting and documenting the cultural and historical heritage, the world celebrates on the 18th of May every year the International Museum Day to highlight museums as a cultural institution that preserves material and immaterial evidence of peoples and civilizations.

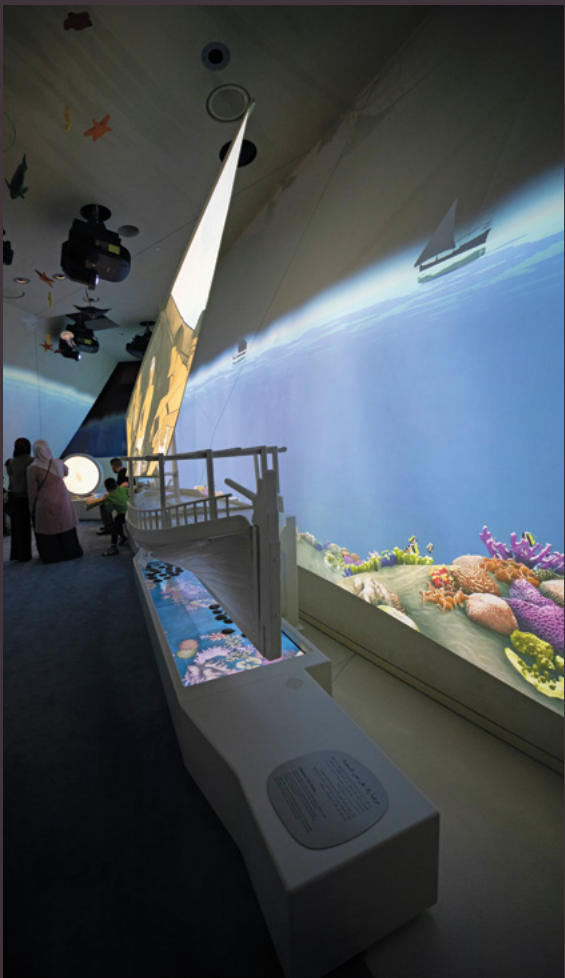
International Museum Day was established in 1977 by the International Council of Museums (ICOM — established in 1946), with the adoption of a resolution during the ICOM General Assembly in Moscow, Russia. The aim was to create an annual event with the aim of further unifying the creative aspirations and efforts of museums and drawing the attention of the world public to their activity. It also reflects the growing recognition of the importance of museums and their positive impact on local and global communities, and the promotion of awareness of the value of culture and heritage as vital elements for sustainable development and quality of life.

On this occasion, it is recalled that “Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples.” Since 1992, an annual theme was set to celebrate International Museum Day, and in 1997 a visual identity was allocated for this day by issuing an official poster for this event representing the celebrated theme.

Regarding the celebration of International Museum Day this year, which came under the theme “Museums, Sustainability and Wellbeing”, a number of local and international specialists in the field of museums agreed, in exclusive statements to Qatar News Agency (QNA), on the importance of this event, emphasizing the role of sustainability in these facilities that preserve the memory of nations and peoples.

In this regard, Director of International Cooperation and Governmental Affairs in Qatar Museums Fatima Hassan Al Sulaiti said, “Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures, exchange of concepts and cooperation between peoples.”

She added that at Qatar Museums, they work hard



being in the cultural heritage sector, in order to ensure its continuity for future generations and transfer part of the Qatari cultural heritage to the outside world.

In his statement to QNA, Director, Dadu, Children’s Museum of Qatar Essa Al Mannai, expressed his happiness with the opening of Dadu Gardens in 2022 during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and the frequent visits from the public, who expressed their happiness at providing learning opportunities and developing children’s abilities through a safe, fun environment that promotes innovation, in addition to the school and community programs that the team has provided over the past years.

Essa Al Mannai thanked Qatar Museums for its interest in establishing a children’s museum, as well as all sponsors of the Children’s Museum in Qatar, expressing his aspiration for more cultural and educational achievements at the level of Qatar, the Arab world and the world.

President of Arab Organization of Museums- ICOM ARAB and Director of Maroc Telecom Museum Ech cherki Dahmali stressed, in a statement to QNA, the role of museums in sustainability, which is the theme of this year’s celebration on the occasion of the International Museum Day, as museums can preserve the environment and spread awareness among visitors of the importance of preserving it, noting that museums have a major role in sustainability, as museums around the world are experiencing great challenges today, especially with regard to financial sustainability.

In this regard, he said that Arab museums need to restore the status of museums within our societies in order to preserve our movable heritage and our intangible heritage.

Secretary of the International Committee for Museum Management (INTERCOM), affiliated to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Maria Cristina Vannini, praised Qatar’s organization of the INTERCOM Doha 2023 Conference, which coincided this year with the celebration of the International Museum Day, and she said in this regard that the International Committee of Museum Management of the International Council of Museums did not find a more appropriate partnership than Qatar Museums in organizing the conference “Museum of the Future, which was held in Doha from 6 to 9 May. Qatar National Museum hosted more than 200 museum professionals and researchers from all over the world. She pointed out that the goal of the International Museum Day for this year is “museums, sustainability and well-being”, focusing on three of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, as the third goal is “Good Health and Well-being” by ensuring a healthy life and promoting well-being for all at all ages, especially with regard to mental health and social isolation.

The 13th goal is “Climate Action”, by taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, and the 15th goal is “Life on Earth, conserve and restore our terrestrial ecosystems.

Vannini said that through what we can witness during our stay in Doha and through our partnership with Qatar Museums for the Museum Leadership Conference, the sensitivity towards the role that museums play in conveying messages that help improve the daily lives of visitors and promote profound behavioral change in community relations.

She stressed that the involvement of the elderly in participatory meetings to transfer memories and skills through conversations and oral transmission to the younger generations is a way to maintain links and understanding across generations.

Vannini concluded her statement to QNA by saying that all these comments do not change the fact that Qatar Museums take museums and their values seriously, visitors, their lives and the environment in which they live are at the heart of Qatar Museums inspiration for a better and more sustainable future.



Enhancing Learning Opportunities

Museums offer a wealth of educational resources that go beyond traditional classroom settings. Through carefully curated exhibits, students gain access to real-world objects, historical artifacts, and artistic masterpieces. These tangible experiences provide a unique and immersive learning environment, enabling students to connect theory with practice. Whether studying history, science, anthropology, or fine arts, museums offer a plethora of learning opportunities that engage students on a deeper level.



Multidisciplinary Approach

Museums encourage a multidisciplinary approach to education by bridging different academic fields. They bring together art, history, science, culture, and technology, allowing students to explore the interconnectedness of various disciplines. By integrating knowledge from different domains, students develop a broader perspective and a holistic understanding of complex subjects. Museums also promote interdisciplinary collaboration, encouraging students to work together to solve problems and gain a well-rounded education.



Cultural Appreciation and Diversity

Museums serve as cultural hubs, celebrating the diversity of human experiences. They provide a platform to appreciate and understand different cultures, traditions, and perspectives. By exploring artifacts and exhibits from various societies and historical periods, students develop empathy, cultural sensitivity, and a global mindset. Museums also organize events, exhibitions, and workshops that promote inclusivity and encourage dialogue, fostering a sense of community and appreciation for diversity among students.



Research and Professional Development

Museums offer valuable opportunities for research and professional development in higher education. Many museums have dedicated research centers or collaborate with academic institutions to conduct studies and contribute to scholarly research. Students can access archival collections, conduct fieldwork, and collaborate with museum professionals. These experiences not only deepen their knowledge but also develop research skills, critical thinking, and analytical abilities, preparing them for future academic and professional pursuits.

Community Engagement and Outreach

Museums actively engage with the local community, acting as catalysts for social change and lifelong learning. They organize outreach programs, workshops, and educational initiatives that extend beyond the campus, reaching a diverse range of learners. By collaborating with schools, universities, and community organizations, museums contribute to educational equity, promote cultural awareness, and empower marginalized groups. These initiatives foster a sense of civic responsibility among students, encouraging them to be active participants in society.

In short, the role of museums in higher education is evolving and expanding, becoming increasingly integral to the learning experience. They provide a unique platform for experiential learning, interdisciplinary exploration, and cultural appreciation. Museums contribute to the intellectual growth, critical thinking skills, and holistic development of students. As higher education

to highlight the various museums with their diverse activities, and they are keen to make the visitors experience unique. Recently, she indicated, a new definition of the museum was adopted by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which is; “A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.”

She noted that t this is an indication of the importance of the role played by museums and the feasibility behind developing and changing the concept of museums in societies.

Director of Cultural Heritage Protection at Qatar Museums Abdullatif Al Jasmi, said in a similar statement to QNA that International Museum Day is not only an occasion to spread awareness of the importance of museums as educational institutions, but also an occasion to change perceptions about the importance of cultural, artistic and creative exchange and to preserve the lessons learned throughout history.

He noted that through the approved theme for the International Museum Day 2023, Qatar Museums, as a leading institution in museum work, is stimulating reliance on sustainable solutions in museums and cultural spaces of all kinds, and the development of well-

QF ‘playing key role in developing country’s higher education’



Hend Zainal, Executive Director of Strategy, Management and Partnerships, Higher Education Division Qatar Foundation

Hend Zainal, Executive Director of Strategy, Management and Partnerships at the Higher Education Division of Qatar Foundation, highlighted the foundation’s role in advancing higher education in Qatar, following Education City’s huge success over the past years.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), she said Qatar Foundation is working with its national partners like the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Qatar University to ensure its academic programmes fit the needs of the state and the region, while working on exploring new partnerships that meet the needs of the state in line with Qatar National Vision. She added that the foundation is keen to ensure that its programmes are complementary with each other. It is co-operating with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Qatar University to achieve the country’s national vision to ensure that the academic curriculum is designed to best develop the country.

She expressed hope that the efforts have the desired impact, give back to society and make the world a better place. Zainal stressed that students applying to Qatar Foundation partner universities and Hamad Bin Khalifa University are looking for a comprehensive experience that goes beyond quality education, and share the desire to embody the standards, values and ideas that Qatar Foundation adopts and supports.

Speaking on the opportunities available to students – thanks to being part of Qatar Foundation – she said nothing matches the Education City experience. Students get a unique educational experience that enhances their skills and prepares them to be the leaders and difference makers of the future, she stressed. Zainal pointed out that after studying at one of Qatar Foundation’s universities, students get the same certificate as their colleagues at the main university campus abroad.

On preparing students for the future and contributing to building society and achieving

sustainable development, Zainal said that their strategy in the field of higher education does not focus only on developing students’ knowledge but is also about upgrading students’ skills, attitudes and values. The strategy is based on sponsoring and nurturing outstanding individuals through their world-class, inclusive and innovative education system, Zainal added.

With regard to promoting diversity and inclusion among the student and staff community at QF, Zainal stated that the Education City universities provide students with a world-class education in a Middle Eastern context, especially since they have a responsibility first towards the citizens and residents of Qatar and towards the neighbours in the Gulf and the Arab region.

She pointed out that about 60% of the students are females and the foundation provides a safe and inclusive place. QF, she noted, places great emphasis on diversity (it has a community consisting of faculty members, staff and students representing more than 113 nationalities, ensuring the provision of a rich experience for students in a diverse international environment), and it takes pride in its identity as a Qatari and Arab institution capable of providing international education and easily accessible by all parts of the region. Since the establishment of the partner universities, 8,804 male and female students have graduated from QF, including this year’s class from (Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, Weill Cornell Medicine, Texas A&M, Carnegie Mellon, Georgetown, Northwestern, and HEC Paris along with Hamad Bin Khalifa University), she said. Starting with the first cohort in which 19 students graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar up to this year’s class with over 850 male and female students, the growth witnessed by the foundation is tangible evidence of the commitment to providing quality education, she stressed.

QNA

2023 WISE Awards finalist takes learning to nature

By Joseph Varghese

The Organisation for Environmental Education and Protection (OpEPA), one of the 2023 World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Awards finalists, is focusing on reconnecting the children and youngsters to the nature to build more sustainable communities.

Headquartered in Bogota, Columbia, the OpEPA, has been focusing on this theme since 1998 through nature-based and regenerative education, heritage interpretation and social weaving, with a regenerative approach to cultural, social, economic and environmental dimensions.

WISE, the global education initiative of Qatar Foundation, recently announced the 12 finalists for the WISE Awards 2023 and the final six projects will be announced in September. The WISE Awards winners will be celebrated at the global summit to be held in November this year.

OpEPA has so far implemented projects and activities in 26 of the 32 departments in the country, in four work fields: nature-based education, nature tourism, regenerative cultures and planetary limits: climate change, biodiversity loss, land and water use.

The programme has so far benefited over 140,000 in Columbia with a geographical reach in Columbia, US, Peru, Costa Rica and Chile. It aims to on reconnecting children, youth and people to nature and earth to build more sustainable, regenerative and peaceful communities.

The programme has the city-wide Biodiversity Nature-Based Education Networks which are spaces for integration



and active collaboration between schools and local actors to appropriate green spaces and create nature-based learning communities. Their origin began in 2015 with the creation of Red de Colegios Cerros de Bogotá, a school network with active collaboration between 101 public and private educational institutions and eight organisation allies. It promotes the appropriation of the Eastern Hills, a strategic ecosystem through Nature-Based Education (NBE).

Luis Camargo, founder and director of OpEPA, is working to strengthen bioregional transitions to regenerative cultures. According to the organisation, “We replicated the model with the Ministry of Environment as our implementation partner in 13 ‘biodivercities’ throughout Colombia. In this process, we created 13 city nature-based networks that connected 145 schools and 460 teachers using in-person capacity-building workshops, online education programmes, and network weaving.”

The nature-based school networks focuses on consolidating a learning community with citizenship skills that promote harmonising the people and nature relationship, allowing them to become planetary stewards and ensuring social wellbeing. It also favours the positioning of students and teachers as multipliers of good practices and ethical behaviour to face environmental and social challenges.

By involving many students from different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds in the city, the network promotes equity and inclusion while developing environmental stewardship skills of students and communities. Furthermore, the network uses the city’s natural ecosystems as a learning environment, where collaborative conservation projects are designed and implemented.

The key impact of the project is the activation of diverse learning communities around NBE and the appropriation of green spaces in and surrounding the cities. In the future, OpEPA aim to expand this initiative as the key educational component of the Biodivercities model in Latin America and worldwide. The organisation’s final goal is to activate cities globally to become nature-based learning cities and inspire learning communities to embrace nature as a key learning environment for all subjects.

Each year, the WISE Awards recognise and promote six successful and innovative projects that are addressing global educational challenges. Since 2009, WISE has received more than 5,300 applications from over 151 countries. 90 projects have been awarded, from a wide variety of sectors and locations for their innovation, positive contribution and ability to adapt and scale.

AFG COLLEGE WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

AFG College with the University of Aberdeen is a unique partnership between Al Faleh Group for Educational and Academic Services, a part of Al Faleh Educational Holding Q.P.S.C, and the University of Aberdeen which opened its doors to undergraduate and postgraduate students in September 2017.

The establishment of the institution is a significant achievement as AFG College with the University of Aberdeen is the first British university to open a dedicated campus offering undergraduate and postgraduate degrees within the State of Qatar.



This exciting University project has been developed under the leadership of H.E. Dr Sheikha Aisha Bint Faleh Al Thani, who identified the need for increased capacity within higher education to support the Qatar National Vision 2030 and to contribute to the development of a stronger knowledge-based economy for the country.

The Partnership Vision

The vision is to deliver an excellent UK higher education experience in Qatar with a strong emphasis on employability. The institution will embrace social inclusion and allow access to university education beyond the academic elite.

The university partnership presents the opportunity for those students living and working in Qatar to access a British degree from one of the leading international universities, currently ranked in top 200 universities in the world, as per as Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2023.

The vision includes the development of a regional research hub, drawing on the strengths of Aberdeen's excellence in global academic research and working collaboratively with other Qatar based educational and institutional partners to contribute to the wider knowledge-based economy within the region.



Future Plans

Now in the sixth year of operation, AFG College with the University of Aberdeen will be developed in two phases. Phase one offers undergraduate degrees in Accountancy and Finance, Business Management, Business Management and Information Systems, Business Management and International Relations, Business Management and Legal Studies, Politics and International Relations* and Computing Science *. In addition to our undergraduate offerings, our postgraduate degrees include MBA Master of Business Administration, MSc International Business Management, LLM International Commercial Law, MSc International Human Resource Management, Master of Public Health (MPH)*, MSc Global Business Communication* and MSc Global Energy Transition Systems and Technologies*.

Phase two is the establishment of a large purpose-built university campus with a student capacity of over 4000, offering engineering, education, medical science and social science degrees.



Since September 2022, AFG College with the University of Aberdeen has had over 600 students enrolled in programmes with over 64% of students of Qatari nationality. Both AFG College and the University of Aberdeen are extremely proud to be part of the growing higher education community in Qatar.

*Subject to the approval of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Bachelor Degrees in:

- Business Management
- Accountancy & Finance
- Business Management & Information Systems
- Business Management & International Relations
- Business Management & Legal Studies
- Politics and International Relations*
- Computing Science *

Postgraduate Degrees in:

- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- MSc International Business Management
- LLM International Commercial Law
- MSc International Human Resource Management
- Master of Public Health (MPH)*
- MSc Global Business Communication*
- MSc Global Energy Transition Systems and Technologies*