

# GLOBAL EDUCATION NEWS

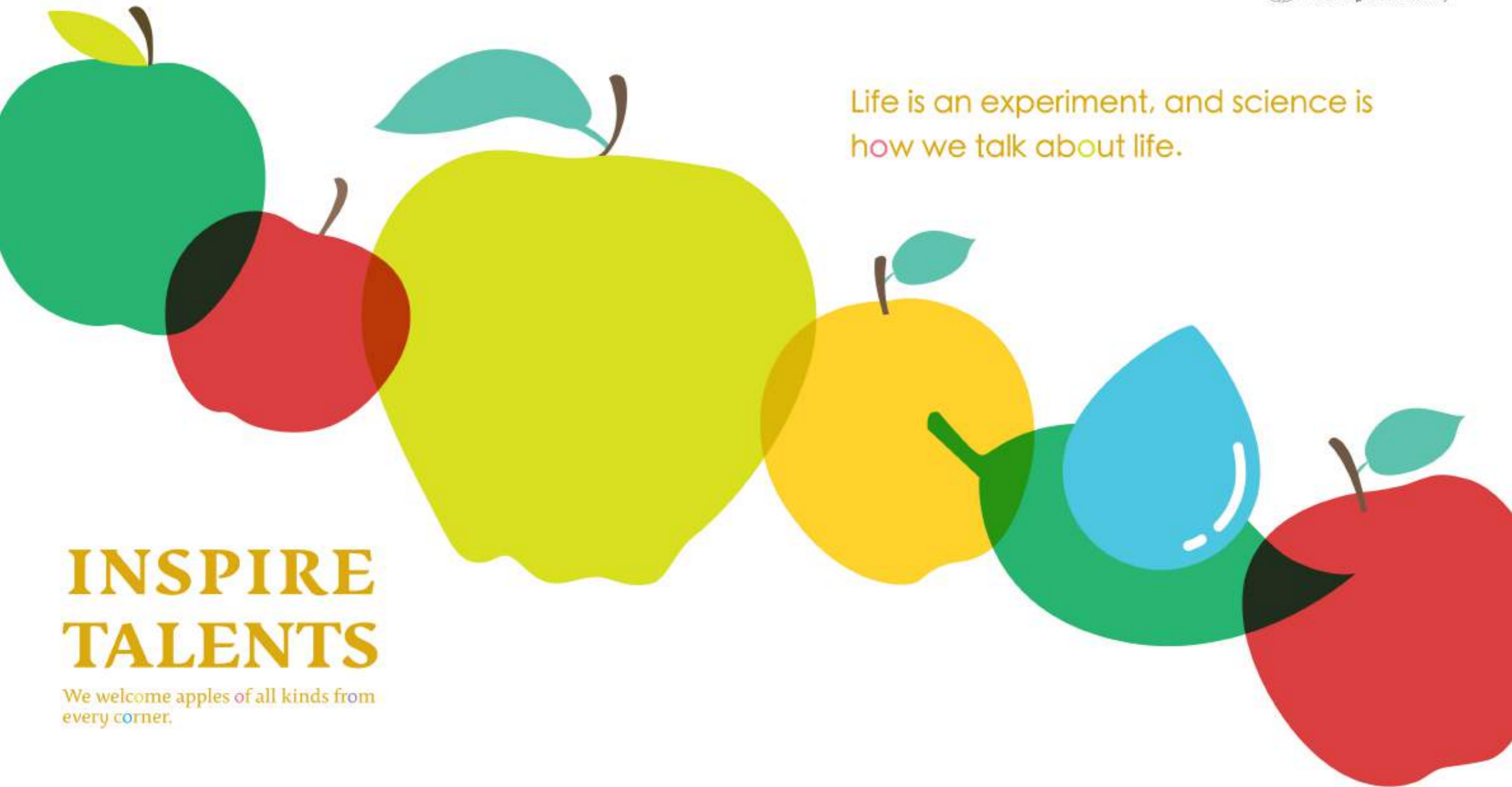


May 2021  
QS Quacquarelli Symonds  
Issue: 04

**WE'RE  
NOT  
GOING TO  
WAIT**

WOMEN IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION





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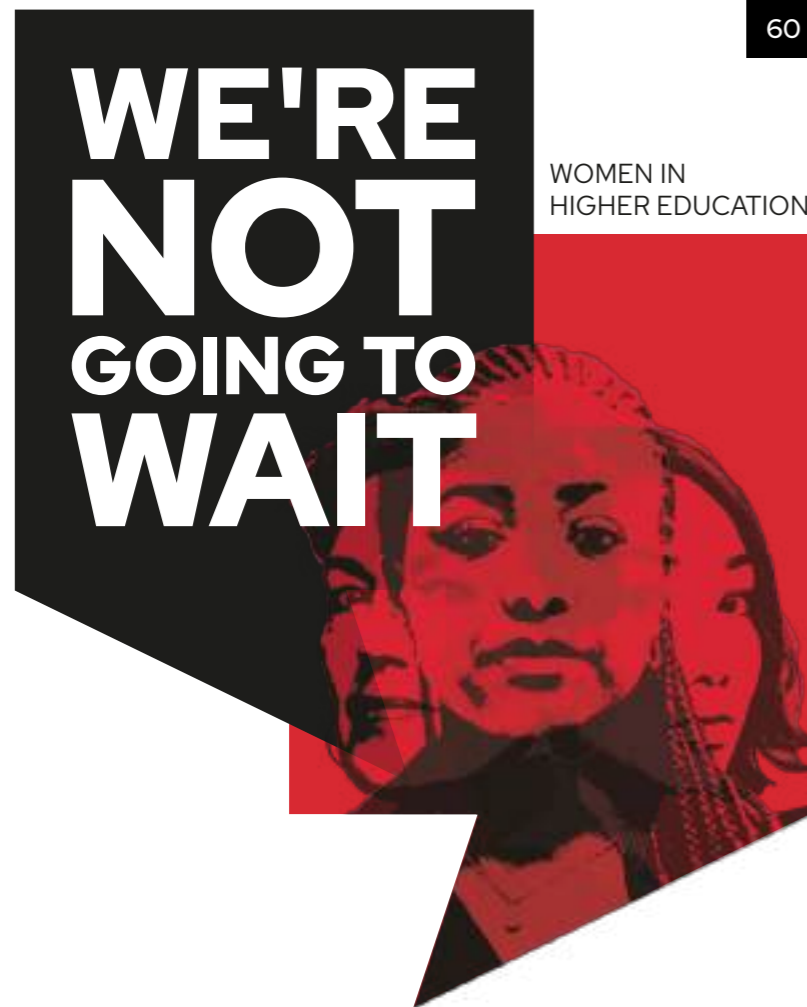
#### College of Life Sciences

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In this issue...



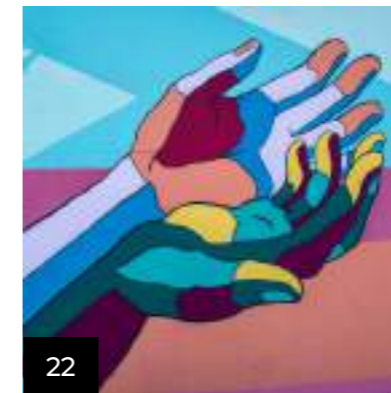
60 **We're not going to wait**

**How women are shaping higher education and developing the leaders of tomorrow**

"You hear these figures that it will take 130 years to achieve gender parity among heads of government – we're not going to wait for that."

Significant strides have been made towards reaching gender parity for women in positions of leadership and influence in higher education, but there is still more work to be done.

Women and allies discuss their work, who they have taken influence from, areas to pay attention to, and the opportunities to fasten the pace of increasing female representation.



22

**Cultivating empathy in leadership**

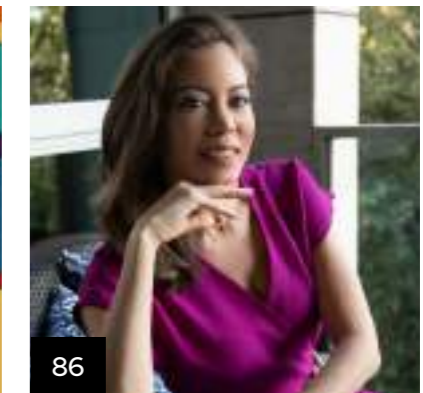
The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has made managers acutely aware of the need for empathy in the workplace. What is the role of business schools in developing empathetic leaders?



44

**Becoming part of the bigger picture**

Creating a diverse workplace doesn't happen overnight - it can take years of work and discussions. We provide three key steps to become part of the bigger picture.



86

**In Conversation with Christine Amour-Levar**

Founder of Women on a Mission and HER Planet Earth, Christine Amour-Levar, discusses her career, passion, and how she is encouraging young women to build confidence and take on the world.

**News by region**

Women in Higher Ed	9-18
Europe & Americas	30-41
Arab Region & Africa	52-58
Asia & Oceania	74-82
	95-104
	114-123
Movers & Shakers	124-127



106

**Empowering young Arab women leaders**

For twenty years, the Arab International Women's Forum has been connecting and supporting women in business for economic prosperity in the MENA region. Founder, Haifa Al Kaylani, oversees the organisation's history, and its work with young women leaders.



## We're not going to wait

### Welcome to the fourth edition of QS Global Education News!

In April this year, I had the honour of speaking to young female emerging leaders from Africa on the role of youth in the UN's SDGs. It was amazing to see so many young women engaging with the topic, and their energy and vibrancy was truly inspiring. Yet, the question was raised: 'what the future looks like for women in higher education?'

After a few moments, I realized that the answer was uncertain.

One of our invited guests at the upcoming EduData Summit, Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education UNESCO noted recently, "While it would seem intuitive that women's leadership and their full and effective participation in public life and decision-making should correlate closely with their attainment in higher education. Unfortunately, this is not the case, revealing the paradoxes and pitfalls of achieving gender equality."

This year UNESCO's report 'Women in higher education: has the female advantage put an end to gender inequalities?' indicates that inequalities still run deep, glass ceilings are high, and that the numbers alone do not reflect how women continue to report working and studying in climates that privilege male perspectives and organizational and leadership approaches.

While it is true positive strides are being taken in the right direction, the reality is that there is still a lot of work to be done.

I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to dedicate this edition of QS Global Education News to the role of women in higher education. There are many inspirational leaders, researchers, and students, as well as perspectives, packed into this issue.

The fourth edition of QS-GEN also marks a coming of age for the magazine. This is somewhat of a first birthday celebration. More so, written, designed, and produced by an all-female team for the first time, this edition is a celebration of the many talents inside QS.

While I struggle to answer the question, 'what the future looks like for women in higher education?', I hope the contents of this edition sparks conversations that lead to not one answer, but many.

This magazine attempts to shed lights on some of the remarkable stories out there in support of those who follow the famous words of Shirley Chisholm: "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair."



Monica Hornung Cattan

Monica is Head of Programmes at QS Quacquarelli Symonds. Her international career has focused on strategic partnerships and convening multi-stakeholders to tackle urgent societal issues for organisations including the United Nations and the World Economic Forum.

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## Research Center for Advanced Materials Science (RCAMS)

The RCAMS is activating the modern research strategies to develop advanced materials science and techniques at King Khalid University (KKU). It also works to establish specialized units to find applied scientific solutions to the main issues that have a direct impact on society in Saudi Arabia and the world. The RCAMS targets to continue in enabling faculty members, and researchers, and the community to produce distinguished research and then publish it in high ranked international scientific journals and transform research results into products that value to the national economy via producing new materials that are registered as patents.

The cooperation with similar local and international universities and research centers in scientific, technology transfer and practical activities are of the center targets. The RCAMS has collaborated with high global universities such as Osaka University, Japan; Penn State University, USA; University of Southampton, UK; and University of Chemical, Bulgaria. Beside that, the new researcher generations are able to take their opportunities of education and developing their capabilities in most modern and advanced technologies. The area of interest includes, but not limited to, the fields of chemistry, physics, engineering, biology and environmental sciences to enhance cooperation between them.

The RCAMS has achieved many advances in Biotechnology, Biochemistry, Medicinal researches, Engineering, safe insecticides, advanced bee research and many others. In addition, the RCAMS published over 1,500 research papers in highly impacted international journals all over the world in areas mentioned above and registered more than 10 patents in different areas.

For more information: <https://rcams.kku.edu.sa/>



## Girls-Only AlgoQueen Coding Contest to be held by Amrita School of Engineering



**India** - In a unique initiative launched on Women's Day, [Amrita University](#) has launched a one-of-its-kind programming competition exclusively for girls, to reduce gender bias and promote the participation of girl students in the coding sector.

The contest, called [AlgoQueen](#), has been initiated with the central aim to promote competitive programming for girls in India. The contest comprises a series of online tests to be conducted during the initial two quarters of 2021. ICPC, Amrita is confident about the success of this initiative. The university has also conducted various programmes like coding camps, programming championships, and competitions for both school and college students in India.

Ahead of the contest, participants can opt to avail training sessions by university students and alumni, which will help build more confidence among the students to participate in the coding contest.

Following the popular trend of conduction of competitive programming in the IT sector, coding competitions help industries to handpick students with excellent coding skills. The initiative will also help girl students to enhance basic algorithmic and mathematical skills in addition to knowledge of data structures, and build logical and analytical skills in students.

The contest is divided into four online rounds that will comprise questions based on C, C++, Java, and Python. This will then be followed by an onsite round (subject

to pertaining situations). All girl students in India can participate in the contest in teams of two or three. The questionnaires for the contest will be prepared entirely by the engineering students at Amrita.

## Academy student makes her debut at the Bolshoi



**Russia** - Eva Sergeenkova, student of the graduating class of Marina Leonova, Principal of the Academy and Professor of the Classical Dance Department, made her debut in not one, but two ballet shows on the Historical Stage of the Bolshoi.

On February 11, Eva performed the part of the Queen of Dryads in Don Quixote, the Bolshoi's regular repertoire ballet show. On April 7, she performed the part of Raymonda's friend Henrietta in the classical heritage ballet show Raymonda. Both performances are landmarks in the young

performer's career.

After her debut performances, Eva shared her emotions: "We worked on every figure, trying to perfect every motion and be sure of every step, because the Stage can agitate both the soul and the nerves of a performer.

"You need to be able to control your emotions while having fun on Stage. I still cannot believe I have been this lucky, and I am ever so grateful to my teacher at the Academy and the management of the Bolshoi Theatre for their trust in me".

## National University of Science and Technology develop AI-based framework for early diagnosis of lung abnormalities

**Oman** - Under the sponsorship of The Research Council of Oman, the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) has developed an AI framework for diagnosing and classifying lung abnormalities like pneumothorax, and pneumonia, led by principal investigator Dr R Krishna Priya.

The research has taken a lead role in assisting the doctors even during the pandemic situation to identify and address the patient at risk immediately.

The AI-based framework

enabled with Modified Transfer Learning methodology applied on Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN's) trained with n-numbers of chest X-ray data sets and delivered an acceptable accuracy of 97 percent.

This AI system is embedded with the facility to alert the physician immediately after processing the X-ray with an SMS, if the patient is suspected to have pneumothorax. This avoids delays in diagnosis and treatment, which when unattended may cause death. The AI system

can render the diagnosis in less than 2 minutes' time, eliminating long delays in starting the adequate medication.



## Could COVID breath-testing be next? New NZ research says yes!



**New Zealand** - Anyone who's experienced a sharp swab up the nose and a tense, isolated wait for results will surely be interested in a pain-free COVID-19 test with a speedy result delivered in minutes, not days.

A new New Zealand study led by University of Canterbury (UC) researchers, along with Callaghan Innovation's Protein Science and Engineering team and MacDiarmid Institute researchers from Massey University, has shown it may be possible to detect COVID-19 in as little as 5 minutes, thanks to a simple breath test.

"We've developed a new approach to detecting COVID-19 viral proteins that is sensitive and accurate enough to directly detect coronavirus particles at biologically relevant levels, specifically in breath

or saliva samples," says the paper's co-author, UC biochemist Associate Professor Deborah Crittenden.

Associate Professor Crittenden brought together with the MacDiarmid Institute's expertise in sensing measurements, Callaghan Innovation's ability to make the target protein, and the biochemical analysis skills of researchers within UC's Biomolecular Interaction Centre.

The result is a proof of principle for a new COVID-sensing test that could dramatically decrease turn-around times for testing, and increase the volume of tests that can be performed.

"Unlike other proposed COVID breath-testing technologies, this test directly detects the COVID spike protein antigen and

is expected to be as accurate as the current gold standard lab-based approach," Associate Professor Crittenden says.

"We will continue developing this as a 'platform technology' for other sensing applications... In future, if other pathogens emerge, it would be really useful to be able to use what we have learned to roll out real-time sensors/diagnostics a lot more quickly."

The team's research paper 'Optical Detection of CoV-SARS-2 Viral Proteins to Sub-Picomolar Concentrations' was published in *ACS Omega*, a journal of the American Chemical Society.

## Dr Catherine Robinson completes pilot survey regarding technology adoption and skills in Kent

**United Kingdom - Kent Business School's** Deputy Dean Catherine Robinson and Dr Christian Siegel (School of Economics), have undertaken a pilot survey of SMEs in Kent to understand their use of Big Data, AI and robotic technologies.

The research, funded by the Office for National Statistics discovered evidence of a digital skills gap amongst SMEs in Kent. While 70 percent of surveyed SMEs made technological improvements in the past three years and 50 percent adopted new production methods, a

third of all surveyed SMEs reported difficulty in attracting people to their jobs with the correct digital skills. The research found that a majority of businesses that reported difficulties recruiting offered training to address the gap.

The surveyed SMEs were generally unsure of how AI or Robotics would impact their future business activities, indicating uncertainty and lack of confidence in investing and engaging with new technologies.



## Celebrating commitment and determination amid the pandemic



**Hong Kong** - In April 2021, The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) organised its Graduation Ceremony for the Class of 2020, which had been delayed for months due to the pandemic. HKAPA Director Professor Gillian Choa extended her congratulations to the graduates, "Life and your career in the performing arts may

not always be a smooth journey, but please remember that there is always a way forward. If it is something you believe in, give it all you can and tackle problems fervently as they come."

Being HKAPA's first female Director whose Directorship commenced in January 2021, Professor Choa has been with HKAPA for over two

decades, first as a guest lecturer. She enjoys communicating with students and has built good rapport with colleagues within HKAPA and well networked with external partners.

"Our students are uniquely positioned in the region being immersed in an East-meets-West culture, allowing them to have a natural display of creative thinking and an artistic style of their own," she said.

"The extensive partnership network established by HKAPA around the world will ensure that they can keep abreast of the latest developments commensurate with 21st Century Performing Arts practices."

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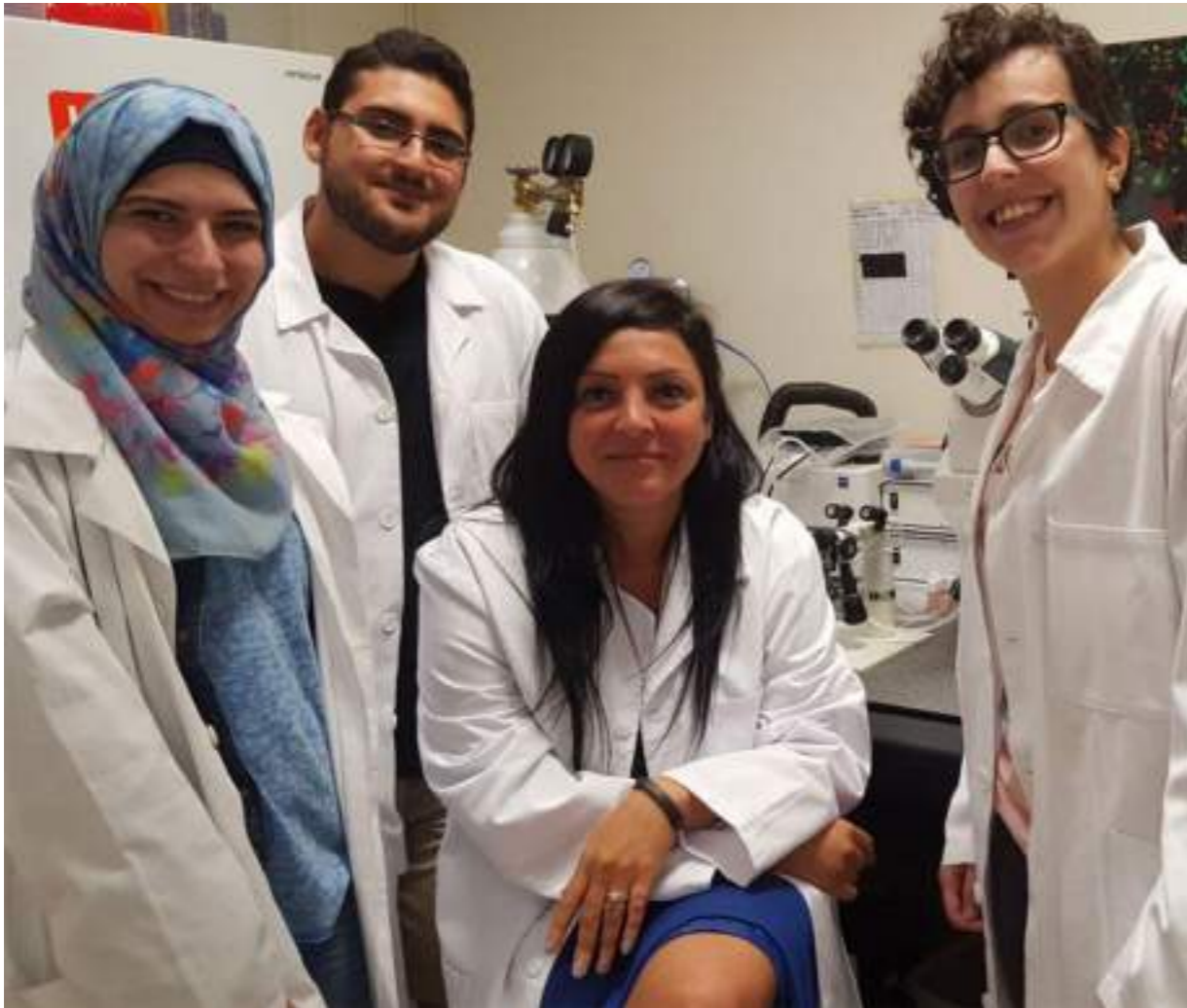






# We all remember that one professor who inspires

By Hanan Nasser



**Lebanon** – Students find inspiration in many things during their university years. But ask any student who had the most impact on them and they will surely remember that one professor who was their mentor, who encouraged them and created the right

opportunities for them to thrive. One such mentorship at Lebanese American University (LAU) is that of Associate Professor of Biology at the School of Arts and Sciences, Dr Mirvat El-Sibai. Recently, Dr El-Sibai was featured by the Albert Einstein

College of Medicine alongside her former mentee Dr Gilbert Salloum in celebration of Arab Heritage Month. A mentor, said Dr El-Sibai, “should cast himself or herself as a role model, an example for the student/young scientist to emulate,

so we need to hold ourselves to the highest standards of work ethics and values.”

Mentorship extends beyond the walls of the classroom and helps students “navigate the knowledge they acquired and apply it in a pragmatic way to extract the most out of it in order to advance their career.”

For years, Dr El-Sibai’s molecular biology lab has served as a hub where students are trained to become future scientists, and where they are pushed to think about experimental designs.

“They have to analyse the reason behind the use of every chemical all the way to how the project as a whole would answer the theory and advance scientific knowledge.”

In her mission to encourage undergraduate research, Dr El-Sibai regularly hosted undergrad volunteers in her lab. She also mentored 38 graduate students from the MS in Molecular Biology (now the MS in Biological Sciences), two PhD students and two post-docs.

One of her former mentees, Samer Hanna, researched in her lab as a graduate student focused on the molecular mechanisms in breast cancer metastasis.

Dr Hanna graduated in 2018 with a PhD from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and is now completing his post-doctoral training at Weill Medical College of Cornell University.

For Dr Bassem Khalil, who is completing his second postdoctoral fellowship in Dr Aguirre-Ghiso’s laboratory at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Dr El-

Sibai was the driving force that propelled him in his career as a cancer researcher.

Dr Khalil is currently working on developing cancer therapies that inhibit metastasis by inducing cancer cell dormancy and is also an adjunct assistant professor at Fordham University.

Beyond the academic encouragement and guidance, students such as alumna Maria Al Haddad, have found in Dr El-Sibai not only a mentor but also a confidant.

Al Haddad said a sense of kinship that Dr El-Sibai fostered in her lab and which formed the nucleus of a support system for her students.

“Our lab is like a family. We celebrate together and we mourn together. We looked forward to meeting as a group weekly so we can share laughs and stories,” Al Haddad said.

“She would sense if you’re not doing well and she’d always help whenever possible. Her office is a vault of secrets and I can say with confidence that she has helped us all grow in science and in our personal lives,” she added.

Dr El-Sibai’s philosophy is to set goals for her students while focusing on what they are most passionate about.

“At the undergraduate and graduate levels, I encourage the students to get exposed to many ideas and explore career potentials,” she said of her approach.

“Planting the seed of scientific curiosity and walking students through the process of the scientific method with relevant examples from everyday life, helps,

particularly undergraduate students, to find a sense of purpose early in their career,” she added.

Dr El-Sibai underlined the importance of one-on-one mentorships in universities such as LAU, describing it as the modern-day equivalent of the mentorship model “used in ancient civilizations whose objective is to develop the well-rounded scholar and to propagate schools of thought.”

But ultimately, a mentor is there to inspire her students, support them through failed experiments and to remind them of the “ethical dimensions and sacrifices” of scientists.

“It is all done in the name of science, not the individual, the same way every research article is one piece of the puzzle toward helping humanity. These values students learn from their mentors,” she said.

## IFTM's Dr Yang Jingjing takes part in high-profile academic initiatives

**Macao** - IFTM Assistant Professor Dr Yang Jingjing has taken part in several academic activities discussing the impact on tourism of a number of national development strategies, including the 'Belt and Road' initiative and the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Her work over the past year has seen her deliver talks at Beijing Union University, a keynote at the online *Contemporary Approaches and Intercultural Communications in Development of Tourism on Silk Road* conference, training on cultural and tourism development within the Greater Bay Area.

More recently, Dr Yang was involved in the production of the *Report on China's Ice and Snow Tourism Development*, released by the China

Tourism Academy in early January.

"I hope that my knowledge, my abilities, can contribute to national development," said Dr Yang.

She gives as an example her work on cultural tourism linked to the goddess A-Ma, a deity also known as Mazu.

"This cultural phenomenon is not only restricted to Macao," Dr Yang explained.

"It exists in many places like Hong Kong, Mainland China, Chinese Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Through investigation on this special topic, we can learn more about how this kind of tourism can be further developed."

The IFTM academic is an accomplished scholar and researcher. Dr Yang joined the Institute at the start of the

current academic year, after stints in academia in the United Kingdom and Mainland China. Her professional experience includes work related to governmental affairs, tourism, planning and consultancy.

Research by Dr Yang has been featured in top-rated academic journals, books and international conferences. She is Associate Editor (China) of the leading international journal *Tourism Management*.



## DIU graduate received TUBITAK Research Fellow Scholarship in Turkey

**Bangladesh** - Congratulations to Afsana Ahsan Jeny, a recent graduate of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Daffodil International University, who has achieved fully funded TUBITAK 2232 (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) research fellow scholarship at Turkey's Bahcesehir University (BAU). Her outstanding performance in research and several significant publications published from reputed international conferences helped to

achieve this success.

TUBITAK is a first-class category scholarship in Turkey to contribute to projects that will be executed in research fields. It is aimed to promote qualified researchers and scientists who have come to the fore with top-level scientific and technological achievements in their fields and who have the experience to work in an international environment, to conduct their research in Turkey.



## Research is not all Ha Ha, Hee Hee

**India** - Dual Degree student Gayatri Purgilla, under the guidance of Dr Radhika Mamidi, from Language Technologies Research Centre (LTRC) at IIITH Hyderabad has presented her research on humour during COVID-19 at the 11th Humour Research Conference organised by Texas A&M University.

Joking one's way through a crisis has long been considered a coping mechanism. Research has shown how using laughter as a stress-buster provides the much-needed diversion especially in an unchanging situation. Much like the one brought upon us by the novel Coronavirus. Social media platforms particularly saw a deluge of humorous memes, jokes, videos,

GIFs, and more - all related to the universality of the pandemic.

"We wanted to understand if it is possible to deduce a trending topic, either universal or culture-specific based on the humour type," said Gayatri.

For instance, when the US reported a massive shortage of toilet paper from panic hoarding in early April of 2020, it led to a surfeit of jokes on the same topic.

"As was the case with Dalgona coffee or Work-From-Home memes," remarked Dr Mamidi, explaining how the frothy concoction born out of social isolation as well as the WFH acronym earlier restricted

to only a handful became a universal phenomenon.

Using data extracted from tweets, the team found the type of humour derived out of someone's misfortune or 'schadenfreude' was the most common type present irrespective of the time period.

Whenever governments announced new lockdown guidelines or policies with respect to the pandemic, satire and sarcasm were the most popular humour techniques deployed.

"Sometimes, you feel helpless and resort to humour as a coping technique," said Dr Mamidi.

## HUFS' Choi Ji-Yoon wins Korea Advertising Society's Rising Scholar Paper Award

**South Korea** - Dr Choi Ji-Yoon of the HUFS Media and Communications Research Institute was selected as a finalist for the 2020 Korea Advertising Society's Rising Scholar Paper Award. The awards ceremony was held during its spring conference on 2 April 2021.

The Korea Advertising Society holds the Rising Scholar Paper Award to improve the quality of advertising research and motivate young advertising scholars in their first five years or less after attaining their PhD degree.

Each year, it presents the award to one young scholar selected by its judging committee to encourage research among young scholars.

In her paper entitled 'Study on TV Advertising Pricing Structure: Centred on Hourly Rates on Terrestrial TV Networks,' Dr Choi focused on the long-standing issue that the current hour-based price of TV advertising does not properly reflect the audience size of individual TV programmes and conducted an empirical verification on the existing TV advertising pricing structure using advertising fee and viewer rating data from the three major terrestrial TV networks.

This study is expected to lead the TV networks to make their advertising pricing more reasonable by giving more weight to the audience size of each TV programme in determining their

advertising fees. At the same time, it will increase predictability for advertisers in assessing the efficiency of the given advertising fees, helping them plan their TV advertising in a more systematic and professional manner.

## Chula develops herbal nasal and throat spray to prevent COVID-19



**Thailand** – Chula Pharmaceutical Science, in collaboration with a leading Austrian institute, have created a special intensive longan extract formula (P80) for throat and nasal sprays that can reduce the amount of viruses that attach to mucous membranes and may enter the body.

The spray helps safely prevent all kinds of viral infections including COVID-19, with no side effects.

Professor Dr Pornanong Aramwit, who developed the spray from longan extract, said the fruit was used because it is edible and very safe, and after studying it, it was found to be able to reduce viral adhesion and was effective against

almost all types of viruses tested, including flu and herpes. “We have been doing this research for about a year and a half even before the COVID-19 outbreak,” said Professor Dr Pornanong.

“When COVID-19 came about, we started testing with it. Currently, we are in the clinical trial process on 62 volunteers, in collaboration with Vibharam Chaiprakarn Hospital. The product is expected to be in the market in the next three months.”

For the research process, Professor Dr Pornanong explained longan extract with high active ingredients of polyphenols was derived by a low temperature process under high pressure, and filtered several times.



The extract was then formulated for nasal and throat spray at optimum viscosity and surface tension, to ensure particles were able to reach targeted spots.

The extract works immediately by physically preventing the virus from adhering to the epithelium, and bioactively blocking the inflammatory chemical mediators. People who travel to high-risk areas such as crowded places, can use the nasal or throat spray before entering the areas and then wear a mask.

Professor Dr Pornanong added that only a small amount of longan extract was needed, and could be used for both throat and nasal passages twice a day.



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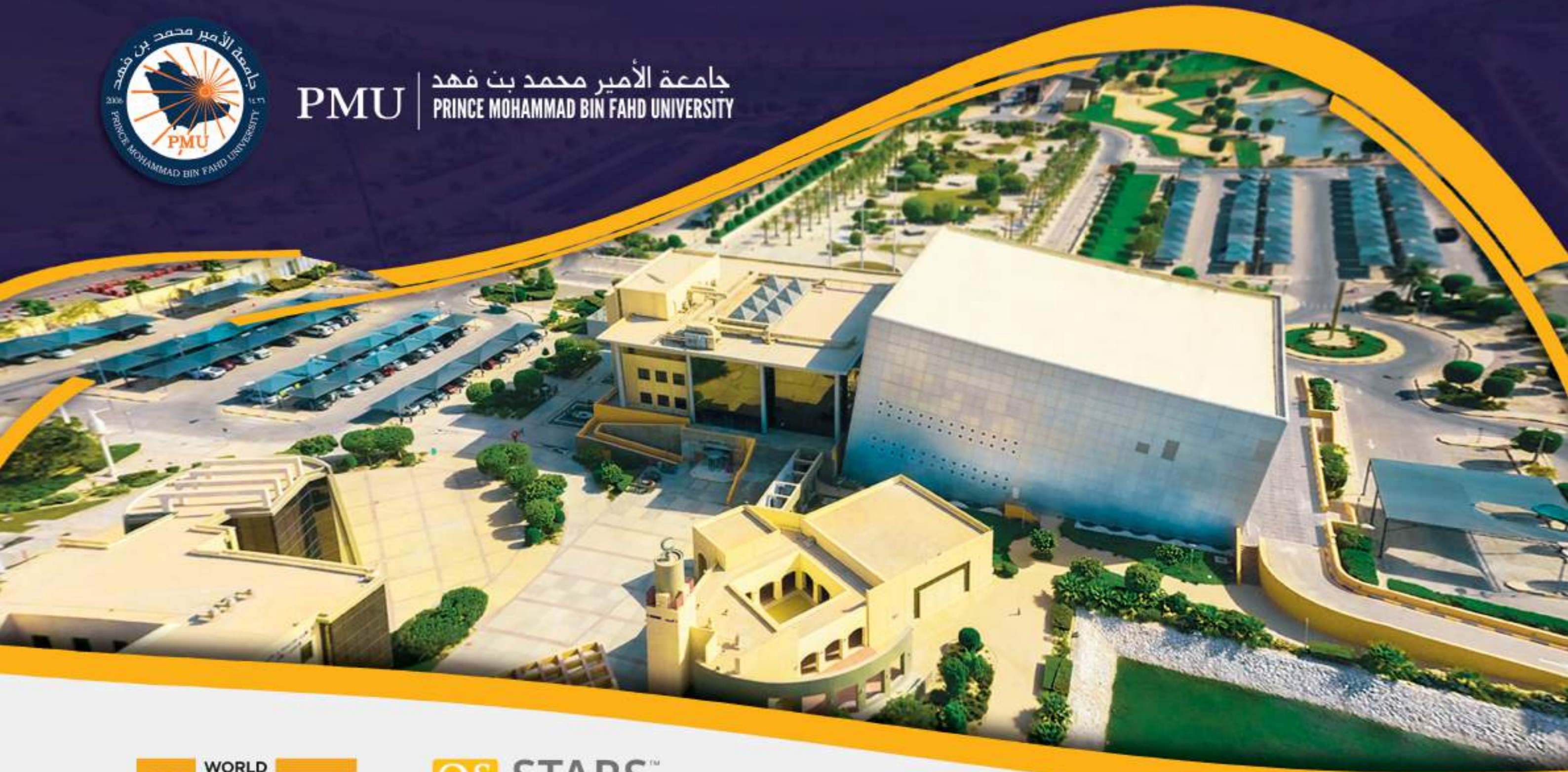


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# Cultivating empathy in leadership

by Amie Edwards-McLean

*"A good manager will always check in with their team members and see how they're doing before jumping into what's happening at work."*

The COVID-19 pandemic has radically altered how academic institutions, firms, and communities around the world communicate. With emotional intelligence (EQ) consistently correlating with the rising success of businesses, human and economic metrics are being given equal importance and attention.

In the discourse surrounding leadership, the rise of empathy and the growing need for it is taking centre stage. This has led businesses to attempt to understand how empathy can be ingrained into the role of leadership, and higher education providers, particularly MBA programmes, may soon be playing a larger part to instil in graduates a more compassionate view towards colleagues.

## Changing circumstances and the future of the workplace

Difficult circumstances tend to make leaders think and act differently if they want their firms to survive. 2020 was the year that accelerated leadership to a state of hyper-change. Focus was drawn on attracting and retaining staff, innovating business offerings, and prioritising employee mental health and wellbeing.

Clare Altmann-Richer, an Executive MBA student at University of Exeter, believes, "Employee expectations will have changed due to the pandemic, and leaders need to focus on demonstrating and role modelling behaviours.

"Employee mental health should be addressed and supported by management."

Vladi Miniha, a finance professional and MBA student at Oxford Brookes University, agrees with Altmann-Richer, adding there is a need for leaders to remember they are working with humans, not robots, "a fairly basic principle but it's easy to forget" she posits.

"We need to take into account our team's circumstances when it comes to decision making and work twice as hard at making connections. Make allowances that your team may not always have a good day," she tells QS-GEN.

The cost of not addressing mental health and wellbeing is high. According to Westfield Health research, poor workplace mental health during the pandemic cost UK businesses £14bn last year. The study also revealed absenteeism saw employees in the UK taking an average of three days off for mental health in 2020, with e-presenteeism, the feeling of needing to be always online, also on the rise due to workplace insecurities such as fear of job loss and increasing anxieties about work.

The current challenges will also not suddenly finish once the pandemic is over. As employees return to life after the pandemic, leaders will need to play an active role in supporting the health and wellbeing of their teams. University education also plays a part in advocating for this.

The long periods of disconnection between one another means social interactions and understanding how to be in the presence of other people is no longer second nature. Social anxieties around returning to

*"If you're not a truly empathetic person then it's not just a switch that you can turn on."*



the office are common, making it crucial that emotional intelligence and empathy are practised by leaders to stay in tune with the feelings of others.

The Royal College of General Practitioners predicts there will be a surge of patients with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) due to COVID-19, either because of their experiences at work or because of the loss of loved ones. Transitioning to a new way of life after a long period of social isolation will be difficult for many, with compassion needing to be exercised.

"People are not coming back as the same people who left," comments Steve Capner,

an MBA student at Alliance Manchester Business School.

"We need to understand where they are and what their perspectives are as not everyone is going to plug back in and get going again the same as how they used to."

Authentic empathetic leadership can help to address workplace insecurities, with a focus on pivoting practices to navigate the fast change of pace throughout the pandemic and beyond. What worked at the start of the period of home working may not necessarily work now. Empathetic leaders are able to recognise this and adapt their approach.

Cameras were consistently encouraged during meetings

at the start of 2020, yet now, empathetic leaders recognise not everyone is situated in the perfect and most professional setup or understand that their colleagues may be suffering from the effects of 'Zoom fatigue'.

"A good manager will always check in with their team members and see how they're doing before jumping into what's happening at work. Is everything okay with them? It's a natural thing to do for some yet not for others," notes Minihane.

Altmann-Richer supports this view, suggesting leaders need to be open communicators, as well as tailoring and flexing their styles to the characters and behaviours of those in their teams.



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GLOBALLY

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ARTS & HUMANITIES



### Cognitive bias vs empathy

Cognitive bias is a mental shortcut that our brains take to expedite information processing to try to quickly make sense of a situation. This is a systematic pattern of deviation from a rationality in judgement that can affect our decisions, actions, and behaviours.

While this process of deduction has its benefits in quickly understanding circumstances, it comes with significant downsides. When a team member approaches a leader with a problem, the leader may address it with their own cognitive bias as opposed to demonstrating empathy.

“People are too willing to jump in and help someone find an answer or a solution without really trying to understand what the problem is in the first place,” Capner remarks.

“As a leader, are you actually spending the time to try and understand what the other person is saying and what their perspective is?”

By quickly offering advice, a leader can remove a person’s sense of autonomy for resolving their own problems which can result in dwindled confidence. This removes one of the key pillars of empathy, active listening. Active listening involves collecting the information with compassion and using a questioning technique prior to offering advice.

Michael Bungay Stanier, founder of the L&D company Box of Crayons, labels this concept as “advice monster”. To stop yourself from unleashing your inner advice monster, he suggests instead to ask a team member three questions: “What is the real challenge here for you?”; “What Else?”; and “What do you want?”. In doing so, a leader can pinpoint the topic to discuss, dig deeper into the details, and help the asker explore the outcome that they want to achieve. This is a useful technique that can be used to empower others to find their own answers and avoid the pitfall of cognitive bias.

**“According to the QS Global Employer Survey, employers value soft skills above technical skills when recruiting MBA graduates.”**

### Empathy and the MBA

According to the *QS Global Employer Survey*, employers value soft skills above technical skills when recruiting MBA graduates. Yet, the extent to which soft skills such as empathy can be taught as part of an MBA and how it is currently being adopted into the syllabus is inconclusive and somewhat inconsistent.

Minhane says her programme has impacted the way she thinks and considers situations through an empathetic lens.

“Empathetic leadership has been brought out in me as part of the MBA. It was the reflective writing that really made me think,” she explains to *QS-GEN*.

“I’ve learnt to record how I’m feeling at a highly emotional event and make myself find the triggers that made that event so much more charged than it could have been. This also helps me to see the views of others as they may have perceived that same situation in a different way.”

On the Manchester Business School MBA, Capner observes: “Our *Leading and Managing in a Global Environment* module touches on leadership styles but it does seem to gloss over empathy.

“There is a new module on the course called *Work Psychology for Managerial Success* that may include it; however, you have to choose that as an elective.”

Altmann-Richer adds that her programme commenced with a leadership and strategy module, including a focus on how to react to crisis situations. This involved topics such as shaping cultures

and forming ethical values which had learning outcomes specifically related to empathy.

### The value of empathy

Current MBA students have a wealth of advice for leaders looking to succeed in their roles in the workplace of the future. Many point specifically to how empathy can be practised more consistently and become integrated into company culture.

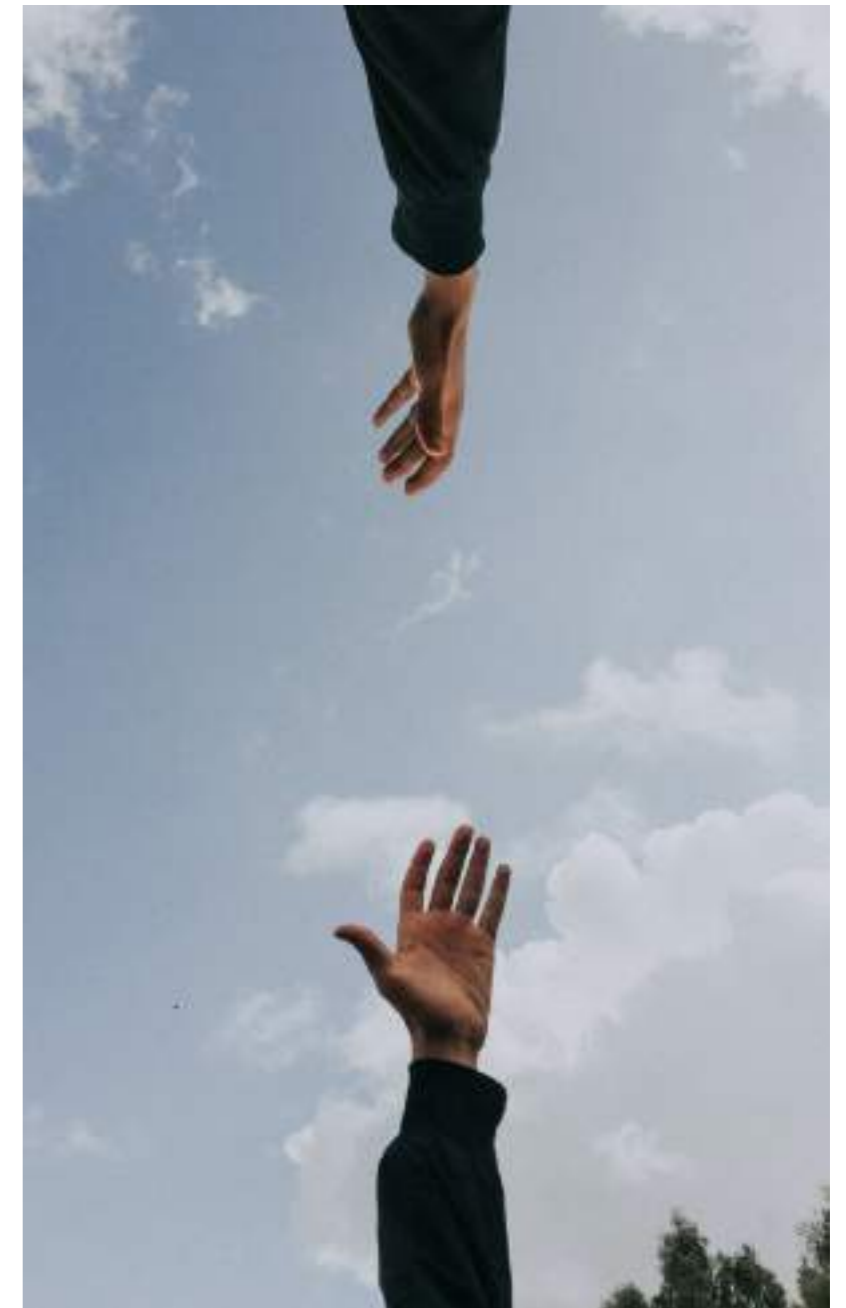
“Empathy is taught to most of us as children and is a skill that anyone dealing with human beings can practice,” Minhane says.

“The MBA is a good refresher of this skill. We should all be respectful, kind and create more positivity in each other’s lives than we currently do.”

Capner adds: “If you’re not a truly empathetic person then it’s not just a switch that you can turn on.

“We all grow up in a certain way and if it is not part of your mindset now as a leader then you’re at the wrong end of the curve. You need to spend time getting into that mindset and that can take years or even decades. People who aren’t truly empathetic now are probably going to be playing at it for a while and there’s a danger then that comes across like it’s being fake”.

Altmann-Richer concludes more empathetic leadership in the workplace could attract better quality talent, appeal to a broader audience, and create more diversity, because empathetic leaders will have a better understanding of development needs, which in turn will result in higher team performance. ❖



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## USask model clearer picture of spring snowpack runoff, impacts of climate change

**Canada** - After decades of research, a new model was developed by University of Saskatchewan (USask) researchers that for the first time successfully predicted mountain snowpack with a high degree of accuracy and detail, information critical for water management, agriculture, mining, recreation, and flood forecasting worldwide. Snow cover in the mountains is the principal driver of spring runoff.

The Canadian Hydrological Model developed by a team led

by hydrologist Dr John Pomeroy, Canada Research Chair in Water Resources and Climate Change, will provide valuable information on spring runoff, risk of flooding, avalanche danger, and the impact of climate change.

According to Dr Pomeroy, more than half of humanity relies on runoff from mountain snow for drinking, power generation, and irrigation.

"We can finally predict the development of mountain snowpack," said Dr Pomeroy.

"This is a big achievement, which allows water management agencies to better assess our mountain snow water resources."



## «Gimme a break» - A hotel management class had enough of distance learning and launches a take-away Bistro

**Switzerland** - In Zurich's Belvoirpark, some students are getting some air from the gray theory. What is the Corona crisis doing to the next generation of professionals? There is much to suggest that the young generation is not letting adverse circumstances take away its desire for the future. This is demonstrated by a brand-new project in Zurich's Belvoirpark, which is making its beautiful views available as a public green space and as the site of the Zurich hotel management school "Belvoirpark". Among its training facilities on the site is the restaurant of the same name, which is currently not allowed to receive guests.

Suitably to the learning module

"Sales and Guesting" and under the confident name "Bistro Prelude", a class of students runs an all-day take-away offering. It ranges from morning coffee with croissants to smaller meals that can be taken home or eaten in the spacious park. The class has even announced this with a media release. On the deserted restaurant terrace next to the festively flagged colonnade of the historic Villa Escher from 1838, half a dozen cheerful young people in purple Belvoirpark masks operate at the bistro.

"Online classes can be exciting, but we're just very hands-on," one of the students says almost apologetically, adding, "We especially want to show our young colleagues in the industry



that you shouldn't lose hope and fight in these difficult times. That also motivates us for the future." They are confident that thanks to vaccinations, restaurants and hotels will largely achieve normal operation and tourism will also pick up again. The friendly campaign was a successful prelude to spring and to a series of hopefully gratifying careers in gastronomy.

## Sir Peter Bazalgette appointed as RCA Chair of Council



**United Kingdom** - Sir Peter Bazalgette, a leading figure in the media and creative industries, will join the RCA Council in October 2021, before taking up the role of Chair on 1 March 2022.

Sir Peter served as ITV's Chair since 2016 and has held a number of high-profile roles in the creative industries, including Chair of Arts Council England, non-executive board member of UK Research and Innovation, non-executive director of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, President of the Royal Television Society and Deputy Chair of the graduate National Film and Television School. In addition, Sir Peter led an independent review into the UK's creative industries as part of the Government's

Industrial Strategy in 2017.

"The RCA sits at the sweet spot for the creative industries: where art and design with flair meet cutting edge technologies," he said on his appointment.

"Pre-Covid, the creative industries sector was worth 6% of the UK's economy and was growing three times as fast. This is the sector whose brilliant design ideas will help every other sector. And this is the sector which won't just fuel growth and jobs, it'll also improve and enrich lives. I look forward to helping the RCA maintain its world-leading status and to nurture the next generation of talented rainmakers."

Sir Peter will succeed Baroness Gail Rebeck DBE who has been in the

role since 2015, after over a decade on Council. He joins the RCA at an exciting time in its 180+ year history. The RCA has been ranked as the world's leading art and design university for six consecutive years and will be welcoming research faculty and students next year to its new flagship campus in Battersea designed by Herzog & de Meuron.

## RIT opens Global Cyber Security Institute

**United States** - A pre-emptive strike on cyber-security threats across the world, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) has created the Global Cybersecurity Institute (GCI), a 52,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility on campus.

With the institute, RIT is on its way to becoming one of the best places in the world for cybersecurity education, training, and research.

"Our ultimate mission is to make you and your digital self safer," said [Steve Hoover](#), the Katherine Johnson Executive Director of [GCI](#).

"In the 21st century, the physical world is becoming digital. It's a double-edged sword, because there's tremendous opportunity

to improve our lives, but it also significantly increases the attack surface."

The GCI is a space where people from different academic disciplines, industry, and government are collaborating to expand cybersecurity knowledge and make it useable in the real world.

At the heart of the building is the [Cyber Range](#), a virtual and physical lab that allows people to simulate network cyberattacks and problem-solving scenarios. Businesses are coming to the range to prepare their employees for cyber incidents, and students are using the space to conduct ethical hacks during cybersecurity competitions.

The institute has also seen RIT's computing security degree programmes expand, with more than 500 students studying computing security and its largest incoming class ever.



## KPI develops nanosatellites to explore Earth and space

**Ukraine** - The Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute (KPI) is developing new nanosatellites, PolyITAN, of the CubeSat class. They will be used for exploring space and processes occurring on Earth. Plans are in hand to orbit one of the satellites, namely PolyITAN-3, in 2021.

The satellite is being built in conjunction with Poland's Poznan University of Technology.

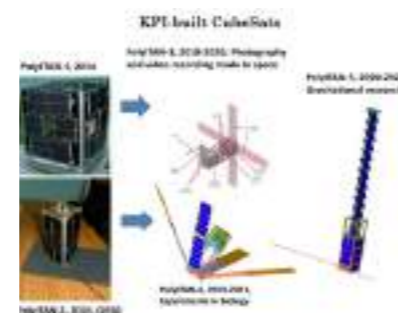
The engineering model PolyITAN-3 is still in the pipeline. It can be used for remote sensing of the Earth, environmental monitoring, earthquake forecasting, and

research in the ionosphere. The main mission of the satellite is to take photographs and transmit data to Earth.

Simultaneously, the team of designers is working on three more nanosatellites. Each of them will carry out missions in outer space.

PolyITAN-4 is projected to be used for bioexperiments on plants as well as for lunar programmes, and PolyITAN-5 will be designed for the exploration of Earth's electronic field and the characteristics of cataclysms, such as earthquakes and tsunamis.

The first test KPI-built nanosatellite, PolyITAN-1, was put into a low Earth orbit in June 2014, and the team continues to receive signals.



## SMART-ER: a new virtual research institute to foster dialogue with society



**Portugal** - A new virtual research institute is being born within ECIU University, with the goal of establishing a barrier-free research and innovation model and of fostering dialogue with society.

The ECIU University Research Institute for Smart European Regions (SMART-ER) aims to overcome any limitations in disciplines, sectors, and countries, based mainly on an online collaborative environment. The project has received €2 million in funding through the Horizon 2020 programme.

This research, innovation, and education project will enable member universities of the ECIU University network to face complex social challenges under the UN's SDG11, make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, stimulating

cooperation and mobility between research centres in 12 participating countries.

Organised as a virtual research institute, SMART-ER designs, develops, and implements research and delivers solutions to current and future SDG11 challenges, identified by the ECIU University Erasmus + project.

Public engagement has special relevance in the SMART-ER initiative, including all the ways in which higher education and research can be shared with society at large, from local or regional government to companies and individual or organised citizens. This is at the core of the methodological approach of SMART-ER, and for this reason it is one of the pillars of the project.

Activities will be implemented by bringing together scientific and management research capacities

at 12 ECIU University member institutions: Aalborg University, Dublin City University, Kaunas University of Technology, Linköping University, Tampere University, Hamburg University of Technology, Universidade de Aveiro, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, University of Stavanger, Università degli Studi di Trento, Institut National des Sciences Appliquées.

Jointly, the institutions will pilot a capacity building programme (Seed Programme and SMART-ER Academy), for which the University of Aveiro will be responsible, and citizen science initiatives that will be used as a testbed to put into practice all the mechanisms and structures built.



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Al-Ahliyya Amman University (AAU) the first private university in Jordan, established in 1989 to be a leading institute in higher education. AAU is recognized and accredited locally and internationally, it is also a member of Arab, Islamic and international university unions.

Al-Ahliyya Amman University makes every effort to maintain its prestigious reputation gained over the past three decades by achieving a number of goals that it has set within its plan to strengthen its leadership position as the first private university in Jordan and as one of the most prominent universities of high quality in higher education in the Arab world.

[www.ammanu.edu.jo](http://www.ammanu.edu.jo)

## KSMA material and tech facilities to aid students

**Ukraine** - Kherson State Maritime Academy has opened new material and technical facilities for experimental research, that provides the study of technological processes of maintenance and repair of transport equipment, improving the efficiency of control of the technical condition of production transport systems of the river and sea fleet.

The work of the scientific school is provided by the preparation and defense of dissertations by graduate and doctoral students, and the expansion of the range of activities of the scientific school is aimed at concluding agreements on cooperation and exchange of specialists both within Ukraine and the European Union, the United States, China and others.



## AACSB 'Innovations That Inspire' challenge motivates institutions to share latest innovations in business ed

**France** - Grenoble Ecole de Management (GEM) was rewarded in the 'Driving innovation in Higher Education' category of the AACSB challenge for its 2020 Virtual Reality Back-to-School Challenge.

"GEM has embraced the call to create positive societal impact and it is our privilege to recognize [them]... among the 2021 Innovations That Inspire initiative," said Caryn L. Beck-Dudley, AACSB president and CEO.

The Challenge included a host of innovations, such as an escape-room game to uncover its theme, "New Deals to think and impact the world"; 9 days of courses and virtual reality workshops to learn the controversy approach for new deal negotiations".

A virtual exhibition of 144 stands that took place at the end of this



period allowed students to share their results and pitch new-deal projects in front of a panel of professionals, school administrators, and representatives from six major corporate partners of the school.

Among the key outcomes were

first-year students coming together to interact and collaborate continuously with the GEM teams involved. The challenge sensitised students to responsible communication, owning their communication, and more.

## One of world's leading scientists appointed to spearhead research and innovation at UCC

**Ireland** - Professor John F Cryan, a neuroscientist recognised as a global leader in the study of gut-brain interactions, will assume the position of Vice President for Research & Innovation at University College Cork (UCC), having been selected after a competitive process.

Professor Cryan's ground-breaking discoveries on microbiome-brain interactions have led to fundamental changes in understandings in both the neuroscience and psychiatry fields. Through his research in the APC Microbiome Ireland SFI Research Centre at UCC, he was recently listed as among the world's top one percent of most-cited

researchers for the fifth time.

Professor Cryan has earned in excess of €23 million in research funding, published over 550 peer reviewed publications across a range of high-profile journals, and has been cited over 62,000 times throughout a distinguished career in both industry and academia.

Professor Cryan has trained more than 40 PhD students, is a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and has received an Honorary Doctorate from University of Antwerp, Belgium.

"The goal is to grow our research reputation coupled with increases in funding, patents and industry

engagement over the next years," said Professor Cryan.

"Now more than ever the value of research is being recognised both by the public and policymakers, but it takes investment. I'm reminded of the inspirational Mary Lasker who said: If you think research is expensive, try disease!"

"I am passionate about the role that the humanities and social sciences can have in such efforts and there are huge opportunities in this regard for UCC, as we strive for a campus of Creativity, Curiosity & Critical Thinking that will enable a more just and inclusive future for all," he said.



## Palacký University enters into the Aurora Alliance project

**Czech Republic** - This year, Palacký University Olomouc (UP), celebrated the 75th anniversary of its reinstatement after WW2, and 447 years of educating students in Czechia. It became a member of the Aurora Alliance of European universities and established the position of coordinator of sustainable development.

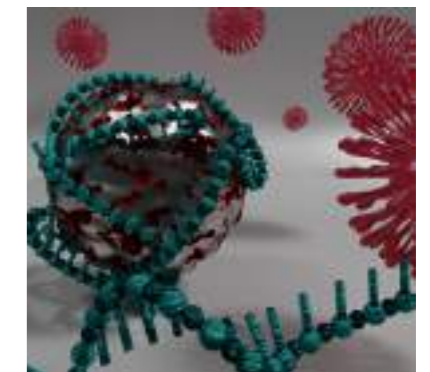
Three state-of-the-art scientific centres at UP were combined to create the Czech Advanced Technology and Research Institute (CATRIN), aimed at deepening multidisciplinary cooperation, finding new research directions, and contributing to

solving global problems.

UP and its Regional Centre of Advanced Technology and Materials (RCPTM) were awarded a prestigious Horizon 2020 grant to support international research on bone tumours, and UP Faculty of Arts Hispanic studies scholar Iveta Nakládalová received a Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant.

After successfully decoding the genetic information of bread wheat, barley, and peas, UP scientist also decoded the rye genome. UP RCPTM scientists have already put into practice a new type of magnetic nanoparticle for the past year at

the UP Institute of Translational and Molecular Medicine to mass-test samples for SARS-CoV-2.



## Innovation Campus programme launched at National Technical University «Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute»

**Ukraine** - On September 7, 2020, the ceremonial opening of the National Technical University «Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute» (NTU «KhPI») Innovation Campus project on the basis of UNIT.Kharkiv took place.

This is a unique project created by NTU «KhPI» together with the modern Ucode IT Academy, which offers practical training on popular IT technologies. The start of the programme took place with the participation of Yevgen Sokol, Acting Rector of NTU «KhPI», Vasyl Khmelnytsky, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of NTU «KhPI»

and founder of the holding company UFuture and the K.Fund, teachers and students of NTU «KhPI».

Innovation Campus was developed by a team of Ukrainian IT specialists in cooperation with NTU «KhPI». The concept is a transition from a declarative training scheme to a project scheme aimed at acquiring practical skills in creating products and systems. This is a fundamentally new training system that provides bachelor's training at a high international level.



## made in UiTM made for the world

Incorporating IoT and Artificial Intelligence in activating its research and innovation to improve agricultural productivity, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) is adopting Smart Agriculture, a technology that is capable of optimizing crop production efficiency and human labour requirements. This technology is expected to bring a huge change to the future of sustainable agriculture with the use of sensors that allow farmers to monitor the state of crops and make precise decisions simultaneously prioritizing responsible food consumption and production.

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## NURE started the development of multi-purpose mobile robotic platform

**Ukraine** - Kharkiv National University of Radio Electronics (NURE) and the Department of Computer-Integrated Technologies, Automation and Mechatronics under the leadership of Doctor of Science, Professor Igor Nevliudov, began developing a new project to create an intelligent multi-purpose mobile robotic platform with improved manipulation capabilities.

This project is based on the methods, development, and improvement for intelligent control of robotic means, methods of mechatronic devices and systems adaptive control, methods of complex mechatronic devices and systems sensitisation, development and use of flexible-



rigid switching structures and devices based on them.

The project is aimed at the intelligent mobile robotic platforms experimental development based on the principles of openness, flexibility, modularity and additivity, capable, in accordance with the conceptual framework, to perform

versatile tasks of a wide purpose: finding and providing assistance functions to victims - in the field of emergency response (including nuclear facilities); supervision and provision of patient care functions - in the health sector; observing, recognising, identifying, and performing tasks in the field of agriculture.

## Hotel Management School of Geneva students involved in an act of solidarity



**Switzerland** - Thanks to the creativity and resourcefulness of the Hotel Management School of Geneva (EHG), and in

collaboration with a Geneva charity organisation, students were able to show their solidarity and altruistic attitude with those who are in need during COVID-19.

Throughout the winter, EHG students volunteered to serve more than 100 breakfasts and 150 lunches, per day, to people in vulnerable situations.

Supervised by a team of permanent volunteers, the students helped serve and pack meals in the Geneva Community Hall, in compliance with the health standards required by the Federal Council.

This great initiative allowed the EHG to find an alternative to help the students by continuing to put into practice their training in catering services to those in need, despite the closure of the restaurants in Switzerland during the current situation.



## Rethink design change our future – D-CoDE

**Latvia** - Transport and Telecommunication Institute (TSI) as one of the partners of D-CoDE, a project towards a sustainable future under the European Union's research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, will share its knowledge and resources to develop novel methods for the design of machine behaviour through principled data engineering.

D-CoDE will train a cohort of 15 PhD students in design, design anthropology, media studies, science and technology studies and data science. The project will equip students with the holistic understanding needed for the



human-centric design of product service systems powered by Big Data, Machine Learning, and Artificial Intelligence.

D-CoDE catalyses responsible change by working in teams across sectors and disciplines to go beyond the status quo and accelerate research for real-world challenges. A fundamentally new kind of design competence is needed to anticipate the digital transformation of society and create the conditions for responsible and sustainable futures.

D-CoDE partners include TU Delft, Umeå Institute of Design, University of Edinburgh, Aarhus University, University of Copenhagen, TSI, Amsterdam University of Applied Science, and Philips Design.



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# Becoming part of the bigger picture

By Frances James



Creating a gender-diverse workplace does not happen overnight.

It requires years of focused and collective action, driven by an awareness of the impact greater gender diversity within higher education can have on staff, students, and the wider gender-equality movement.

Higher education institutions play a significant role in shaping society, through the education of future decision makers, critical research, and as high-profile and respected organisations within communities.

“College and university leaders make daily decisions that have life-altering impacts on a growing number of students – students who will populate our businesses, organisations and governments as workers and leaders,” says Leah Teague, Associate Dean and Professor of Law at Baylor University.

To become a catalyst for positive change, universities must acknowledge their profile as complex networks, in which the decisions made by leadership can have both immediate and long-term impact, not only on their own students and staff, but on marginalised genders for generations to come.

In its recently released series of report, QS looked into how higher education providers can develop into diverse institutions, with specific focus on ethnicity, gender and disability.



# At a *glance*



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### Educate current staff and students

When an environment is openly welcoming and supportive of people of all genders, it is more likely that the respected individuals will be attracted to that environment. Creating a community of staff and students who respect and value each other, and who are fully in support of the gender-equality movement, can spark further diversification of that institution.

This means taking steps to help individuals in the community to understand one another; to acknowledge the barriers that staff and students face as a result of their gender identity.

Diversity training can play a significant role in taking these steps, whether at the hands of an internal diversity team, or via external help.

For example, a key area that all staff must be educated in is gender expression and identity.

Recognising and complying with someone's decision to be identified in a certain way, such as via the pronouns he/him, she/her or they/them, or a chosen name, can go a long way towards that person's happiness and satisfaction.

According to a study in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, when transgender youths can openly use their chosen names in places such as work, school and home, their risk of depression and suicide drops.

The study reveals "young people who could use their name in all four areas experienced 71 percent fewer symptoms of severe depression, a 34 percent decrease in reported thoughts of suicide and a 65 percent decrease in suicidal attempts".

While this study focuses specifically

on transgender youths, it exposes a connection between improved mental health and having a person's self-expression accepted within their community.

Diversity training is not only important for understanding the issues that women, non-binary, and transgender individuals face, but also to expose and recognise any conscious or sub-conscious prejudices that may exist a person may hold.

This is particularly important for decision makers at universities, as dismantling personal prejudices towards certain genders is the first step in preventing the consequences of this prejudice, such as gender pay gaps and barriers to promotion.

Higher education has the power to not only foster a community of inclusivity at institutions themselves, but to influence the breakdown of gender norms and assumptions seen in wider society.

Solveig Olson-Strom and Nirmala Rao explore the experiences of women in higher education in Asia, with specific focus on the inequality experienced by female students and how this reflects social structures.

The authors write: "Implementing trainings for faculty and staff focused on creating a university-wide community that prioritises breaking down patriarchal norms and other harmful societal structures is another way to create an inclusive space."

Achieving gender diversity in higher education is a collective effort, one that needs to be prioritised throughout all aspects of university life and by all those affiliated with higher education.

*"The results of investigating barriers may reveal more work needed to address internal prejudice and misogyny"*

<p><b>98.7%</b> Graduate Employability (Ministry of Higher Education tracer study, Malaysia)</p>	<p><b>Top 47%</b> (QS World University Rankings 2021)</p>	<p><b>Top 139</b> (QS Asia Rankings 2021)</p>	<p><b>Top 100</b> (QS World University Rankings 2020 - Top 50 Under 50)</p>
<p><b>Top #1</b> in Malaysia for Art &amp; Design (Fashion Design) (QS World University Rankings 2021 by Subject)</p>	<p><b>Top #2</b> in Malaysia for Hospitality &amp; Leisure Management (QS World University Rankings 2021 by Subject)</p>	<p><b>Top #11</b> in Malaysia for Business &amp; Management (QS World University Rankings 2021 by Subject)</p>	<p><b>QS 5 Stars</b> · Teaching · Facilities · Graduate Employability · Social Responsibility · Inclusiveness</p>
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### Diversify leadership

Providing diversity training to decision makers at higher education institutions can have a positive impact on the development of a gender-diverse workplace. When those with the power to employ new staff see past gender norms and assumptions, they are more likely to hire based on relevant factors, such as a person's qualifications and experience.

As well as training decision makers in the importance of gender diversity, it is also important to directly place women and transgender and non-binary individuals in leadership and decision-making roles.

Evidence repeatedly shows, in many countries, women are under-represented across leadership and senior positions at higher

education institutions.

According to Sue Shepherd, from the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research at the University of Kent, the figures "reflect a failure to maximise female talent" and "is problematic both from a social justice and an organisational perspective given the increasing evidence that the more women executives an organization has, the better it performs".

Pew Research Center asked US respondents what they believe the common obstacles are to female leadership in business and politics.

"About four in ten believe higher standards for women and lack of readiness by companies to hire women for top positions and by voters to elect women to higher office are major reasons that

there are not more women in top leadership roles in business and politics," the report found.

It is crucial that those currently in leadership roles investigate the barriers that may be preventing women from entering top positions at their institution.

The results of investigating barriers may reveal more work needed to address internal prejudice and misogyny, such as by increasing support for women who start a family alongside the continued progression of their careers.

Much of the research surrounding gender inequality amongst leadership in higher education covers the barriers to women specifically, as opposed to those identifying as transgender or non-binary.

While progress has been slow, there are early signs some of the barriers that were preventing transgender and non-binary individuals from being elected to leadership roles, in higher education and beyond, are slowly being dismantled.

In 2015, Manabi Bandopadhyay became India's first transgender college principal at Krishnagar Women's College in West Bengal's Nadia district.

Later in January 2021, Dr Rachel Levine was nominated Pennsylvania Secretary of Health by then president-elect Joe Biden, "to serve as the new assistant secretary of health at the Department of Health and Human Services".

*"Diversity training is not only important for understanding the issues... also to expose and recognise any conscious or sub-conscious prejudices that may exist a person may hold."*





*“Developing a gender-diverse workplace at higher education institutions should never be driven solely by the desire to meet diversity targets.”*

However, these case studies are rare, with many transgender and non-binary individuals still facing barriers to employment and leadership in higher education.

A report by the Equality Challenge Unit into the experiences of transgender and non-binary staff and students reveals that 23 percent of transgender staff had been denied promotion due to their identity.

Every effort must be made to investigate the barriers that may prevent the appointment of transgender and non-binary staff to leadership or high-ranking positions in higher education. Doing so will not only provide your institution with further talent, but also help validate the goals and ambitions of future generations of transgender and non-binary individuals.

#### **Create practical steps and targets**

Developing a gender-diverse workplace at higher education institutions should never be driven solely by the desire to meet diversity targets. In doing so, it is likely that important factors in gender equality will be overlooked, such as improving the personal experiences of staff and dismantling the internal and complex prejudices that may exist amongst the community.

However, targets can still be a good indication of whether the efforts being made to create a welcoming and inclusive working environment are paying off, and to guide any changes that need to be made to the approach.

Establishing a diversity team or board dedicated to creating an inclusive working environment will

ensure there is always momentum behind any set goals or targets.

In some instances, external expertise may need to be sourced, such as providers of diversity and inclusion training, or diversity and inclusion consultants.

With the help of internal or external diversity experts, institutions can develop practical steps and targets, and a long-term strategy for the formulation of a gender-diverse workplace.

For example, they may be able to advise institutions on how to promote job opportunities in a more gender-neutral way.

According to the *Harvard Business Review*, while men and women were almost equally likely to view a job advertisement, “women are 16 percent less likely to apply for a job after viewing it”.

They go on to advise that a job listing can be made more inclusive with certain changes, revealing “44 percent of women would be discouraged from applying to a job if the description included the word aggressive”.

While the intention to create an inclusive and gender-diverse working environment within an institution might be noteworthy, in order to achieve this goal, it must be met with actionable steps.

#### **Closing comments**

The three actions outlined are only a starting point.

Discussions surrounding gender identity are constantly evolving, requiring the continuous review and update of the approach to the development of a



gender-diverse workplace.

With sustained effort, higher education institutions can increase the number of women and transgender and non-binary individuals in academic and non-academic roles, and create working environments that are welcoming, inclusive and fair.

*The content of this article is taken from excerpt taken of the *Prioritising gender diversity in the workplace at higher education institutions* report, exploring three critical steps that must be taken by higher education institutions to create greater gender diversity amongst their institutions academic and non-academic staff.* ❖



## US Patent awarded for BitCube



Tests showed BitCube needs very low computing power compared to other known cypto systems, and has very limited memory (less than 0.5 Kilobyte), and very low power consumption (0.18 to 0.23 Wats).

BitCube's robustness comes from the fact that it uses two different continuously changeable encryption keys. It utilises the concept of the Rubik's Cube rotations in generating the encryption keys which results in a huge number of key possibilities. BitCube can defend against brute-force attacks, known-plaintext attack, chosen-plaintext attack, and cipher-text only attack.

The implementation of the BitCube will result in secure IoT environment. It will significantly decrease the huge number of expected attacks on the current insecure IoT sensors.

The inventors team comprises of Dr Khalid Adnan Alissa, Dr Abdulah Almuhadib, Hala Ehab Hamdy, Reem Alshareef, Reem Rawdhan, Rawan Alsleebe, Randa Abualrob. Dr Khalid Adnan Alissa is Cyber security consultant and Dean of Information and Communication Technology in Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University (IAU), having PhD in Computer and Information Security from Queensland University of Technology.

**Saudi Arabia** – A light and secure cryptosystem developed by an Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University security consultant, has been awarded a US patent.

BitCube solves issues around the Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, which are not secure due to their limited power capabilities and memory space. The invention aims to secure the data transmission

between IoT sensors and their base station by designing a new lightweight cryptosystem.

Through BitCube, users have confidentiality, message authentication and device authentication. The device's time complexity, power, and memory space are calculated and tested to be suitable for limitations the sensors have.

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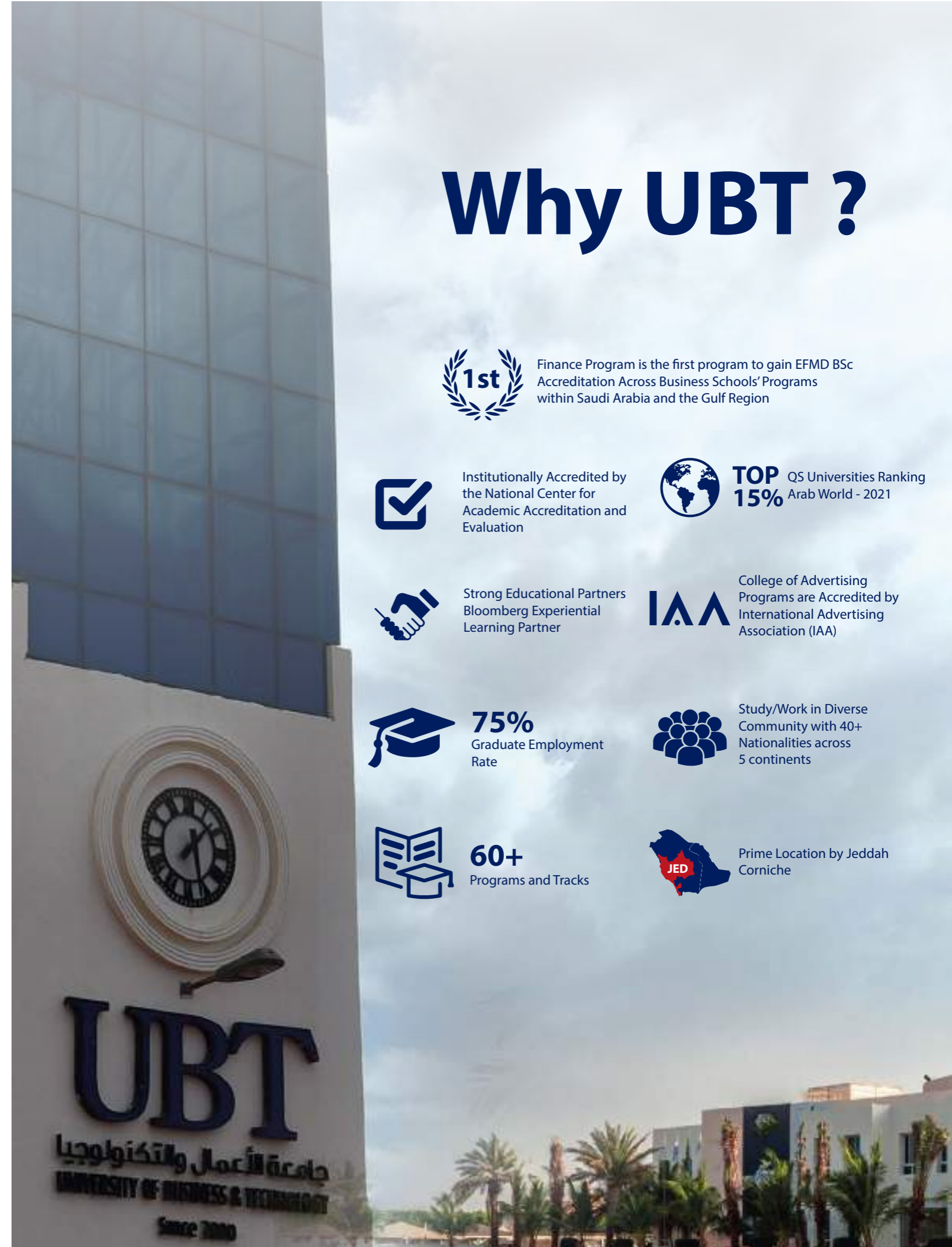
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## Helwan University joins Pharaohs Golden Parade

**Egypt** - Helwan University, as part of its involvement in the community, participated in the preparation and execution of the Pharaohs Golden Parade held in April 2021. Nearly, 100 staff members and students from the Faculty of Fine Arts, the Faculty of Applied Arts and the Faculty of Art Education decorated the pathway of the parade from the Egyptian Museum at Tahrir Square to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization.

450 students from the Faculty of Physical Education performed the march and lyrical dance that accompanied the Pharaohs Golden



Parade. They were prominently noticed at the outdoor area of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, to mark the end of the parade. The rigorous work behind the fascinating artwork

of the parade, constituted in the decorative paintings, laser engraved marble and banners, took 6 months of preparation.

## Monastir-ENIM obtains EUR-ACE accreditation for four of its master degrees

**Tunisia** - The quality approach implemented by the National School of Engineers of Monastir-ENIM (University of Monastir - Tunisia) has been rewarded by the European Accreditation of Engineering Programmes EUR-ACE, for its Master Degrees in Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Energy Engineering, and Textile Engineering.

This label, issued by the Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (CTI-France), is awarded to schools that meet the highest standards and represents a real asset for ENIM attesting of the quality of its teaching and

training programmes.

It is also a major asset for students and graduates since it promotes international equivalence and can facilitate not only academic recognition in foreign countries, but also the registration process to be recognised and officially practice the engineering profession.

The label has also professional benefits, as employers are assured that the knowledge of young graduates of the labelled programmes is in line with international standards for engineering education.



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## Yarmouk University and Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg launch YU Remote Lab



**Jordan** - Yarmouk University (YU) has launched the YU Remote Lab (YU-RL) project in partnership with Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg (H-BRS) with support from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to design and develop teaching methods and tools

for remote laboratories.

The YU-RL project will revisit the practical training component in electrical engineering and study the challenges of delivering it online. Based on this study, the curriculum will be updated to suit the local context and reflect

the latest developments in science and technology.

Laboratories will be conducted remotely, taking advantage of similar experiences at H-BRS, in two modes: the student will be able to connect to a remote server to do the experiment on the server on another piece of equipment connected to the server; and the student will be able to conduct the experiment at home, with remote and synchronous supervision from the teacher.

The development of a suitable didactical approach and the shift to digital learning will be accompanied by the Centre for teaching development and innovation at H-BRS (ZIEL) as an experienced partner in train-the-trainer activities.

## Book by QU's Dr Talal Al-Emadi indexed by Elsevier's Scopus

**Qatar** - Director and Oil & Gas Law Professor at Qatar University, Dr Talal Al-Emadi's book, titled "Joint Venture Agreements in the Qatari Gas Industry: A Theoretical and an Empirical Analysis" has been indexed in Scopus, the world's largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed research literature.

Scopus, by Elsevier, creates professional links between researchers, published ideas, and organisations. Data generated

by Scopus is used to calculate influential rankings such as QS World University.

The book is the first to showcase the indigenous Qatari energy industry and it was published in 2019 by Springer Nature. It is also part of the IEREK Interdisciplinary Series for Sustainable Development, namely Advances in Science, Technology & Innovation (ASTI).

ASTI contributes to the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) as set out by the UN



(United Nations) for 2030. The book was also reviewed in *Oxford University Press World Energy Law & Business Journal*, the official peer-reviewed journal of AIPN.

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## UAEU-led team reveals link between blood biomarker and the risk of severe COVID-19 complications

**UAE** - A joint collaborative research team from the UAE University (UAEU) and the Medical University of Graz in Austria, led by Dr Abderrahim Oulhaj, has discovered a very promising link between a biomarker, called 'Soluble Urokinase Plasminogen Activator Receptor' (suPAR), and the risk of severe complications among hospitalized COVID-19 patients.

The results show that COVID-19 patients with high levels of the biomarker suPAR at the time of hospital admission are at an increased risk of developing severe complications, such as the need for respiratory support and intensive care, compared with those with low levels of suPAR. These results confirm the

hypothesis that suPAR can be used as a prognostic tool to predict severe COVID-19 complications in hospitalised patients.

The study was conducted between May and August 2020 at Al Ain hospital; a designated COVID-19 response centre in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. During the study, 403 confirmed COVID-19 patients were recruited and prospectively followed-up until the occurrence of severe complications or until discharge from hospital.

The findings of this study have great potential for guiding decision-making in the hospitals, and to facilitate the identification of medications and supportive therapies to save lives. SuPAR could be used to triage patients according

to their blood levels to identify those who may safely be discharged home for self-isolation, those who should be hospitalised, and those at high risk of deterioration and may require admission to intensive care.

The study has been published at the *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*, an international peer reviewed scientific journal.

pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33862208/



# WE'RE NOT GOING TO WAIT

By Niamh Ollerton

## WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION



They say diverse teams are the best teams. Everyone, regardless of race, gender, nationality, or education brings a different perspective to the table – something that will benefit the masses if given the opportunity to flourish.

Women are making waves in the higher education sector – building new business models, boosting morale, and paving the way for female leaders of the future. All of them, they tell QS GEN aren't done yet, and hope the lessons they've learned during their careers to senior leadership positions, and their wisdom and strategies will allow others to follow in their footsteps.

### Improving education from an early age

Lindsey Nefesh-Clarke, Founder & Managing Director, Women's WorldWide Web (W4), says: "There've been great gains in education, but the problem is we're not seeing that in STEM and we're certainly not seeing that in tech."

"In Europe, women account for 17 percent of ICT specialists. There's a huge, costly supply-demand mismatch."

"The research shows it starts at an early age. It's got nothing to do with ability. Instead, girls and young women tend to self-select out."

Nefesh-Clarke believes there are a number of ways to address this: adopting education, address unconscious bias and stereotypes in education.

She says: "In our work at W4, we're very proud to be involved in a global project, Tech for Girls."



"We're trying to introduce girls to technologies at an early age. Our objective is to pique their interest to provide them with hands-on engaging experience of technologies." Véronique Tran, Dean of the Executive MBA programme at ESCP and the Dean and Rector of ESCP's Berlin campus notes the importance of soft skills, and the necessity to build women up from a young age. "Boosting their self-confidence and sense of self-efficacy is very important and needs to be nurtured as adults too. This is what we provide women managers who attend our Executive MBA," Tran says. Nefesh-Clarke believes these

priorities could be a gamechanger, but other aspects need to be addressed. She says: "We need to see more gender-smart finance investing. The paucity of VC capital that goes to women-owned businesses is pretty demoralising; that needs to be turned around. There's really an education, employment and leadership disconnect. "We've made these great gains in terms of women's education but that isn't translating into women's leadership. "You hear these figures that it will take 130 years to achieve gender parity among heads of government – we're not going to wait for that."

**Women transforming HE**

The Global Leadership League (The League) is one organisation transforming the lives of professionals across the globe. Founded by 10 women in 2017, after initially being sparked during a Forum on Education Abroad retreat focused on women in international education leadership some six years earlier, each member of The League has a key role to help operationalise its vision.

Key among the focus discussions was considering what each member wished they'd known at the start of their career, and how to overcome a lack of mentoring, a circumstance many shared.

"It was a collective moment of questioning how to really change our field for the practitioners coming up," says Martha Johnson, Assistant Dean, Learning Abroad at University of Minnesota and co-founder of The League.

Fellow founder, Cynthia Banks adds the team shared a common question about how to best support their teams, their own leadership journey, and also raise up the next generation of leaders for the sector. She says: "As a group, we created The League to help others around us – all genders – with their own professional journey."

Banks, who is also the Executive Director for The League, says her function is to keep an active group of volunteers, solidify the technology that powers the programmes, support members, and raise the profile and partnerships of the League.

"I love working with this group of leaders and I am inspired by

the progress we have made for our members and member organisations," she explains. "There is always more to do but we have a plan and motivation to serve the field well." The list of women who have influenced global education is a long and robust list. In fact, it should be noted that women make up the majority of the roles in global education, but Banks explains to QS-GEN that considering those numbers alone does not provide a complete picture of their positions of power.

"However (and this is a big however), we do not always see women in the top leadership roles in universities and organisations. I believe this is a paradoxical issue related to career progression," she says.

"We know that our global community is more important than ever, and we marvel at our membership roster that contains colleagues from 42 countries and over 1,400 active participants in three years."

The League focuses on the individual leader and their need for management skills, learning opportunities to reflect on their situation, and peer mentoring and expanding networks.

"We aim to prepare the person for the role – whatever it may be. "Before and now after the pandemic, global educators need to know how to lead teams and be effective team members through times of crisis and to be innovative when there is lack of clear directions. "These skills are what will transform



the global education sector and ensure we adequately can prepare students – and ourselves as professionals – for a truly globalised world," Banks says. Banks notes The League sees a huge need for leadership skills training for professionals that go beyond training for the actual global education role, and that the organisation aims to bring this training to help other be better team managers, to learn more about key technologies, marketing data analytics and overall strategy and problem-solving techniques.

"We envision programmes where we learn together (like our Chat Boxes) and opportunities to focus on both professional and personal growth (like Career Connections). Our goal is to be real, relevant, and personal so that global educators will successfully manage this turbulent and exciting time in international education," she says.

Banks started her own study abroad organisation at 24 and says at the time, the field wasn't overly kind to a young professional – with her able to count mentors

on one hand. Once she'd raised her organisation to a team of 100 worldwide and sold it, she says she noticed several other women leading the way through leadership in their own organisations.

"The League sees people like Amy Baker and Clare Gossage at the *PIE News* as big changemakers many other amazing women creating and leading worldwide organisations," Banks says.

Importantly, Johnson says The League has worked to expand its message of inclusion – adding more nuanced language around leadership and gender dynamics rather than positioning it as an organisation exclusively for women. Using this type of messaging, she explains, came from conversations resonating across identities.

"We want to make it clear that all are welcome.

"We are looking forward to the post-pandemic evolution but in some ways the need for our programming and resources has been uniquely timely, as the current situation has exposed and exacerbated inequities," Johnson says.



Banks adds: "The League has only been in existence for about three years. This entire venture is one of our proudest achievements and we have more to do."

"We were not sure what this might be when we started but we are so proud to be contributing to professional and personal growth and hope that next year we can double our efforts."

#### The importance of gender parity

The League members come from a variety of backgrounds including diversity of gender, race, religion, socio-economic status and more. With this in mind, Banks says it only makes sense that those influencing the education of the group understand diverse needs, and diverse colleagues across the organisation ensure listening posts are active.

"We live and breathe the belief that diverse perspectives in leadership lead to amazing and positive changes for an organisation! This stems from understanding that education is a service to others who are, themselves, diverse."

"As part of learning to effectively lead this new world, The League believes that the more feminine leadership qualities such as transparency, empathy, open communication, cooperation and listening can overall create a more effective organization. Any gender can learn and practice this style of essential power skills," Banks says.

#### The rise of women in Higher Education

Gary A. Berg released his book, *The Rise of Women in Higher Education: How, Why and What's Next*, in 2017. The book covers the gains made by women in higher education, but also focuses on the countless areas where women haven't achieved equity.

Berg, a former associate vice president at California State University Channel Islands says the premise of his book was that the most important change in higher education in recent history is the increase of women leaders, faculty, and students.

Over the past 10 years, Berg says the pattern of change has continued with the increased participation of women in higher education as students, faculty, and administrators, but adds we're not over the finish line yet.

"There are still troubling disparities in participation by area of study, attendance at elite institutions, faculty at elite institutions, top leadership

overall, and compensation for women," says Berg.

In his view, society benefits from more diverse leadership in all organisations, and a starting point for creating that pipeline is in business schools, and although reaching gender parity across the board is still some time in the future, Berg doesn't see progress slowing down.

"The tide has turned, and there's a new generation with different ideas and less constrained by the past," he says.

The most significant change in higher education at the end of the 20th century into the 21st is the rise of women in participation and influence in higher education.

Berg says: "I think we've reached the place where we don't need to point to examples of successful women in higher education as it is no longer unique. I would just point to the number of women presidents for instance in the largest American public university system, the California State University. A remarkable change."

*"Before and now after the pandemic, global educators need to know how to lead teams and be effective team members through times of crisis and to be innovative when there is lack of clear directions."*

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### Changes in HE over the past 10 years

Banks says higher education is always in the transformative stage as learning modalities adapt to the needs of students. Wider use of tech to disseminate information and ensure education is more accessible is one such revamp, and Banks says we will see continued calls to reduce education costs worldwide – with universities targeting programmes to meet community workforce needs.

She says: "In our sector, we face an immediate need to adapt to a

global world that cannot meet each other in person and going forward we sense that global educators will see new ways to ensure experiences that may be shorter, more on-line, less costly, and of deeper value.

"We believe all genders – binary and non-conforming – should have the opportunity to pursue their passion in whatever way they desire. The challenge for all industries, including STEM, is to create fair pathways where all forms of diversity feel WELCOME and where the current leaders are open to hearing a new perspective to allow diversity a seat at the table."

Ensuring this becomes a reality is where feminine leadership qualities can play a role according to Banks, like encouraging young people for example, as most young adults are influenced by the media, parents, and family friends.

"It's difficult to directly counter these underlying messages in schools when other sources are a more regular and closer influence.

"Therefore, let's assume that encouraging women is more about normalising these STEM paths and other choices as 'expected' and not a "surprise"m: says Banks.

"Let's get to a point where we don't have to say words like 'Isn't it great a woman got that job' and instead 'We appointed an amazing leader'."

Johnson thinks the focus on employability in higher education is significant but unfortunately often positioned in conflict with the broader goals of higher education.

"I believe personal growth and intellectual development is not diametrically opposed to career readiness," she says.

"One of the reasons I am passionate about experiences abroad for students is because experiential learning is a space where both learning and skill development goals to be achieved simultaneously."

The STEM industry is one such field where women are massively underrepresented. Encouraging girls and women from an early age to take chances in education and careers is one way to tackle this, however, Johnson says it's also about acknowledging gender dynamics early and often.



*"There's really an education, employment, and leadership disconnect."*





Johnson says: "Boys are still given trucks and building sets as gifts while girls may be given a doll. Girls need to see more role models in these jobs and in the faculty. It is the same for students of colour.

"Underrepresented students need to "see" themselves in these faculties and industries if we are to change them."

Berg echoes this sentiment as he says groups with historical advantages tend to congregate in higher power and compensation fields such as engineering.

"Women have made great strides in participation in biology and medical fields, but technology, engineering and math remain less attractive fields. Moving beyond gendered fields of study and occupations is a complex problem which needs to be addressed early on in education.

"It is difficult to change participation rate at higher education and

professional levels partly because of the intensely competitive nature of those careers. Providing the foundational education and information about those careers early on is the most important," says Berg.

#### How experience influences change

As the Assistant Dean for Learning Abroad at the University of Minnesota, Johnson knows the importance of international study. She notes that for many American students, study abroad is the first time they tangibly experience difference.

She says: "That critical first exposure to different cultures, races, politics, histories and ways of thinking should open a door for the future and challenge ethnocentrism. The long-term impact is often remarkable."

Johnson says her proudest achievements in her career were

only accomplished because of the amazing people she works with at the University of Minnesota.

"This year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of our ground-breaking Curriculum Integrations initiative.

"We have changed education abroad globally by being one of the first universities to align study abroad with the curriculum. I am incredibly proud of that work and the growth in education abroad at the university, but I certainly can't take credit for its success!" Johnson says.

Johnson advises budding leaders to do what you do passionately and because the job fulfils you.

She says: "Too many people want the title but not the actual job. Ignore the noise from the critics and those who will tell you all the reasons why you can't do something or should do it a certain way... they might be wrong.

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## SOAR WITH US



# Northern Border University

## LEADERSHIP AND EXCELLENCE IN THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO ACHIEVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

"Most of my success has come from questioning the assumptions and mythology of my predecessors."

Johnson served on the NAFSA International Education Leadership team and has also served and chaired multiple committees in NAFSA and the Forum on Education Abroad two committees she thoroughly enjoyed being a part of.

"One of the most exciting aspects of my career has been the opportunity

to have a front row seat to the development of a profession that really didn't exist when I started in it.

"All of these organisations have been critically engaged in the professionalisation of international education. Since it is still "new" we all have the ability to impact the outcome.

"We need to own our expertise and affect how campuses internationalise, and the

professionalisation of the field is a critical step in legitimising our work and developing data and research," she says.

All genders are invited to join The League to help effect great sector changes while advancing their own leadership skills and educating the next generation.

"For female leaders who do wish to rise, we give you our support and would love to help counsel and support you in your journey," says Banks.

With over 30 years' experience in the global education field, Banks knows first-hand the challenges of building a brand and reputation.

Her top recommendations are:

1. Get involved in global education organisations as a volunteer to widen your circle.
2. Stand up on stage and share something at a conference through a presentation panel.
3. Look for mentors who can support you and then make your conversations active and engaging.
4. Take time to support others.
5. Take a risk and state your opinion. Remember, amazing leaders didn't get there by being silent.
6. Make friends, stay in touch through the year, use LinkedIn to stay aware of ways to get involved and to support others.
7. And most of all, aim for your true north where your best self is happy and fulfilled. ❖

The Northern Border University (NBU) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established by The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz during his visit to the Northern Border Region in 2007 (1428 H).

The College of Sciences in Arar, which had been affiliated with King Abdulaziz University, was amalgamated into the newly established University and later the Teachers' College.

A number of colleges in Rafha, Turaif and Al-Uwaygilah Governorates were also amalgamated into the University; these colleges together formed the Northern Border University. Several Colleges were inaugurated after the establishment of the University including the Colleges of Medicine, Engineering, Computer Science, Pharmacy, Nursing, Administration and Medical Sciences, and Social Sciences

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through well-educated and experienced faculty members; preparing qualified administrative and technical staff; developing academically accredited programmes, building a holistic infrastructure (laboratories, classrooms, library halls, digital resources); and creating a motivating research environment that meets the researchers' competence.

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- College of Pharmacy in Rafha
- College of Nursing
- College of Engineering
- College of Sciences
- College of Business Administration
- College of Arts and Education in Arar
- College of Home Economics (female)

- College of Computer Science and Information Technology
- College of Sciences and Arts in Rafha
- Community College in Arar
- Community College in Rafha
- Community College in Turaif
- College of Sciences and Arts in Turaif
- College of Sciences and Arts in Al-Uwaygilah (female)

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## Bakrie University takes home the gold at Archimedes 2021

**Indonesia** - Bakrie University's Faculty team represented by Jouvan Chandra Pratama Putra (Civil Engineering Department), Safrilah (Civil Engineering Department), Sigit Wijayanto (Information Systems Department), and Mirsa Diah Novianti (Industrial Engineering Department) were again awarded a Gold Award at the XXIV Moscow International Salon of Inventions and Innovative

Technologies "Archimedes" in March 2021 with the project "The Zeolite Modification and its Application to Indoor Air Quality Control" after winning the Silver Medal from the 1 Idea 1 World event in Turkey in February 2021.

Archimedes is a platform for the development of discovery and innovation supported by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the Federal Service on

Intellectual Property, the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, to the regional representations of the Russian Federation.

The Archimedes activity successfully presented hundreds of participants and innovative work from various institutions worldwide even though carried out in correspondence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Highly permeable, superelastic conductor shapes future wearable electronics

**Hong Kong** - Researchers at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) have made a breakthrough in a stretchable conductor that is highly permeable and superelastic with good conductivity.

The new conductor serves as a platform enabling the making of monolithic stretchable electronics that integrate many components in a small area, provide multiple functions and endure hours for wearing. Potential applications include health monitoring devices, soft robotics and on-skin electronics.

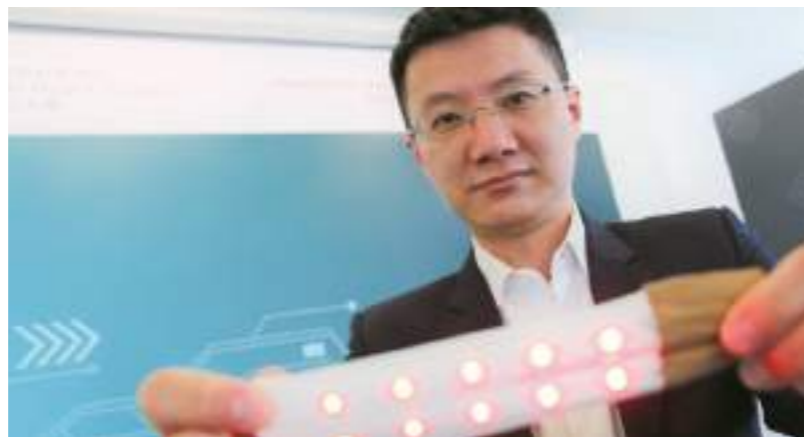
This novel conductor is called liquid-metal fibre mat (LMFM). Eutectic gallium-indium alloy (EGaln) was selected to manufacture the LMFM as the conductive component for printing on a stretchable mat made of poly(styrene-block-butadiene-block-styrene), or SBS.

"EGaln is a type of liquid metal commonly used in soft electronics, such as flexible printed circuit boards," Professor Zheng Zijian of PolyU Institute of Textiles and Clothing said.

"It can be maintained in a liquid state under room temperature and

has low viscosity, high conductivity and low toxicity. When exposed to air, it forms a thin solid layer of oxide (Ga<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>) rapidly on the surface and becomes soft and stretchable."

The interdisciplinary research team will continue to improve the performance of the LMFM.



## Ambassador unveils first Indo-French Sports Management dual degree

**India** - Furthering the Indo-French ties in the field of education and research, India's first Indo-French business, Xavier Emlyon Business School (XEBS) launched its Dual Degree masters programme in Sports Industry Management recently in presence of the Ambassador of France to India, Emmanuel Lenain.

Principal Secretary, Sports and Youth Services, Government of Odisha; Vishal Dev, Consul General, Consulate General of France in Calcutta; Virginie Corteval, Chairman, Odisha State Hockey Promotion Council; and former Indian hockey captain Dilip Tirkey, Attache for academic and scientific cooperation Emilia Cartier, XEBS board members, faculty and students were also present for



the launch ceremony.

The Indo-French dual degree programme, launched under the aegis of the XEBS Ahluwalia Centre of Excellence in Sports Management (XEBS CESM), is expected to be a gamechanger with an MBA degree from Xavier University, Bhubaneswar and MSc degree from Emlyon

Business School, France.

"I am happy to be a part of the launch of this Indo-French Dual Degree programme of XEBS Ahluwalia Centre of Excellence in Sports Management that too in a state like Odisha that is being called the sports capital of India," Ambassador Lenain said.

## Assisted reproduction tech and bio-bank to save Sumatran rhinos

**Indonesia** - Dr drh Muhammad Agil, IPB University expert in rhinos, shared hope for the survival of Sumatran Rhinos (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) at the edge of extinction with a life-saving technology.

Dr Agil has discovered nearly 70 percent of Sumatran rhinos saved from isolation suffer from abnormalities in their reproductive organs and tracts. Even in normal conditions, pregnancy is difficult in most Sumatran rhinos due

to undeveloped embryos and early embryonic death.

To save their genetic resources, quick implementation of Assisted Reproduction Technology (ART) and Bio-Bank was necessary. These technologies could be utilised by producing an embryo from their genetic resources which could then be stored and transferred to a healthy surrogate mother.

IPB University shows full support in ART programmes and Bio-Bank for Sumatran rhinos and endangered



wildlife in Indonesia through the development of the Centre for Assisted Reproductive Technology and Bio-bank of the Sumatran Rhino and Critically Endangered Wildlife in Indonesia.

## Mapping the 'hidden' eighth continent of Zealandia

**Australia/New Zealand** – The 'hidden' continent of Zealandia is being partially mapped, thanks to a deepwater mapping expedition led by The University of Queensland (UQ) in collaboration with Schmidt Ocean Institute.

The mostly submerged continent has New Zealand and New Caledonia rising from its depths and was only put on the map by geologists in 2014.

Chief Scientist and UQ researcher Dr Derya Gürer spent 28 days at sea on Schmidt Ocean Institute's research vessel Falkor, exploring the north-western edge of the continent located in Queensland's Coral Sea Marine Park.

"We're only just starting to discover Zealandia's secrets – it's remained hidden in plain sight until recently and is notoriously difficult to study," Dr Gürer said.

"Zealandia is an almost entirely submerged mass of continental crust that subsided after breaking away from Gondwanaland 83 to 79 million years ago, and spans around 4.9 million square kilometres."

The mapping project offered 37,000 square kilometres of data to the Seabed 2030 project and aims to produce a publicly available bathymetric map to measure the depth of the world's ocean floor by 2030.

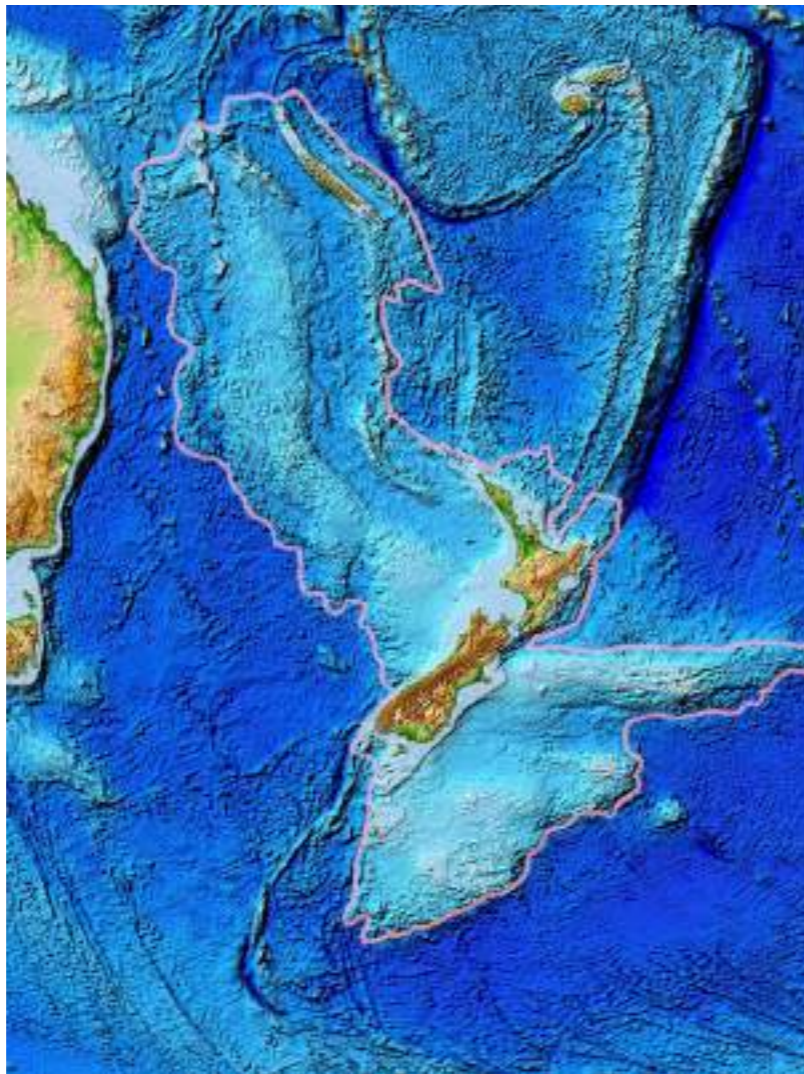
UQ's Dr Tara Jonell said the team on Falkor also took the opportunity to improve sampling methodology for microplastic monitoring and collected data on seabirds.

"We analysed more than 100 samples for microplastics, in addition to 40 samples collected on a previous voyage, and only one sample didn't contain any visible

microplastic," Dr Jonell said.

The multidisciplinary on-board and shore-based science teams for the voyage were assembled from several Australian universities and other institutions including UQ, the Nippon Foundation-GEBCO, University of Sydney, James Cook

University, University of Wollongong, Geoscience Australia, Queensland University of Technology, Australasian Seabird Group, Parks Australia, Centre for Earth Evolution and Dynamics, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, University of Tasmania and Expedition.



## Earth to reach temperature tipping point in 20-30 years, new study finds

**New Zealand** – Earth's ability to absorb carbon emissions through plants could be halved within the next two decades at the current rate of warming, according to a new study from the University of Waikato (UW) and Northern Arizona University, USA. Published in *Science Advances*, the research suggests mitigating against climate change could start to get harder.

The study used more than two decades of data from measurement towers in every major type of ecosystem (or 'biome') on the planet. The researchers identified

a temperature tipping point beyond which plants' ability to capture and store carbon dioxide, a key greenhouse gas, decreases as temperatures rise.

"We have been relying on ecosystems to provide a service to us – to offset fossil fuel CO2 emissions," said UW professor Louis Schipper, co-author of the study.

"We should stop relying on that. We have to do at least two things: we have to plant trees to fix carbon, and we have to fundamentally change how we behave to

reduce our emissions."

Plants pull in carbon dioxide through photosynthesis and release it back into the atmosphere via respiration. The study found photosynthesis peaks at 18°C in the majority of plant ecosystems and declines thereafter. However respiration keeps going up as temperatures rise.

This means in many biomes, continued warming will tip the balance of ecosystems, changing them from carbon absorbers to carbon producers, accelerating climate change.



## University Teknologi Malaysia providing water as lifeblood to the society

**Malaysia** – UTM, through its Advanced Membrane Technology Research Centre (AMTEC), has developed a portable and low-cost water treatment system for communities with clean water supply issues, such as victims of natural disasters and industries that recycle water produced from manufacturing processes.

The system can treat water from sources including rivers,

groundwater, and floodwater and is equipped with seven levels of filtration: pre-filtration, micron filtration, ultrafiltration membrane, reverse osmosis membrane, post-filtration and disinfection to ensure that the water is safe, clean, and in accordance with the national drinking water standards.

Able to produce 5,000 litres of clean water for daily use and 1,000 to 2,000 litres per day of drinking

water, it can assist 500 people at a time. The system also does not require high energy, and is equipped with a generator to function during power outages.

To date, UTM has successfully installed 68 units of portable water treatment systems in rural school communities, local authorities, natural disaster victims, and industry players.



## Tokai Hygge - online exchange with partner universities

Japan - Tokai University (TU) is conducting a programme called "Tokai Hygge" on Zoom from Spring 2020 to facilitate online exchange activities between Tokai students and students who attend one of the global partner universities.

Tokai Hygge, which takes its name from the Danish word for a quality of coziness, aims to encourage TU students and its partners learning Japanese language and culture to interact during the coronavirus pandemic. Throughout the process

students are not only encouraged to improve their language skills but also to prepare themselves to study abroad following the end of the pandemic.

Sessions are organized by country and regions, with the last session comprising a mixture of students from all over the world. The participating students hail from countries including Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Russia, Germany, Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand and Japan.

TU has conducted more than 40 sessions with over 1,000 participants.



## Taipei Tech Partners with Facebook



Taiwan - Taipei Tech has announced a collaboration with Facebook, the Taiwan External Trade Development Council, the Taiwan Non-store Retailer Association along with 19 technological and vocational universities in Taiwan, to launch a talent cultivation programme aimed at improving students' digital knowledge and skills.

Yu I-Hui, General Manager of Facebook's Hong Kong and Taiwan offices, noted at the ceremony that as small and medium enterprises in Taiwan are undergoing digital transformation, Facebook has been actively invested in digital talent training for the local industries.

Vice Premier Shen Jong-Chin said it is great to see how an international

conglomerate like Facebook has joined hands with government, academia, and retailer associations to address industrial demand, bridge the industry-academia gap, and lead Taiwan to achieve better performance in the global market.

Taipei Tech President Wang Sea-Fue said there were 202 students enrolled in the "E-commerce talent cultivation course" of the programme this semester. Professors from Taipei Tech and lecturers from Facebook will jointly provide digital marketing related course contents, and the course will be opened to all the professors from other universities who also participate in the implementation of the programme. The students who take the course will be encouraged to get the E-commerce analyst certification and will have the opportunity to get a full subsidy from Facebook to take the Blueprint certification exam.



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## IFTM's Dr Yang Jingjing takes part in high-profile academic initiatives

**Philippines** - London-based International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) has appointed Colin L. Hubo, Executive Director of the Center for Social Responsibility (CSR) of the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P), as one of its global ambassadors.

IIRC is a global coalition of regulators, investors, companies, standard setters, the accounting profession, academia, and NGOs that seeks to establish integrated reporting and thinking within mainstream business practice as the norm in the public and private sectors.

The appointment recognises the work of UA&P-CSR in promoting the use of the Integrated Reporting <IR> Framework, an international reporting standard preferred by the Fortune 500 companies in disclosing to investors how their companies create value over time. The integrated report is used by global investors in making a more efficient and productive allocation of capital.

As an ambassador, Hubo is expected to engage with influential stakeholders on a voluntary basis to promote the aims of the IIRC and build a consensus around the need

for the <IR> Framework, and provide additional insight to the IIRC on the views of such stakeholders.

The appointment has made UA&P the only institution in the Philippines that has a formal relationship with the IIRC.



## Samara University launches Capella-ML model rocket

**Russia** - On April 6, 2021, students of Institute of Aerospace Science and Technology, Samara University, launched a Capella-ML high-power model rocket in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the first human space flight.

The launch took place at Bobrovka airdrome, the Samara Region, and provided a perfect opportunity to test a two-stage parachute system, an onboard electronic system, a video system, as well as the new construction rocket design.

The Capella-ML is a 1.7-metre and 11.26-kilogram rocket designed and built by RocketLAV Student Design Bureau. It has a modular fiberglass construction set on a metal frame, which is made of aluminum alloys.

The rocket reached 1,791-metre altitude with all its systems functioning normally and landed using a parachute 1,847 metres away from its launch site. A directional antenna was designed to provide a stable reception of an onboard telemetry, whereas a ground station received a video transmitted by the rocket.

On behalf of Institute of Aerospace Science and Technology, Samara University, and RocketLAV Student Design Bureau, we are honoured to wish congratulations to the global university community for the 60th anniversary of the first human space flight.



## MAI scientist creates a new scheme for space antenna

**Russia** - Researchers at MAI are working on a large, umbrella-type space antenna that produces a smooth, reflective surface with a diameter of more than 10 meters on Earth's orbit. It is launched into space in a folded compact state.

The author of the idea and head of the project is an associate professor of MAI Department 602 "Design and Strength of Aircraft, Rocket and Space Products", a senior researcher at the Institute of Applied Mechanics of the Russian Academy of Sciences Sergey Russsikh.

The new antenna consists of radial rods supported in position by cable elements. It is planned to be patented in the near future.

Sergey Russsikh developed mathematical models and made calculations, and published 10 research papers in leading journals as co-authors. Several companies are already interested in the development.

In contrast to previously known structures of this type, the antenna will not only be deployed in space from a folded compact state to the preoperational

state but also undergo a process of shaping by necessary deformations of radial rods.



## NYCU announces new model for University-Industry co-creation partnerships

**Taiwan** - National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University (NYCU) has created a "push-pull" scheme for university-industry co-creation, which emphasizes the overall partnerships between the two institutions by engaging the industrial practitioners in all aspects of education and research, over traditional academic research and scholarship funding.

This scheme is promised to accelerate the translation of research discoveries and to pioneer frontier research topics.

Adopting this new co-creation model, the NYCU College of Innovative Creation aims to attract interactions among

faculty, students, and industrial partners. A new faculty title named "Professor of Professional Practice" will be created to effectively integrate industrial talents into the classrooms and laboratories.

Through such an intensive bilateral

relationships between university and industries, cutting-edge research and innovations can be produced, resulting in substantive impact on industry achievements and enormous benefits to the university-industry collaborations.



## SMU one of seven Asia unis with AACSB accreditation in business and accountancy

**Singapore** - SMU's Lee Kong Chian School of Business (LKCSB) and School of Accountancy (SoA) have both earned re-accreditation from AACSB International (AACSB), the largest business education network and longest-serving global accrediting body for business schools, to remain one of seven universities in Asia to receive AACSB accreditation in both business and accounting.

"LKCSB has been successful at achieving Top 50 global rankings for our thought leadership and our programmes. The re-accreditation demonstrates AACSB's confidence in the excellent quality of our

undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, research impact, and our deep engagement with industry partners," said Professor Gerard George, Dean of SMU LKCSB.

"Maintaining the AACSB International accreditation since 2011 is a testament to our university's and school's commitment to deliver innovative, engaging and impactful

programmes," said Professor Cheng Qiang, Dean of the SMU SoA.

There are over 890 business schools in 58 countries and territories that have earned AACSB Accreditation in business and 189 institutions that hold a supplemental, specialised AACSB Accreditation for their accounting programmes.



## The only AMBA & BGA excellence award winner from Thailand and ASEAN!

**Thailand** - Thammasat Business School has won the Silver Award for "Best Lifelong Learning Initiative" in the Association of MBAs (AMBA) and Business Graduates Association (BGA) Excellence Awards, 2021.

This unique event brings together leading lights from the global business education community to celebrate excellence and commend achievement among Business Schools, MBA students and graduates, suppliers and employers. TBS was announced as the silver award winner among the final six candidates in the AMBA & BGA Festival of Excellence held online on 29th January 2021

As part of its commitment to lifelong learning, Thammasat Business School (TBS) offers practical, innovative programmes to the widest possible segment of society.

In *TU100: Civic Education*, a core course for undergraduate students, the aim is to improve community enterprises by connecting community members, corporate partners, and students in projects to research, improve, and develop local products and services, an approach called the "Thammasat Model".

The outstanding results of these practices have been recognised by the "AMBA & BGA Silver

Award" for "Best Lifelong Learning Initiative 2021", which has put TBS and the "Thammasat Model" in the global spotlight.

"TBS offers ambitious and innovative ways to awaken current students' thirst for lifelong learning and, at the same time, equips entrepreneurs and employees in grassroots enterprises with the skills necessary to adapt and thrive in a world of challenges," said the AMBA&BGA judges.

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# TOGETHER





Photo: Anna Shatilova



## In Conversation with Christine Amour-Levar

by Monica Hornung-Cattan

### QS-GEN: Do tell us about what you do?

CAL: My focus over the last nine years has been on raising awareness and funds for vulnerable women via my two non-profit organisations, Women on a Mission and HER Planet Earth. HER Planet Earth's primary objective is to support underprivileged women affected by climate change, while Women on a Mission aims to empower women who have been subjected to violence and abuse.

Both organisations take all-female teams on challenging expeditions to off-the-beaten-track locations around the world as a way to support and raise funds for these worthy causes.

With COVID-19 putting a damper on travel, I've also recently become part of the founding team of Force for Good, a new social tech startup that is disrupting philanthropy by connecting individuals, charities, and corporates with one another on one platform, to drive change globally.

### QS-GEN: What were some of the learnings and biggest challenges you faced setting up Women on a Mission and HER Planet Earth?

CAL: In terms of key learnings, there certainly were many. I would say that via my two NGOs, because I've had the great privilege of taking all female teams, close to 150 women to date, of all nationalities, ages and backgrounds, to off the beaten track locations around the world on challenging expeditions, I've learnt more about leadership than in my 20 years in the corporate world.

In fact, one of the greatest challenges on this journey has been to inspire a group of individuals to find the courage to step out of their comfort zone and come with me to some of the most remote and inhospitable places in the world, in support of something bigger, and ultimately more meaningful, than themselves. As a result of this experience, I've learnt that there are only two ways to influence human behaviour: you can manipulate it or you can inspire it, and I've come to realise that people will follow you, even to the ends of the world, if you have the courage of your convictions and are fearlessly authentic.

### QS-GEN: What is Women on a Mission's core objective?

CAL: Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent, and devastating human rights violations in our world today, and Women on a Mission's core objective is to support and empower such women via our advocacy work and fundraising. It's been over nine years now, and Women on a Mission is still going strong. In fact, it's been an incredibly humbling and formative journey.

As a team, we have managed to raise well over US\$1 million to empower women affected by violence, and my partners and I certainly hope to continue to build on the work we have done thus far to support some of the most marginalised women around the world.

### QS-GEN: Why did you set up HER Planet Earth?

CAL: A few years after I set up Women on a Mission, I became increasingly frustrated and alarmed, quite frankly, by what I was reading in the news, what I was seeing around me in nature. I was horrified by the destruction of our planet's ecosystems, the pollution of our oceans, the burning of our forests, and shocked by the increasing havoc that climate change was wrecking on impoverished populations. Climate Change is the most critical challenge facing humanity today, and I was feeling powerless, what could I do to make a difference?

So, I decided to inform myself, to better understand this crisis that was gripping our planet, and the more research I did, the more I realised that despite the fact climate change is a global phenomenon, its effects are really felt locally and poor people suffer the most. In all the chaos surrounding the news about climate change, gender often remains the untold story behind it all. Yet in many countries around the world, women are among the most vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation. They are hit the hardest, partly because women make up the larger share of the agricultural workforce and tend to have access to fewer income-earning jobs.

This is why I decided to set up HER Planet Earth, to raise awareness and funds for underprivileged women affected by climate change so as to make them more climate change resilient.



**QS-GEN: Her Planet Earth is a two-pronged advocacy group for women's empowerment and environmental conversation. What do you see as the relationship between those two advocacies and how are they connected?**

CAL: The two are intrinsically linked. 70 percent of the world's 1.3 billion poor are women, and whenever a crisis hits, it's usually the poor who bear the brunt of it. This disproportionately affects women, and research from the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security shows how climate change and conflict risks around the world worsen gender inequalities and pre-existing patterns of discrimination – across income and wealth, social and human capital, land rights, and gendered divisions of labour. This constrains women's capacity to absorb and recover from climate-conflict shocks.

However, despite the fact women are the most vulnerable to climate change, they are also a huge part of the solution.

In truth, empowering, investing in, and educating women is a very good way to mitigate climate change, especially when we help women build livelihoods that are eco-friendly and compatible and in harmony with nature.

**QS-GEN: Your organisations have, among other areas, identified women's marginalisation from economic, social, and political power as a barrier. Where do you see education and higher education playing a role in overcoming this type or marginalisation?**

CAL: There absolutely is a responsibility for education to play an important role.

Giving women more access to education would have tremendous benefits for the world. Sadly, education is a basic human right that is not yet a reality for too many women around the world. Today, 130 million school-age girls are not in classrooms. This means they are missing a vital foundation for life.

More education for women means better health, financial security, more capacity to navigate a climate changing world. Women with more education have fewer children, and the children they do have are healthier. Maternal and infant mortality rates are lower for educated women.

Girls who stay in school longer are less likely to marry as children or against their will, they also have lower rates of HIV/AIDS and malaria, and their agricultural plots are more productive while their families are also better nourished.



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Higher education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence to take on leadership roles at local and national levels. Higher educational achievements of women can have ripple effects within the family and across generations. Better-educated women are more likely to join bodies, whether volunteer or elected, where they can take part in making decisions that affect their lives and those of their communities.

**QS-GEN: Is there a responsibility for higher education to not only empower women and gender diverse people, but also to educate and create male allies?**

CAL: Higher education can help develop more effective male allies who could then be better equipped to participate in discussions and champion the key issues surrounding gender equity, as well as diversity and inclusion in the workplace and society. There is no doubt that more education for both men and women helps in pushing the organisational, societal, and political change efforts forward.

**QS-GEN: What sort of work have you undertaken so far in this area? The type of initiatives and fundraising, and what has been the impact?**

CAL: Through Women on a Mission in particular, over these past few years, my partners and I have supported education programmes in many parts of the world, notably in war-torn regions. Our funds have enabled over 500

women in conflict zones, mainly in Afghanistan, Iraq, Rwanda, Syria, and Sudan, to participate in one of our charity partners, Women for Women International's year-long training programme, giving them the knowledge and skills to rebuild their shattered lives.

Our expeditions have also raised valuable funds for charities supporting hundreds of women via education programmes in the countries we have visited, notably in Bhutan, Iran, Mongolia, Nepal, and Cambodia.

Women on a Mission's advocacy work centres primarily on awareness building and on helping women understand their rights, while supporting them to build stronger livelihoods. Indeed, it is difficult to combat oppressive inequality if one cannot identify what one is entitled to. We partner with organisations in Singapore and abroad focused on providing entrepreneurial and life-skills training for underprivileged women living in conflict and war-prone areas.

**QS-GEN: Why have you looked towards creating expeditions for women in achieving the organizations goals?**

Growing up, sports was always a huge part of my life. I was very athletic and competitive in my youth, and had a strong sense of adventure. Sports also gave me much confidence as a child and as a young woman, and I believe deeply in the power of sports to bring people together, and to help us find mental, physical and emotional balance.

*"Sadly, education is a basic human right that is not yet a reality for too many women around the world."*



*"Sports gave me much confidence as a child and as a young woman, and I believe deeply in the power of sports to bring people together."*

Throughout my life, when it came to picking jobs, I followed my heart. Thus, it is no coincidence that I ended up working for a sports company, Nike, for many years, in four continents and many cities. After that, soon after I arrived in Singapore and set up my two NGOs, it made perfect sense to have sports and adventure at their very core. This was completely in line with my desire to challenge myself and to take other women outside of their comfort zone on pioneering expeditions - while empowering and supporting other women in need.

*Christine is a French-Swiss-Filipina Social Entrepreneur and Advocate. A passionate champion of female empowerment and environmental conservation, she founded Women on a Mission and HER Planet Earth, two award-winning NGOs, to support vulnerable women. Christine is also Head of Impact Partnerships at Force for Good, a Social Tech Startup, that is disrupting philanthropy and connecting purpose-driven changemakers globally.*

Find out more: [christineamourlevar.com/about.html](http://christineamourlevar.com/about.html)





## QS Student Insights Tracker

### Student mindsets and decisions from the International Student Survey (ISS)

- Preferences for education delivery options and mode of study
- Opinions on new learning formats and the future of education
- Desired university support for the education experience and career planning
- Motivations, reservations, and selection criteria for studying abroad and choosing a university
- Influencers, information sources, and communication preferences
- Career aspirations

### Online behavior and interaction from TopUniversities.com

- Interest in various subjects and study destinations over time
- Demographic characteristics of candidates
- Content consumption
- Technology profile

### Education landscape information by trusted sources

- Population trends by target age segment
- Higher education enrolment and graduation detail
- Student mobility patterns



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## Tackling air pollution with new approaches

**Hong Kong** - New methods for reducing air pollution and generating solar fuels developed by scientists at City University of Hong Kong (CityU) offer practical solutions to the energy shortage, environmental issues, and related public health risks.

The research has been generated by two projects led by Dr Ng



Yun-hau, Associate Professor, and Dr Shang Jin, Assistant Professor, respectively, in the School of Energy and Environment (SEE). The research has been published in the top chemistry journal *Angewandte Chemie*.

Dr Ng and his team designed a new solar-powered catalyst that can convert carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into methane fuel through artificial photosynthesis.

"Turning CO<sub>2</sub> into methane fuel using sunlight has the potential to produce a clean and sustainable energy alternative, thereby reducing our carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels," Dr Ng said.

"We hope we can recycle the unwanted CO<sub>2</sub> from industry and transportation sectors at an affordable cost in the future and use

it as the precursor to produce green and alternative fuels."

The other study, carried out by the team led by Dr Shang, aims to control pollution resulting from nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), a major roadside pollutant causing photochemical smog and damage to the human respiratory tract. The team revealed a new class of robust adsorbent materials for capturing ambient NO<sub>2</sub> in a paper titled "Transition-Metal-Containing Porphyrin Metal-Organic Frameworks as π-Backbonding Adsorbents for NO<sub>2</sub> Removal".

The team has developed a series of sponge-like nano porous materials featuring tailored transition metals as active sites at the porphyrin rings, which can selectively bind and remove NO<sub>2</sub> from gas mixtures.

## Universal swarm of drones by VoISU student

**Russia** - A first year student from the Institute of Mathematics and Information Technologies of Volgograd State University (VoISU), Ilya Danilenko, has developed a universal swarm of quadcopters for aerial photography in forests that will significantly improve the work of search and rescue teams.

Danilenko's invention was highly appreciated within the framework of the "Big Challenges 2020" All-Russian Competition of Design and Research Works.

Unlike existing drones, these devices are fully automated. Users select a search area on the map via a special software application, and the drones independently distribute territory among them. If one of the devices accidentally discharges or breaks down, the others are notified and rearrange their route to cover the territory assigned to the failed drone. Furthermore, the quadcopters are able to fly under treetops avoiding different obstacles.

The swarm of quadcopters will improve the search for lost people and make the process safe and efficient. This is highly important as every minute counts in this matter.



## Clinical & Translational Cancer Research at Taipei Medical University

Taipei Medical University focuses on developing and applying key cancer detection and early diagnosis technologies, assisting doctors in planning the best treatment strategy and regular follow-up, and providing patients with consistent and integrated medical care. It also helps establish a genetic map of hereditary cancer families and studies the relationship between gene expression and carcinogenesis. All cancer researchers at TMU are putting together a strong base of knowledge and expertise easily accessible to researchers around the world to maximize the impact of our Clinical & Translational Cancer Research.

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[oge.tmu.edu.tw/research/](http://oge.tmu.edu.tw/research/)



## NUCB wins Negotiation Challenge

**Japan** - Global Frontiers, a team comprised of MBA students at NUCB Business School, won first place at The Negotiation Challenge (TNC), one of the most established international negotiation competitions. Over the years, TNC has hosted the world's best student negotiators from leading universities, allowing them to share their passion and compete against each other in realistic negotiation situations.

The team, comprising final year

students William Stull, Dhiviya Anbazhagan, and Siphosethu Makananda, competed against 43 teams from universities around the world. The Negotiation Challenge involves reaching a business agreement with another graduate school team across a diverse range of industries.

The team members were trained in their Strategic Negotiation course taught by Visiting Professor William Baber, and from the experiences shared by the pioneering alumni who

formed the NUCBeasts team, which reached the TNC finals in 2019.

Scoring highly in both deal value and opposing team satisfaction throughout all five rounds of the competition, Global Frontiers was also able to make fast friends with their competitors.

## NDHU wins USR award by Vision Magazine

**Taiwan** - National Dong Hwa University (NDHU) received the University Social Responsibility (USR) award from the 2021 Taiwan USR Rankings, compiled by Vision Magazine in April, 2021.

The award recognising the work undertaken by NDHU, such as "Good Neighbors in The Life Circle of Chihak: An

action project for sustainable development of local resilience". Through social engagement and participation as well as practical courses and community work, learning and education are opened and enabled across boundaries, thereby contributing to the development of "teachers, students, and community".

A "three-in-one" learning model was also applied to promote Hualien local education, green therapy, and cooperation, especially for children, the elderly, and industry partners, which are vital actors in rural areas. Building community care and seeking communal wealth in Hualien remain priorities.

## UUM recognised by Beta Gamma Sigma

**Malaysia** - Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) has been recognised as the winner of Beta Gamma Sigma' (BGS) 2021 Best Practice in Creating Connections, for

exceptional use and prioritisation of the BGS alumni network. The UUM BGS chapter was selected as the winner of this award out of more than 615 global chapters,

found in AACSB-accredited schools in 38 countries.

# KAIST

# 1<sup>st</sup>

in Electrical & Electronic, Mechanical, Aeronautical & Manufacturing, Chemical, Computer Science & Information Systems, Civil & Structural, Materials Science, Chemistry in South Korea  
(2021 QS World University Rankings by subject)

50<sup>TH</sup>  
INNOVERSARY  
1971-2021



## President Jokowi and Nobel Laureate talk at UNS' 45th anniversary

**Indonesia** - Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) commemorated its 45th anniversary of founding on 11 March 2021 in a virtual ceremony celebrated by students, alumni, faculty, and staff streamed on YouTube.

President of the Republic of Indonesia, Ir H Joko Widodo (Jokowi), congratulated UNS on its anniversary this year.

"Congratulations on creating and innovating in science and technology, creating solutions to the challenges facing humanity and the development of the nation," said President Jokowi.

On this special occasion, Robert

Engle, from New York University, a Nobel Laureate Professor awarded the 2003 Nobel Prize in Economics for his research on the concept of autoregressive conditional heteroskedasticity (ARCH) delivered a scientific talk on climate risk.

The online talk, which was open to the public, included discussions about why climate funds are doing well in the pandemic. Based on his research, there is a close similarity between the effects of climate change and the effects of COVID-19.



## Osh State University expands dual degree education networks with Russia



**Kyrgyzstan** - Osh State University signed agreement to implement a two masters programmes with Russia's National Research Tomsk State University. The accord considers providing a joint master's programme in "International Relations".

Students who successfully complete their studies receives two diplomas: a Master's degree in "International Relations" from Tomsk State University and Osh State University.

The result of another remarkable agreement between Osh State University and South Ural State University became the opening of Kyrgyz-Russian

department offering majors in Regional Studies, Philology, Math and Computer Sciences.

An agreement concluded with Ural State Medical University provides two-degree certificates in Therapy, Dental Care and Pediatrics, admitting international students for 2021-2022 academic year.

As an exemplary cooperation can be considered the construction of Lomonosov Moscow State University's branch at Osh State, offering majors in Geodesy, Math, Applied Informatics, Russian language and Literature.

## KMU finds novel prophylactic and therapeutic strategy against viruses

**Taiwan** - Research led by KMU distinguished visiting Professor Hsiao-Sheng Liu and Associate Professor Ying-Ray Lee, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, in collaboration with National Cheng Kung University and National Yang-Ming University was the first to conduct human trials combined with cell lines and animal studies to demonstrate that drinking honeysuckle flower water could induce specific host MicroRNAs (miRNAs).

MiRNAs are small non-coding RNAs that are ubiquitously expressed in cells, and endogenous miRNAs serve as an innate response to pathogen invasion.

The researchers found 12 miRNAs induced both in mice and human volunteers were able to recognize the dengue virus, enterovirus 71 (EV71) and SARS-CoV-2 genome sequences.

Let-7a was used as the example to confirm treatment with either

honeysuckle or let-7a was able to suppress dengue virus and EV71 replication both in cell lines and animal models. Moreover, the viral amount and disease symptoms were alleviated when associated with prolonged survival time in viral-infected mice.



## Mining University working on new tech processing phosphogypsum

**Russia** - Saint Petersburg Mining University is developing technology for converting phosphogypsum, a by-product of processing phosphate rock, into ammonium sulphate and calcium carbonate, which it says will tackle the massive amounts of waste products created by Chemical and agrochemical industries.

"There are different uses for calcium carbonate. One of them is for liming of soils, which results in a higher yield. It is also in demand in making steel and Portland cement," said Vyacheslav Brichkin, Doctor of Engineering Sciences, Head of the Department of Metallurgy at Saint

Petersburg Mining University.

"As for ammonium sulphate, it is a much sought-after mineral nitrogen fertiliser with numerous advantages. It is highly soluble in water. Even heavy rains can't wash it out."

PhosAgro, a chemical holding company, and Mining University developed the technology, and Brichkin said testing was successful.

"Working together with Mining University, we have examined the physicochemical parameters of each process stage, came up with engineering drawings for non-standard equipment," said Boris

Levin, Deputy Chief of Staff for the CEO of PhosAgro.



## UNAIR professor awarded Chevalier Medal



**Indonesia** – An Agriculture Merit medal with the rank of Chevalier (Knight) was given by the French Ambassador to Indonesia to Professor of Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR), Dr I Komang Wiarsa Sardjana drh. The award was given for the dedication of Professor Komang in establishing a partnership between Indonesia and France.

Ambassador Chambard said the award was given following the professional field and collaborative activities developed by Professor Komang. This collaborative activity

involves UNAIR, East Java Province, and the Government of Indonesia, in the field of science and technology between France and Indonesia.

“On this day, I am pleased and proud on behalf of the French Republic, respecting the career and firm commitment of Professor Komang in serving the world of Francophonie, the friendship between France and Indonesia, and the wider society in advancing the scientific field,” said Ambassador Chambard.

## EdUHK wins seven at 2021 Geneva’s Inventions Expo



**Hong Kong** - The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) has received two Gold Medals and five Silver Medals in the first-ever virtual edition of Geneva’s Inventions Expo held in March, setting the best record since participating in the competition.

The inventions covered a wide range of areas: mindfulness, education technology, language learning, drug rehabilitation, environmental

education and sustainable construction technology.

Among the awardees were a novel mediation platform that helps users comfort their heart and care for their inner self, an online system for assessing and scoring individual contributions in group projects to improve team-based learning, a mobile app which helps non-native Cantonese learners practise their pronunciation skills and learn

commonly used expressions, and a system which integrates eye-tracking technology and assessments to measure implicit attentional bias in rehabilitated/rehabilitating drug abusers.

Other winners were an innovative indoor air quality (IAQ) educational kit which contains a portable sensor that can simultaneously detect and monitor three major IAQ indicators in classrooms and houses, an educational tool developed to nurture citizens’ botanical knowledge, and the production of eco-concrete blocks utilising sludge and coal combustion residuals from wastewater plants.

# Ready for lift-off

The University of Auckland’s Space Institute (Te Pūnaha Ātea) has been chosen as ‘mission control’ for New Zealand’s first government funded space mission.



The satellite launch will have far-reaching impacts on climate change research by tracking global methane emissions. It will also develop important capability in the local space sector through education and training. Think of it as one small step towards our goal to shape a better world.

Learn more at [auckland.ac.nz](https://auckland.ac.nz)

## NCUT and Wowprime Group develop remote catering hygiene smart box

**Taiwan** - National Chin-Yi University of Technology (NCUT) cooperated with Taiwan Wowprime Group to develop the "Pest Identification Smart Management Box" to solve the problem of cockroaches hidden in the kitchen. This research is to digitally advance the management of catering hygiene through the cloud system to actual catering hygiene management.

Combining academic research strengths and using new technological methods to solve kitchen pests is a boon for the service industry, which has been exacerbated by climate change, complicating infectious diseases. This research uses an artificial intelligence system to identify the number and breeding status of pests with automated non-contact

automatic optical inspection (AOI) as a way to provide catering hygiene managers with sufficient pest information. The statistics is directly stored in the server information management system.

It can effectively calculate the number of pests in the restaurant and judge the cleanliness of the restaurant environment, while also controlling the number of viruses, moulds, and bacteria and tracking pest footprints to achieve digital restaurant hygiene management.

Home environments, supermarkets, medical institutions, traditional markets, public institutions, and schools, baby care centres will also be able to utilise the technology.



## Beating the odds at UCSI University



**Malaysia** - Vigkneswaran Ramasamy was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder called spinocerebellar ataxia at the age of 17. But that didn't stop him from getting a degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering at UCSI.

"Studying at UCSI was really an amazing experience," remarked Vigkneswaran.

"Meeting a lot of people from various countries and making new friends helped me step away from the anti-social person that I use to be. The hands-on learning experience provided by the University has prepared me well and

enhanced my confidence level."

Now, the CEO of RVV Technologies, he is involved in designing IOT and AI based solutions as well as proposing drone based solutions for security surveillance and monitoring industries.

"Within five years, I would like to be recognised as an expert in terms of product knowledge, have developed very close relationships with clients, have significantly expanded the client base in my region, and perhaps assigned to some major national and international clients. I would like to also get my company publicly listed," he added.

## MSU lecturers win Bronze Medal at 48th International Exhibition of Inventions

**Thailand** - Between 10 - 14 March 2021 at Geneva, Switzerland, Assistant Professor Dr Arthit Chingsoongnern together with the team of lecturers at the Faculty of Science, Mahasarakham University, won the Bronze Medal from the 48th International Exhibition of Inventions Geneva in the title "Multihole atmospheric pressure plasma jet (Multihole-APPJ)".

The format of the event is the presentation of innovative works through video clips, and answering questions online, which has innovation competed in this forum, more than 800 entries and more than 40 countries around the world.



## Material from Russia will triple the capacity of lithium-ion batteries



**Russia** - Scientists at the National University of Science and Technology "MISIS" (NUST MISIS) have been selected to join an international team of researchers to increase the capacity and extend the service life of lithium-ion batteries.

According to the researchers, they have synthesized a new nanomaterial that can replace low-efficiency graphite used in lithium-ion batteries today. The results of the research are published in the *Journal of Alloys and Compounds*.

Lithium-ion batteries are widely used for household appliances from smartphones to electric

vehicles. The charge-discharge cycle in such battery is provided by the movement of lithium ions between two electrodes – from a negatively charged anode to a positively charged cathode.

The scope of application of lithium-ion batteries is constantly expanding, but at the same time, according to the scientists, their capacity is still limited by the properties of graphite – the main anode material. Scientists from NUST MISIS managed to obtain a new material for anodes that can provide a significant increase in capacity and extend battery service life.

## Face Mask Valve for COVID-19 endoscopic procedure

**Malaysia** - A group of UKM researchers have invented a tool called Face Mask Valve to reduce the spread of aerosols or small droplets during endoscopic procedures on ear, nose, and throat (ENT) patients.

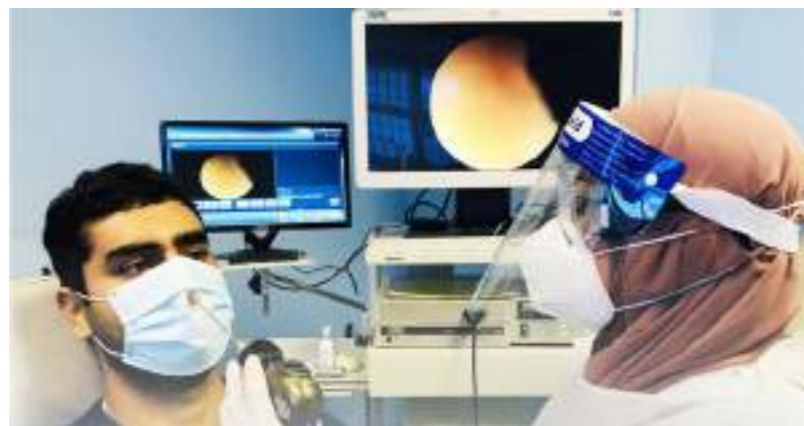
This tool was invented by Dr Hardip Singh Gendeh, lecturer and ENT surgeon specialist, HCTM, Professor Dr Salina Husain, Head of Department and senior surgeon ENT, Dr Abdul Razak, ENT master student, and Professor Madya Dr Zainuddin Sajuri, FKAB.

With a 2cm diameter, the tool can be mounted on an existing 3 ply or 2 ply face mask and is made from locally quality materials available at reasonable prices. The valve, which is made of plastic and has a perforated line produced by a thin laser cut, is located in

the centre of the mask.

This tool allows an endoscope to be inserted through the valve in the patient's face mask, reducing the hole size and limiting the risk of COVID-19 aerosol diffusion.

This invention can be used for patients who have other infectious diseases such as Tuberculosis. Face Mask Valve has the potential to be commercialized for the use of the public and private medical industries in Malaysia.



## CUHK explores Space Tourism with OASA



**Hong Kong** - Astropreneurship leaders Dr Gregg Li, the Founding Chairman of the Orion Astropreneur Space Academy (OASA), and Mr Hubert Lem, Vice Chairman of OASA, shared their knowledge and expertise in Space Tourism at the School of Hotel and Tourism Management's (SHTM) Distinguished Speaker Series on 5th March. SHTM students learned to "think outside the box" and "be a bold innovator."

On April 13, Professor Lisa Wan, Associate Professor at SHTM at

CUHK Business School was invited to the 'Pioneering the Space Economy' webinar, hosted by OASA, and shared her vision regarding opportunities in Space Tourism and its impact on the tourism industry.

CUHK and OASA will jointly launch a series of webinars in order to share and promote innovation and entrepreneurship through Space Tourism to a broader range of worldwide audiences. In addition, SHTM at CUHK Business School will offer a course on Space Tourism.



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# Empowering young Arab women leaders

By Haifa Al Kaylani



Gender equality and economic inclusion are key areas for action that have always been immensely important to me, both personally and as President & Founder of the Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF), having launched AIWF in London in 2001 as a non-profit, non-governmental, and non-political development organisation for women and young leaders in the UK, MENA and internationally.

AIWF was founded on two guiding principles: firstly, that there can be no development in any community, politically, socially, or economically, without empowering women. And secondly, that as the Arab world is part of the global community, Arab women leaders need to connect not only with each other in the region but also, importantly, with their counterparts internationally to exchange experience and knowledge, to do business, and break stereotypes.

Since 2001, AIWF has become a platform for action where women's voices are heard, challenges directly addressed, and opportunities for women and young people fully leveraged. AIWF has worked diligently at the heart of the Arab world and internationally to honour these principles, to move the agenda for women's empowerment forward, to address salient development issues that directly impact economic inclusion for women and young people, to advocate for legislative and public policy change, and to remove roadblocks to women's participation in Arab political systems and in society overall. We have set a benchmark for a top-down, bottom-up approach in our work, working

directly from grassroots to the highest levels of government, and we are unique in our network for our multi-stakeholder approach to effecting change and impacting policy shifts that empower women and young people.

From its earliest days, AIWF has prioritised education, sustainability, entrepreneurship, gender parity, job creation, and MENA economic growth, progress, and prosperity as our priority areas for action.

We have consistently addressed the job creation crisis in a region with the worst youth unemployment rates in the world. We have bridged economic and financial inclusion, societal, digital skills, and gender equality gaps which are prevalent in the MENA region, and many other regions. And we have become a truly global organisation in the process, with a strong Arab, UK, Europe, US, and Asia base of longstanding members and institutional alliances.

Under my chairmanship in the

last 20 years, AIWF has hosted and partnered on key events, initiatives and conferences, held alternately between London, Western European capitals, and major business hubs throughout the MENA as well as virtually. AIWF, as an NGO Member of the UN Global Compact, is committed to integrating the SDGs into the programming of all its conferences, initiatives, and activities.

Events held since 2001, in London, Berlin, Paris, Dubai, Doha, Damascus, Washington DC, Madrid, Brussels, Sharjah, Cairo, Amman, Beirut, Ramallah, Kuwait City, and Fez, have examined strategies for job creation; inclusive sustainable development; the role of women as engines of economic growth; women, peace and security; refugee maternal health and refugee entrepreneurship; women in law and the professions; women-led entrepreneurship, research and innovation; food security, water scarcity, climate action and

sustainable energy; and women in healthcare and STEM education.

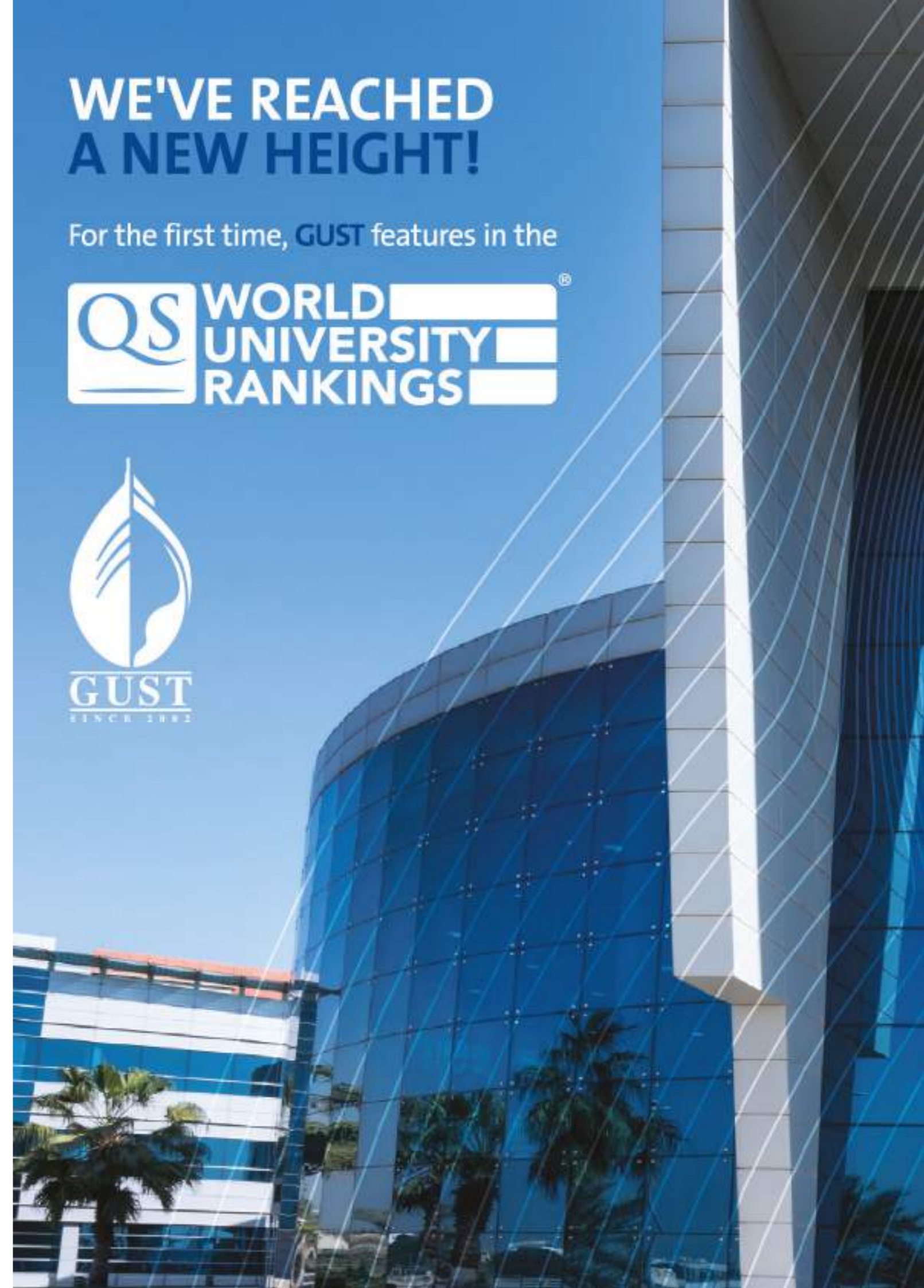
Every one of these initiatives has brought our valued stakeholders together to understand the challenges, identify opportunities, and document a strategic plan for action in our Reports and Recommendations, which are always disseminated widely within our global advocacy network to impact both policy and practice and advance legislative reform, gender parity in policy, and better linkage between industry and education.

We clearly see education as pivotal to the region's progress and integral to its economic success. Without a doubt, the advancements in access to education for women that we have seen in the last two decades in the region have delivered unprecedented opportunities for economic inclusion for women which has positively impacted families, communities, sectors, and whole economies.



# WE'VE REACHED A NEW HEIGHT!

For the first time, **GUST** features in the





Since our inception, we are proud to have partnered with some of the world's leading universities and regional institutes of learning to support opportunities for Arab women in higher education, with a focus on STEM, business and entrepreneurship, including Zayed University; the American University of Sharjah; the American University in Cairo; the American University in Beirut; the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University; the University of Massachusetts Medical School; and Harvard University, among many others.

Youth engagement has underscored AIWF's ethos from the beginning. When we launched our *Young Arab Women Leaders* STEM-focused initiative in partnership with PwC in 2011, we did so in direct response to the Arab Spring, having recognised the need as a development organisation to address the underrepresentation of young people in civic participation, the ongoing crisis of job creation and youth unemployment, and the persistent problems of 'brain drain' and economic migration that has in the past caused the region to lose its talented, ambitious, highly educated and driven youth to economic migration.

In its first phase, the *Young Arab Women Leaders* initiative was comprised of a series of ten conferences held alternately in London and across the Arab world, a platform to bring mentors in political, economic, and social leadership roles in the Arab world together with talented, educated, creative and innovative young

women who aspire to community, business, and political leadership. Each conference brought established and emerging women leaders together for an intensive day of deeply engaging and open discussions, through which women leaders have formed new business and research links, have mentored and encouraged each other's projects and progress, and enjoyed opportunities for highly targeted and valuable networking and experience exchange.

The initiative actively promoted the development of leadership skills and confidence in the next generation of young women leaders, and has over the years examined global trends impacting the changing workplace, the impact of automation, challenges of early stage entrepreneurship, cultural barriers to personal and professional success, gender diversity in the private sector, and women's leadership in the critical STEM sectors, in the legal profession, and in public service. *Young Arab Women Leaders* has, since 2011, welcomed nearly 3,000 young Arab and international women advocating sustainable solutions to critical global challenges through education, leadership, and innovation.

This year, we are relaunching *Young Arab Women Leaders* as a virtual academy for young Arab women's leadership and development. We will be working with our corporate, institutional, and academic partners to offer a series of short courses and seminars designed to equip young women leaders with the skills to start, grow, and lead successful businesses.

*"In its 20th Anniversary year, AIWF renews focus on nurturing young women's leadership in the MENA region."*



## INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF PRINCESS NOURAH BINT ABDULRAHMAN UNIVERSITY WHICH AIMS AT EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE FIELD OF TECHNOLOGY.

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of the total workforce in the sector.

The Enrollment rate of Female students in the fields of communication and information technology in Saudi Arabia has reached

**54%**  
of the total number of female students enrolled in Saudi's universities

We aim to improve access for women to digital, technical, and professional education, and to strengthen links between young women in the MENA and the international community to create new business alliances and facilitate the exchange of valuable experiences, opportunities, and best practices.

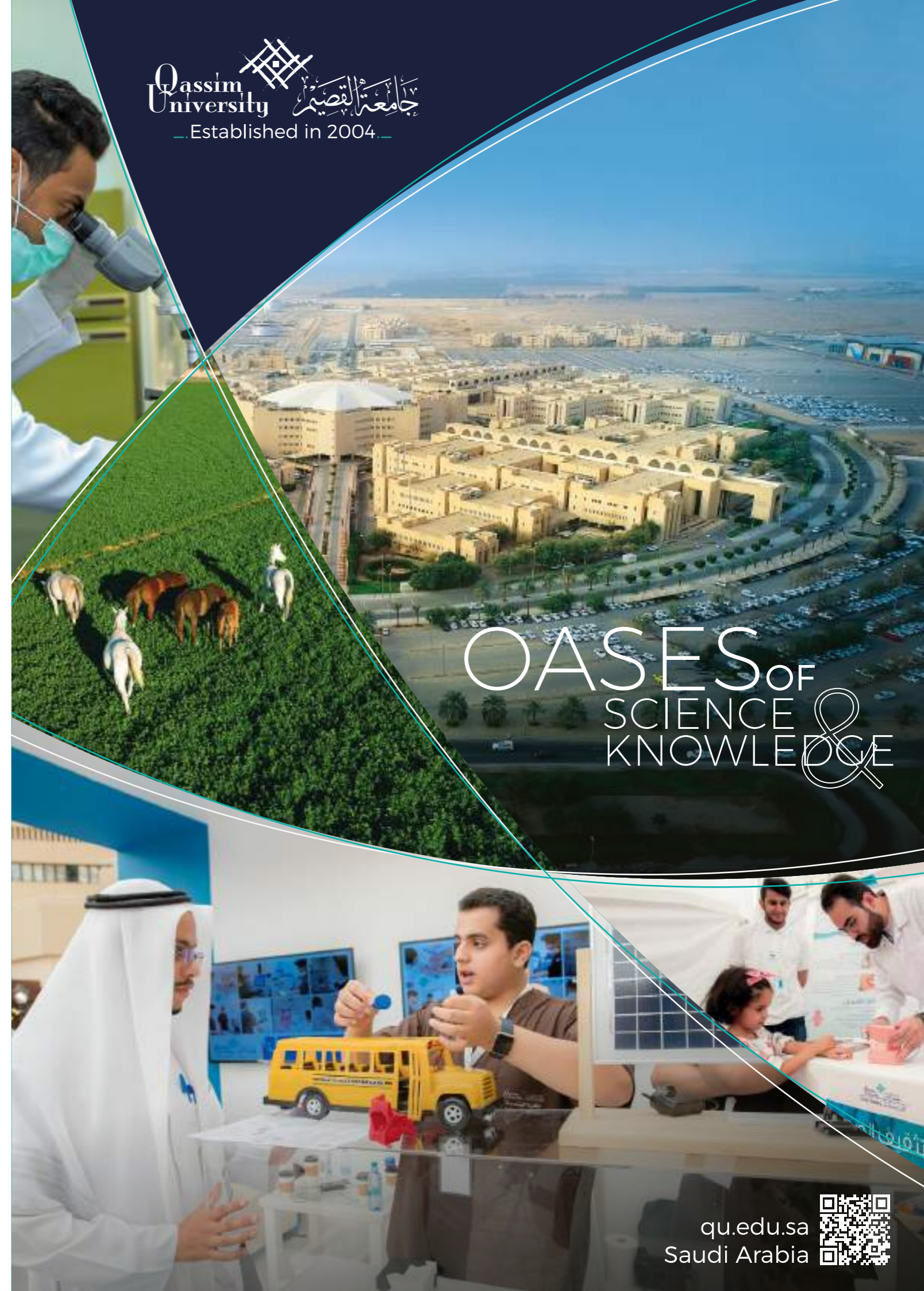
Alongside *Young Arab Women Leaders*, AIWF has also launched our Global Youth Council, a network of young leaders and supporters that aims to engage vital young voices, and scale up engagement between young people, governments, organisations, and international institutions. The role of our Global Youth Council members is to support the AIWF Board in its mission to strengthen awareness among the next generation of young leaders for the AIWF mission across the regions, bring in vital youth perspectives in our programming and partnerships, and amplify our international advocacy on youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, education, and civic engagement. Via an impartial and open selection process, which is now live and accepting applications, AIWF is looking to appoint one Global Youth Council member from each of the 22 Arab States and up to 8 Advisory Council members from non-MENA countries where AIWF has an existing presence or can make significant impact: the UK, US, Germany, Italy, and France among them. There will also be a Youth Council member appointed from the African and Asian regions.

In our 20th anniversary year, the AIWF *Young Arab Women Leaders* initiative and the AIWF Global Youth

Council are important milestones in our mission to empower young Arab leaders and youth by fostering youth empowerment and leadership, capacity-building, civic engagement, and youth-led innovation through education. This mission is, in my view, critical to regional stability and global security, and AIWF looks forward to working closely with all our global partners to bring world-class opportunities for professional and personal development to our region's greatest natural resource – our youth.

*Haifa Al Kaylani founded the Arab International Women's Forum in 2001 and is recognised in Arab and international government,*

*development, business and NGO circles as a high-impact change agent focussed on women's leadership and youth empowerment, working for progress, inclusion, peace and prosperity in the Arab region and internationally. She is a development economist and an international advocate for gender and youth empowerment, diversity and inclusion, the green economy, and sustainability. She is a Fellow of the Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative 2017 and was a Commissioner of the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work (2017-2019). For more information about the work of the Arab International Women's Forum, please visit [www.aiwfonline.com](http://www.aiwfonline.com).*



## SUSTech team's discovery China's top ten scientific advances for 2020

**China** – Research from the Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech) College of Science, conducted by Professor Xueming Yang, has been named as one of the top 10 Chinese scientific advances of 2020. Professor Yang's group conducted ground-breaking experimental proof of a previously unobserved example of quantum interference in chemical reactions.

The discovery was published in Science on May 15, 2020, and demonstrated there were still mechanisms to uncover in the simplest chemical reactions and that a quantum interference exists, proving nature does play dice, as initially derided by Albert Einstein.

The most straightforward reaction

is a hydrogen reaction,  $H + H_2$ , and its isotopes. Since the reaction only involves three electrons, it is easier to calculate the interaction form in different configurations of the three atoms. That means it is easier to simulate and then realize the reaction process at the molecular level so that researchers can understand the chemical process at the micro-level.

The research team found that at a specific scattering angle, the volume of  $H_2$  produced would oscillate at a specific rate relative to the collision energy. They applied improved technology to increase higher collision energy, thereby further developing quantum reaction scattering theory.

SUSTech has won this award for the second consecutive year. In 2019, a research team led by Prof. Liyuan Zhang proved the 3D Quantum Hall effect by experiment, and his work was selected as one of China's top 10 scientific advances of 2019.



## Millennials and Generation Z are more sustainability-orientated

**Japan** – Younger generations are willing to put their money where their mouth is when it comes to sustainable living, according to a study questioning both commitment to sustainable behaviours and willingness to trade better pay to work for a more sustainable-minded company.

Researchers at Hiroshima University (HU) issued two surveys investigating how people support the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Results were published last January in a special issue of the *Journal*

*of Cleaner Production*.

"Younger people are willing to dispense income to work for SDG-minded companies," said paper author Tomomi Yamane, researcher with the Network for Education and Research on Peace and Sustainability (NERPS) at HU.

The first survey of 12,098 respondents found those between the ages of 18 and 30 were more likely to value and practice sustainable behaviours, such as paying more for sustainably developed products.

The second survey of 668 university students found respondents more likely to accept lower salaries to work for highly SDG-minded companies. In total, 56 percent said they would select a highly SDG-minded company, even if the pay were low, compared to 28 percent, who said they would work for the least SDG-minded company with a high salary.

The probability of a participant electing to work at an SDG-minded company with high pay was 87%.

DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.125932

## International Collection 2021 celebrates MSU's top fashion school ranking

**Malaysia** – Recently announced as Malaysia's top fashion school in Art and Design on QS WUR by Subject 2021, MSU collaborated with UEDA College of Fashion Japan and Japanese textile designer treasuKURA in delivering the 2021 collection by its School of Hospitality and Creative Arts (SHCA) students of Bachelor in Fashion Design with Marketing (Hons) and Diploma in Fashion Design.

Universities are important contributors to the creative

industries, said guest of honour Malaysian Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Noraini Ahmad. The fashion industry, employing an estimated million, contributed close to two percent of the national GDP in 2015.

Present at the unveiling of the MSU International Fashion Collection 2021 was Malaysia's Higher Education Director General Professor Dato' Dr Husaini Omar.

Greeting the audience with a pre-recorded message was UEDA

College of Fashion President Hitoshi Tajima, followed by live Zoom-in by treasuKURA Founder Mizutani Tetsuya.

The MSU International Fashion Collection 2021 is set to participate in Malaysia Fashion Week this year and grace Japanese runways in 2022.

Management and Science University (MSU) also unveiled its own-design mask at the runway showcase of the MSU International Fashion Collection 2021.



## EndCorona: COVID-19 risk assessment app developed by UI students

**Indonesia** – Students from the Faculty of Medicine Universitas Indonesia (FMUI) spearheaded the development of EndCorona, a mobile app to assist the public in assessing their risk of having COVID-19 and offer them necessary advice.

Collaborating with students from the Faculty of Computer Science Universitas Indonesia and supervised by FMUI academic staff, EndCorona once reached rank 6 on the AppStore under the category of medical application, with over 120,000 people from 50 different countries having used it.

This application is lauded by the Indonesian government and national media for its innovation and contribution to the society. Clearly, EndCorona has empowered students, giving them the impetus to keep innovating.

## Hyocholic acids show promise in predicting and treating diabetes

**Hong Kong** - The little-known bile acid, hyocholic acid and its derivatives (HCAs) could potentially transform the prediction and treatment of diabetes, according to a series of studies led by researchers from Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU).

HCAs facilitate fat digestion in humans and pigs, but the research has also uncovered their role in regulating blood glucose levels and protecting against diabetes.

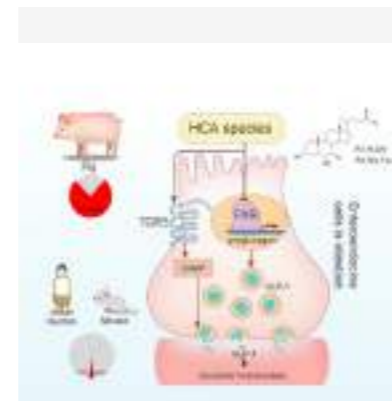
Led by Professor Jia Wei, Chair Professor of the School of Chinese Medicine at HKBU, the researchers found blood glucose levels were significantly lower

in pigs despite their low activity levels and high-calorie diet. While HCAs only make up two percent of bile acids in humans, they constitute nearly 80 percent in pigs, with the results indicating their potential role in maintaining stable blood glucose levels.

Further analysis of two large-scale cohort studies also revealed the levels of HCAs are a strong predictor of metabolic syndromes such as diabetes.

"HCAs demonstrate promising potential, and they could be developed into an agent for the prediction and treatment of type 2 diabetes," said Professor Jia.

The research was published in the journals *Cell Metabolism* and *Nature Communications*.



## AlmaU joins network of unis working to meet demand for quality higher ed



**Kazakhstan** - Almaty Management University (AlmaU) has announced a new initiative to expand the institution's academic programmes in order to serve the fast-growing demand for postsecondary education across Kazakhstan and Central Asia.


As part of the initiative, the

university has joined the Cintana Alliance, enabling its students to benefit from collaboration with some of the world's most innovative institutions. In addition to benefitting from cutting-edge curriculum and learning practices, AlmaU students will have the opportunity to earn a degree

from the Alliance' flagship partner, Arizona State University.


"Central Asia is at a critical moment: we must think strategically and boldly about how we educate our future generations and invest in our local economies," said AlmaU President Dr Assylbek Kozhakhmetov.

"We can think of no better partner to embark upon this challenge with than Arizona State University—a university known globally for its innovations in teaching, research, and technology. This collaboration, which will bring the best practices of university management to Kazakhstan, is unprecedented in the Central Asian region".



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## HKU Engineering developed robotic fish sets second World Record

**Hong Kong** - SNAPP, a robotic fish with wide-ranging functions from search and rescue to providing entertainment at an aquarium developed by a young engineering team at the University of Hong Kong (HKU), currently has broken the Guinness World Record for the fastest 50m swim for a second time.

Invented by a student-staff team led by the Department of Mechanical Engineering and sponsored by the Tam Wing Fan Innovation Wing under HKU's Faculty of Engineering, the robotic fish completed the 50m swim in 22.92s, faster than most Olympic swimmers including Michael Phelps

The robotics team is working on using SNAPP to address ocean pollution and to scout for underwater garbage patches. The fish can relay its location



back to a collector or be deployed to take water samples periodically in river basins.

"It can also be used as "pet" for divers, carrying crucial equipment and oxygen tanks for them," said founder of robotics team, BREED, Timothy Ng.

While in talks with commercial companies on utilizing the search, rescue, and patrol functions of SNAPP, Ng is eyeing other wider applications. "Perhaps in the future, we would not need to keep real fishes captive for entertainment; robots can replace them instead."

## Remembering March 11, 2011

**Japan** - To mark the 10-year anniversary of the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, also known as the Great East Japan Earthquake, which took the lives of many and destroyed homes and buildings, Waseda University created and published a dedicated website providing an overview of the university's decadal record in research, education, and

contribution after the incident.

Interviews conducted with Waseda professors, students and alumni were put into articles, telling real-life stories about their personal experiences during and after the earthquake and tsunami. For instance, one of the articles features how Dennis, a then international student from

Singapore, decided to establish a company aimed at solving social problems and promoting regional revitalisation in Japan following the unfortunate incident.

As well as contributions of individuals, research and volunteering activities undertaken by Waseda University to help restore affected areas are also documented.

A timeline, number facts, and extensive images on the website are made available to paint a vivid picture of the disaster, especially to those who did not experience them first-hand.



## Lingnan develops smart autonomous UV-C disinfection robot

**Hong Kong** - Lingnan University has achieved a breakthrough in cleaning and disinfecting public spaces by constructing a smart



Autonomous UV-C Disinfection Robot to provide thorough and efficient UV disinfection for large indoor establishments. The robot takes only 10 minutes to clean a 400-square-foot area automatically, far more effective and five times faster than manual disinfection with 1:99 diluted bleach.

Since UV-C is harmful to human skin and eyes, the robot is designed to operate independently, so that disinfection can take place outside business hours. It is

equipped with a laser-based radar system (LiDAR), and uses its laser surveying, terrain mapping and obstacle detection instruments to plan a path for disinfection and to navigate intelligently.

Dr Albert Ko, Director of the Lingnan Entrepreneurship Initiative and leader of the project, said the team will provide free disinfection services for schools, care homes, and NGOs in Hong Kong with autonomous UV-C disinfection robots by the end of 2021.

## Scientists to digitize heritage of the peoples of the Arctic

**Russia** - In May 2021, Russia will assume the chairmanship of the Arctic Council and will chair it for two years. In 2020, it received the status of an Arctic Council project and aims to become one of the main projects of the Russian Federation.

"We have raised the question of the implementation of our project at all levels - it is comprehensive. All 8 Arctic countries can join it," said Anatoly Zhozhikov, head of the UNESCO Chair at NEFU.

"The project belongs to a new field - digital humanities, which are at the intersection of sciences and combine methodologies from the humanities."

Data collection and outreach will take place from January 2022 to December 2023.

"This stage includes analysis, synthesis, systematization,

digitization and processing of the collected data. As well as the creation of 3D models of cultural and historical objects and the organization of seminars," said Anatoly Zhozhikov.

"2024 is set aside for the final stage. This is where we will support the platform and disseminate the results of the project."



## Active Aging—TMU reaches out to the local communities



**Taiwan** – In collaboration with Chiayi County Health Bureau in southern Taiwan, the Taipei Medical University (TMU) Center for Arts and Humanities took its health empowerment programme to southwestern Taiwan with a series of activities including handicraft courses, puzzle games, and qigong courses for the elderly in Chiayi County.

Integrating learning of knowledge and visitation to galleries and museums, the community care helps improve the elderly's quality of life through immersion in artifacts. In doing so, the idea of "localizing the artistic culture, aestheticizing the community medical care" is brought alive.

The significance of active aging

is to "activate" the vitality, the meaningful living, the wisdom of the elderly, and the solutions for an aging society through the high-quality services for the elderly with singing, dining, and living together of fun.

Apart from paying attention to one's own physical health under the pandemic, the companionship and mental health are of importance to keep one from panic or anxiety while the social distancing policy is being widely implemented.

## UTAR and TF AMD to promote automated robotics technology

**Malaysia** – UTAR and TF AMD Microelectronics (Penang) Sdn Bhd (TF AMD) have begun a strategic partnership to initiate joint projects or research on automated robotics technology, staff and student exchanges, study visits, industrial placement opportunities, co-supervision of the postgraduate studies.

The ceremony for the exchange of the memorandum of understanding

(MoU) took place via Zoom on 5 February 2021, after it was digitally signed on 4 December 2020 and the memorandum of agreement was signed on 18 December.

The MoU will enable both parties to work even more closely in creating platforms which will enrich both staff and students' academic experience, as well as empowering them to explore learning opportunities beyond the classrooms.

The signatories for the MoU were UTAR President Ir Prof Dr Ewe Hong Tat and TF AMD Managing Director Neoh Soon Ee. It was witnessed by UTAR R&D and Commercialisation Vice President Prof Ts Dr Faiz bin Abd Rahman and ATMP Engineering and Factory Automation Engineering Senior Manager Tai Ewe Shin.

## Lingnan develops smart autonomous UV-C disinfection robot

**Singapore** – NTU's food scientists have made an antibacterial gel bandage using the discarded husks of the popular tropical fruit, durian.



By using a low-cost green process to extract high-quality cellulose from the durian husks, they created a soft gel, like silicon sheets, which can be cut into bandages of various shapes and sizes, then added the organic molecules produced from baker's yeast, known as natural yeast phenolics, making the bandage deadly to bacteria.

This non-toxic hydrogel bandage may be useful in helping skin wounds heal faster, while the antibacterial molecules help to

prevent infections, as shown in lab experiments on animal skin.

Developed by Professor William Chen, the Director of NTU's Food Science and Technology Programme, the innovation was published recently in ACS Sustainable Chemistry & Engineering.

## UiTM research on host-parasite relationship of world's biggest flower

**Malaysia** – Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia has embarked on a research to investigate the host-parasite relationship of the world's biggest flower Rafflesia, an endangered flowering plant with a complex and mysterious relationship with its host (*Tetrastigma rafflesiae*).

Rafflesia exists in five countries in Southeast Asia including Malaysia which is home to 13 species. In Malaysia, Rafflesia can be found in Perak, Kelantan, Pahang, Terengganu, Sarawak, and Sabah.

Syarifah Haniera Sheikh Kamal, a graduate student at the Faculty of Applied Sciences, spent two years analysing the growth, life cycle and the relationship between the host and parasite for Rafflesia azlanii and R. cantleyi species in Belum-Temenggor Forest Complex, Perak,

Malaysia. Being supervised by Professor Dr Mohd Nazip Suratman, she discovered the growth rate for R. azlanii buds is slower than R. cantleyi. Additionally, the life cycle for visible stage for R. azlanii is longer than R. cantleyi.

The research, which is funded by

Yayasan EMKAY and UiTM, is the first to uncover the life cycle of visible phase of R. azlanii and R. cantleyi, and the results provide fundamental information on the host-parasitic relationship of the plant which is crucial for field monitoring and observation.



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## Remotebase raises \$1.4 million to help Pakistani engineers get global exposure

**Pakistan** – Remotebase, a 10-month old start-up that helps connect high-performing engineering teams with US companies, has raised a \$1.4M seed round. The round, led by Indus Valley Capital, saw

participation from several renowned global investors such as billionaire investor Tim Draper, Hustle Fund Ventures, and other well-known angel investors from Silicon Valley.

Remotebase, co-founded by Syed Talha Masood who graduated from GIK Institute in 2013, has operations both in Pakistan as well as Silicon Valley and has raised the money to scale its operations by the end of 2021.



The company's mission is to turn Pakistan into a global tech hub by hiring, training, and placing engineers in Silicon Valley based start-ups. The idea is to give Pakistani engineers the exposure to the world's most innovative companies by deeply integrating the engineers inside those companies.



## Movers and Shakers



**Professor Janusz Antoni Zygmunt Jankowski**  
Dean and Head of College, College of Medicine and Health Sciences  
*United Arab Emirates University, United Arab Emirates*

**Moved from**

Honorary Clinical Professor  
*University College London, United Kingdom*



**Ph.D. Emmanuel Merchán**  
Acting Dean of the Engineering Faculty  
*Transport and Telecommunication Institute (TSI), Latvia*

**Moved from**

Professor in Robotics Engineering  
*Instituto Politécnico Nacional, Mexico*



**Professor Arve Lee Willingham**  
Professor and Chair, Department of Veterinary Medicine, College of Food & Agriculture, *United Arab Emirates University, United Arab Emirates*

**Moved from**

Associate Dean for Research and Postgraduate Studies, Professor of One Health  
*Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine Department, St. Kitts*



**Associate Professor Dr Mohd Zaki Awg Isa**  
Director, MSU Eye Centre (MEC)  
*Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia*

**Moved from**

Head of Department, Faculty of Health & Life Sciences  
*Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia*



**Professor Hao Zhou**  
Dean of the College of Business  
*Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech), China*

**Moved from**

Associate Dean, Unigroup Chair Professor of Finance  
*Tsinghua University, China*



**Professor Dr Noraini Nun Nahar Yunus**  
Consultant Paediatric Dentistry  
*Management and Science University Medical Centre (MSUMC), Malaysia*

**Moved from**

Professor and Consultant Paediatric Dentistry  
*Lincoln University College, Malaysia*



**Professor Thomas Kvan**  
Founding Dean, School of Design  
*Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech), China*

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Pro Vice Chancellor, Campus and Global Developments  
*University of Melbourne, Australia*



**Dr Lilysuriazna Raya**  
Deputy Dean (Academic), Faculty of Information Sciences & Engineering  
*Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia*

**Moved from**

Head of Department, Faculty of Information Sciences and Engineering  
*Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia*



**Professor Qikun Xue**  
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*Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech), China*

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**Dr Brian Teo Sheng Xian**  
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*Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia*

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Deputy Dean (Student), School of Pharmacy  
*Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia*





## Movers and Shakers



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Rector of Thammasat University - 2nd Term  
*Thammasat University, Thailand*

**Moved from**

Rector of Thammasat University  
*Thammasat University, Thailand*



**Professor Gillian Choa**  
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*The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong*

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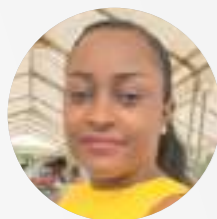
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