



4th Annual Forum for Open Research

20th-23rd October | 2025

Sharjah | UAE

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Becoming Open: Building
Capacities and Communities
in the Arab world



OUR PARTNER

AUS | الجامعة الأميركية في الشارقة
American University of Sharjah



Arabic Programme

يرجى مسح رمز الاستجابة السريعة أدناه للحصول على النسخة العربية من كتيب المؤتمر

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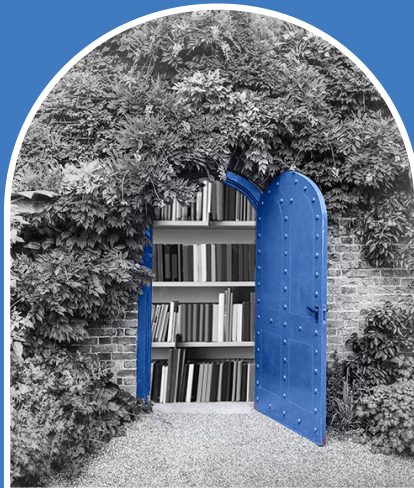




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Welcome from the Organisers



Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 4th Annual Forum for Open Research. This year's conference theme is Becoming Open: Capacity Building and Community Collaboration in the Arab World, because we believe that open science is vital for the sociocultural and economic development of the Arab world, and we therefore want to place accessibility at the heart of the region's scientific and research ecosystems. The advancement of open science policies and practises requires the development of strong, collaborative communities and the sharing of skills and ideas.

We are therefore especially delighted to be hosting this year's Annual Forum in the United Arab Emirates because the UAE designated 2025 as the Year of Community, and we are honoured to be partnering with the American University of Sharjah, a regional leader for research and education in the Arab world. We are also excited to be able to host the Annual Forum in the Emirate of Sharjah, which is home to so many of the region's leading publishers and collaborative research and innovation centers.

This year, we have 26 sessions, with 88 speakers from 29 countries and 60 institutions across the world – covering four key thematic pillars:

- Community building and engagement
- Capacity building and localization
- Open access policies and publishing
- Open Science investment and funding



These have been chosen to reflect the needs and priorities of our network, of our members, and of the wider open science community, with a particular emphasis on developing resources and capacities amongst the region's open science communities, and building collaborative partnerships within countries, between stakeholder groups, and across the wider region. So please do take this opportunity to engage with each other, to build new partnerships and explore new collaborations, both online via the chat and in person during the coffee breaks and social activities – we hold this event to bring you all together, to provide a forum for discussion around the key challenges and priorities

I hope you will find it a fruitful and thought-provoking event.

Thank you!

Dr. Emily Choynowski

Conference Chair (Annual Forum for Open Research)

Director of Operations (FORM)



Welcome from the Foundation



Dear Delegates

On behalf of the Knowledge E Foundation, it gives me a great pleasure to welcome you to the 4th edition of FORM in Sharjah, UAE, under the theme “Becoming Open: Building Capacities and Communities in the Arab world” and in collaboration with the American University of Sharjah.

Last year’s Annual Forum offered a series of carefully tailored presentations and panels addressing key themes and topics related to Becoming Open: Building Capacities and Communities in the Arab world and the advancement of Open Science policies and practices in research institutions and research communities.

We were honoured to have the Qatar National Library in Doha, Qatar as our Host Partner. Having a record attendance of over 1450 delegates attending in-person or online, from over 89 countries across the world was a clear indication of the interest that the forum has generated over the past few years. We also had presentations from 67 leading global experts and key regional stakeholders, who joined us online and in-person to facilitate a truly thought-provoking programme around some of the Open communities most pressing issues. What started as an online Open Access symposium in 2021 has now become a strong community engaging in ongoing activities throughout the year, and coming together during the annual forum.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have supported us on this journey and all who are joining us for the first time. Reducing barriers to accessing knowledge has been a mission of the foundation from day one and we have been proud to support the Forum for Open Research in MENA since its start and to see what it has become.



The KnE Foundation's initiatives have left a lasting positive impact on many countries around the world, including in Cambodia, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal, the Arab region and we are hoping to reach more.

I hope you will find the next few days inspiring and informative as we exchange ideas, explore opportunities, and build valuable cross-regional partnerships.

Yours Sincerely

Kamran Kardan

Chairman Knowledge E Foundation
CEO & Founder, Knowledge E



Welcome from American University of Sharjah

Dear Delegates

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the 2025 Forum for Open Research, hosted this year at the American University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.

Our theme, 'Becoming Open: Building Capacities and Communities in the Arab World,' reflects a shared vision of fostering a culture of openness in research, knowledge exchange, and collaboration across the region. Together, we will explore how open research practices can strengthen academic capacities, bridge communities, and empower new generations of scholars and innovators.

To those colleagues joining in person, our beautiful campus inspired by Islamic architecture provides the venue for engaging in dialogue and sharing experiences for advancing openness. Participants joining online can also join conversations that begin here and will contribute to building sustainable infrastructures and communities that support transparent, inclusive, and impactful research across the Arab world.

We thank you for being part of this journey and invite you to contribute your voice, your expertise, and your vision to shaping a more open and connected future.

Welcome to the 2025 Forum for Open Research MENA and welcome to Sharjah.



Dr. Steven Griffiths
Vice Chancellor for Research



Kara Jones
University Librarian



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Annual Forum,
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Our Partners

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Our Supporters





Advisory Committee

Dr. Abdulla Al Hefeiti

Assistant Vice President, Libraries, Khalifa University

Dr. Alwaleed K. Alkhaja

Head of Open Access and Copyright, Qatar National Library

Dr. Batool Almarzouq

Founder of Open Science Community Saudi Arabia and Research Project Manager for “AI for Multiple Long-Term Conditions”, The Alan Turing Institute, London, UK

Dr. Emily Choynowski

Director of Operations, Forum for Open Research in MENA

Dr. Imad Bachir

Professor of Library and Information Studies at the Lebanese University and Dean of Libraries at the American University of Iraq – Baghdad (AUIB)

Prof. Kamel Belhamel

Professor of Chemistry, University of Bejaia, Algeria

Kamran R. Kardan

Founder and CEO, Knowledge E Foundation

Kara Jones

University Librarian, American University of Sharjah

Dr. Rabab Isa Saleh Almuqahwi

Arabic Language Programmes Coordinator & English Lecturer, RCSI Bahrain

Raed Al Zoubi

Library Director, Jordan University of Science & Technology

Victorien Dognon

Head of the International Cooperation Department, Vice-Rectorate in charge of Inter-university Cooperation, University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin



About FORM

The **Forum for Open Research in MENA (FORM)** is a non-profit membership organisation supporting the advancement of Open Science policies and practices in research communities and institutions across the Arab region.

Our mission is to support the advancement of Open Science practices in research libraries and universities across the Arab world, by facilitating the exchange of actionable insights and the development of practical policies.



SUPPORT

The advancements of Open Science ecosystems in HEIs and RLS across Arab world



CREATE

Accessible and localized resources relating to the implementation of Open Science policies and practises



ENCOURAGE

Collaborative community partnerships and cooperation between members and partners of FORM



CHAMPION

The development of RTL functionality in key open source and open science technological solutions

A catalyst for positive action, we work with key stakeholders to develop and implement a pragmatic programme to facilitate the transition towards more accessible, inclusive and sustainable research and education models in the Arab region.

For more details, visit our website www.forumforopen.org



The Knowledge E Foundation

The Knowledge E Foundation is a community interest company that is constantly growing and intensifying its activities to contribute to more diverse causes and offer aid wherever possible. As the philanthropic arm of Knowledge E, the KnE Foundation tends to focus its efforts on funding education projects, building and renovating schools in remote areas around the world, contributing to disaster relief efforts, empowering research, and endorsing the movement towards Open Science.

The foundation's initiatives have left a lasting positive impact in many countries around the world, including in Cambodia, Egypt, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal, and the region.

Recently, the foundation has been very active in the realm of Open Science, organising the Forum for Open Research in MENA. We take great pride in witnessing the coming together of numerous advocates for Open Science in support of this initiative.



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- Bloomsbury Medieval Studies
- Bloomsbury History: Theory + Method
- Churchill Archive
- Bloomsbury Education and Childhood Studies
- Bloomsbury Philosophy Library
- Theology & Religion Online
- The American Mosaic Series
- ABC-CLIO Databases
- Human Kinetics Library
- Jessica Kingsley Publishers Library

Film, Music, and Performing Arts

- Bloomsbury Music + Sound
- Drama Online
- Screen Studies
- Bloomsbury Video Library

Visual Arts and Design

- Bloomsbury Fashion Central
- Berg Fashion Library
- Bloomsbury Fashion Business Cases
- Fashion Photography Archive
- Bloomsbury Fashion Video Archive
- Fairchild Books Library
- Bloomsbury Dress and Costume Library
- Bloomsbury Digital Fashion Masterclasses
- Bloomsbury Visual Arts
- Bloomsbury Design Library
- Bloomsbury Architecture Library
- Bloomsbury Applied Visual Arts
- Photography Collection; Ceramics Collection; Printmaking Collection; Design Studies Collection; Animation Practice Collection; Packt Gaming
- Bloomsbury Art Markets
- Bloomsbury International Encyclopedia of Surrealism
- Fairchild Books Interior Design Library

Resources for Students

- Cite Them Right
- Skills for Study

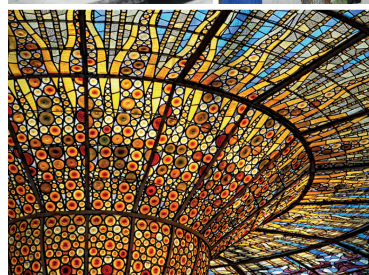
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Become a Member of FORM

Any research institution or research community based within the Arab region that wishes to support our mission and become a signatory of our principles can become a member. Non-profit organisations and non-profit solutions-providers working to support Open Science policies and practices can also become members or strategic partners.

Our membership is institutional, and it is also free. All members will be invited to attend the Forum for a honorary signing ceremony during the conference.

Becoming a member of FORM signals your public commitment to contribute actively and constructively to the advancement of Open Science in the tertiary education sector and research communities of the Arab world.

- Recognise the diverse outputs, practices and activities that maximise the quality and impact of research, and where appropriate incorporate these diverse outputs into your assessment criteria.
- Support the development and implementation of Open Science policies and practices at your institution/organisation.
- Gain global and regional visibility for your institution through FORM promotion and support.
- Take advantage of a potential speaking spot to display your institution's latest research at our Annual Forums (subject to availability & quality of proposal).
- Work to enhance the discoverability and visibility of Arab language research.
- Participate in collaborative community development activities and contribute to the growth of an Arab community of best practice in Open Science.





Open Science Resources

FORM produces bite-size resources on a rolling basis that offer informative overviews of key topics and issues within the field of Open Science. They are designed to help our network understand the foundational pillars of Open Science, such as Open Infrastructure, Open Publishing, Community Development, and Open Policies.



Open Access Publishing



What are Pre-Prints?



Open Access Copyrights



Becoming an Open Peer Reviewer



Maximising Open Data



Understanding Open Access Policies



Building Open Science Communities



An Introductory Guide to Citizen Science



Data Management Plans

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Agenda

Day 1 - 20 October

9:30-11:00	Parallel Panels
11:30-13:00	Parallel Panels
14:00-15:30	Parallel Panels
16:00-17:30	Parallel Panels
19:00-20:00	Welcome Reception & Early Registration

Day 2 - 21 October

8:00-9:30	Registration & Coffee
9:30-10:00	Welcome Ceremony
10:00-11:00	Keynote
11:00-11:30	~ Coffee ~
11:30-12:30	UAE Leadership Panel
12:30-14:00	~ Lunch (& Tour of AUS) ~
14:00-15:00	State of Play Overview
15:00-15:30	~ Coffee ~
15:30-17:00	Parallel Panels
17:15-18:45	Parallel Panels
19:30-21:00	Gala Dinner



Day 3 - 22 October

9:30-10:00	New Members Signing Ceremony
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10:00-11:00	Keynote
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11:00-11:30	~ Coffee ~
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11:30-13:00	Parallel Panels
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13:00-14:30	~ Lunch (& Members AGM) ~
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14:30-16:00	Parallel Panels
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16:00-16:30	~ Coffee ~
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16:30-17:30	Parallel Panels
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17:30-18:00	Closing and Key Takeaways
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Day 4 - 23 October

9:00-11:00	Parallel Workshops
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11:00-11:30	~ Personal coffee break ~
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11:30-13:30	Parallel Workshops
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AI tools and solutions

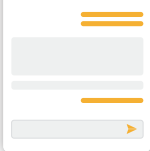


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Venue Information

We are delighted to have the American University of Sharjah as our Host Partner for the 4th Annual Forum. We are honoured to be partnering with this institution, a regional leader for research and education in the Arab world. We are also excited to be able to host the Annual Forum in the Emirate of Sharjah, which is home to so many of the region's leading publishers and collaborative research and innovation centers.



About AUS

American University of Sharjah (AUS) was founded in 1997 by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed AlQasimi, Member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Sharjah. Sheikh Sultan articulated his vision of a distinctive institution against the backdrop of Islamic history and in the context of the aspirations and needs of contemporary society in the UAE and the Gulf region.

Firmly grounded in principles of meritocracy and with a strong reputation for academic excellence, AUS has come to represent the very best in teaching and research, accredited internationally and recognized by employers the world over for creating graduates equipped with the knowledge, skills and drive to lead in the 21st century.

AUS values learners not driven only by academic success, but by those that embrace our dynamic campus life and embody our ideals of openness, tolerance and respect. This combination of academic excellence and community spirit ensures AUS is filled with world-class faculty and students, poised to become the innovators, thinkers, contributors and leaders of tomorrow.



Travel & Transport

Travel to and from Sharjah

Sharjah is very closely connected to Dubai through the Dubai-Sharjah-Ajman metropolitan area, with commuter traffic creating rush hour traffic jams. Many people live in Sharjah but work in Dubai, hence traffic from Sharjah to Dubai and Dubai to Sharjah is largely expected in rush hours.

The emirate is considerably larger than Dubai, with coastline on both west and east coasts of the peninsula, and with exclaves of Kalba, Khor Fakkan, and Dibba Al Hisn. The road to the east coast goes through rugged Al Hajar mountains. Public buildings in the Emirate are all in Umayyad and Abbasid architecture.

Major Airports:

There are a number of airports conveniently situated for travel to Sharjah. Airfares vary depending on the airport chosen, so do check all options to ensure you get the most appropriate option.

- Dubai International Airport (DXB), is a 20-25 minute drive away from the American University of Sharjah, and a large number of international airlines operate here.
- Sharjah International Airport (SHJ) is a 10-15 minute drive away from the American University of Sharjah, and various carriers including Air Arabia operate from here with a good regional network.
- Abu Dhabi airport (AUH), is a 90 minute drive away from the American University of Sharjah.

Getting around UAE

Taxis are available at most locations and accept cash and card payments. However, for convenience following apps can be used:

- Careem and Uber. Available in all emirates and offers regular taxis and more comfortable options. Payments via card or apple pay.
- Bolt. An alternative to Careem, can use to book taxi or more comfortable rides online. Only operating in Dubai.



Weather in the UAE

In October the temperature is usually around 36 degrees centigrade during the day, dropping to around 25 degrees centigrade in the evening. Please be aware that humidity levels are often high during this period, especially in the coastal areas. However, many venues have strong air conditioning, so do ensure you pack suitable clothing to remain comfortable.

Dress Code in the UAE

Please note that the dress code for the Annual Forum is: Business casual.

The UAE has a relatively modern and tolerant approach to dress codes, but it's still important to respect the local culture and traditions. In malls, markets, and public spaces, modest clothing is appreciated. Recommended clothing includes:=-

- Men: T-shirts, shorts, and light pants are fine. Avoid tank tops and overly short shorts in more conservative areas.
- Women: Loose, breathable clothing is ideal. T-shirts, blouses, and knee-length skirts or pants are common. Shoulders and knees should generally be covered in public, especially in less touristy areas.

Sharia Law and What to Be Mindful of

Although it's possible in some Emirates like Dubai to buy and drink alcohol in selected hotels, restaurants and bars, Sharjah remains an alcohol-free Emirate. It means that sale and possession of alcohol is almost entirely forbidden.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Our Community Development Activities are a key part of our strategy, designed to provide insights and learning opportunities for all stakeholders looking to engage with Open Science at an institutional level, including funding groups and government ministries, libraries and universities, and all members of the region's wider research communities.

Our Community Development Activities include webinars, symposia, and our How to be Open workshop series.

To get involved or propose an idea for the Community Development Series, please send an email to:
contact@forumforopen.org



OUR PROGRAMME

NOVEMBER 2025 - WORKSHOP

How to be Open: Transforming Institutional
Repositories into Fully Open Science
Databases



DECEMBER 2025 - WEBINAR

Mapping Open Access and Open Science in
the Arab World



JANUARY 2026 - SYMPOSIUM

Understanding Open Infrastructure: Why It
Matters and Why It Needs Funding



FEBRUARY 2026 - WORKSHOP - ARABIC

How to be Open: Building Open Science
Communities in the Arabic-Speaking World



APRIL 2026 - WORKSHOP

How to be Open: How to Support and
Advocate for Open Infrastructure at Your
Institution



MAY 2026 - WEBINAR

Navigating Open Science Implementation:
Strategic Pathways and Lessons Learned
Across Europe



JUNE 2026 - WORKSHOP - ARABIC

How to be Open: Metadata Best Practises



Use the QR code to join our
mailing list, and receive
updates about all our events!



Monday, 20th October

Online

09:30-11:00 – Parallel Panels - Session 1

Panel A - Collaborative Openness in the Arab World (Arabic)

Chair: Ahmed Moustafa, Knowledge E

Towards Building Effective Community Engagement to Support Open Science in Morocco

- Touria Slimani, National Center for Scientific and Technical Research
- Samira Nait Ajjou, National Center for Scientific and Technical Research

Governance Strategies for Institutional Repositories: Analysis and Recommendations for Algerian Universities

- Nadia Smaili, Khemis Miliana University

Data Journals and their Role in Enhance Publishing and Sharing of Open Research Data

- Dr. Kareman Baknam Sedki Abdel Aziz, Cairo University

Panel B - Challenges and Opportunities for Arab Open Science (Arabic)

Chair: Mohamed Elsayed Yahia Ali Elsayed Kelib, Institute of Applied Technology

Investing in Open Science in Arab Public Universities: A Survey Study of the Views of Heads of Library and Information Science Departments in the MENA Region

- Dr. Farah Sbeity, Lebanese University

Open Infrastructures on a Budget: From ORCID/ROR to Crossref DOIs and OJS—Bootstrapping Sustainable Open Infrastructure in Resource-constrained Universities

- Dr. Mustafa Kayyali, Higher Education Ranking

Open Data in Sensitive Research Contexts: Ethical Dilemmas and Structural Barriers in Fieldwork on Iran's Foreign Policy in the Sahel Region

- Malak Benkirane, UCLouvain

11:00-11:30 – Break

11:30-13:00 – Parallel Panels - Session 2

Panel C - The Hidden Costs of Openness (English)

Chair: Dr. Emily Choynowski, Forum for Open Research in MENA

The Cost of Public Access: Do We Get What We Pay for?

- Sarah Lippincott, Invest in Open Infrastructure

PKP Doesn't Just Believe in Open—It Builds It. Now It Needs Your Support

- John Willinsky, The Public Knowledge Project at Simon Fraser University
- Urooj Nizami, The Public Knowledge Project at Simon Fraser University



Advancing Open Science in Post-Conflict Iraq: From Marginalisation to Community-Led Transformation

- Salwan Abdulateef, Open Science Community Iraq
- Thafer Thabit Mohammed, University of Anbar

Panel D: Encouraging Open Access Advocacy (English)

Chair: Rima Qayed, Forum for Open Research in MENA

Open Access in the Arab World: A Wealth in Programs and a Dearth in Cooperation

- Samir Hachani, University of Algiers 2

Recent Open Science Endeavours at Koç University

- Dr. Cem Birol, Koç University
- Tuba Akbaytürk, Koç University

Advancing Open Access Books through Community-Driven Collaboration

- Dr. Kira Hopkins, Copim Open Book Futures
- Lucy Barnes, Open Book Publishers

13:00-14:00 – Lunch

14:00-15:30 – Parallel Panels - Session 3

Panel E - Roundtable (Arabic)

Chair: Menna Emam, Open Science Community Egypt

Beyond Borders: Building Collaborative Networks for Open Science Communities in MENA

- Menna Emam, Open Science Community Egypt
- Doaa Mohamed Abdelkader, Open Science Community Egypt
- Batool AlMarzouq, Open Science Community Saudi Arabia
- Salwan Abdulateef, Open Science Community Iraq

Panel F - Localising Capacity Building Strategies (English)

Chair: Rima Qayed, Forum for Open Research in MENA

The Challenge of Equitable Open Access in the Arab World: Bridging the Gap through Localised Capacity Building

- Maryam Sayab, Asian Council of Science Editors

From Passive Subjects to Active Partners: Democratising Research through Public Participation and Localised Capacity Building for Gulf Knowledge Economies

- Dr. Fatma Said, Zayed University

Capacity Building and Localisation of Persistent Identifiers: The Africa PID Alliance's Digital Object Identifier Container (DOCID™) Model for Empowering Open Knowledge Communities

- Nicholas Omimo, Training Centre in Communication Africa (TCC Africa)



15:30-16.00 – Break

16:00-18:00 – Parallel Panels - Session 4

Panel G - Building Open Science Communities (English)

Chair: Ahmed Moustafa, Knowledge E

Advancing Open Science Communities in South Asian through Regional Collaboration and Diplomacy

- Dr. Pragya Chaube, Open Science South Asia Network
- Dr. Moumita Koley, Indian Institute of Science

The Power of Open Science Communities

- Mirjam Walpot, International Network of Open Science & Scholarship Communities

Community Building and Engagement in Open Science Across Africa and the Arab States

- Raed Al-Zoubi, Jordan University of Science & Technology
- Nicole Mulaku, Training Centre in Communication Africa (TCC Africa)

Advancing Open Science in the Middle East: Iran's Role in Strengthening Scientific Diplomacy

- Dr. Farshid Danesh, Islamic World Science & Technology Monitoring and Citation Institute

Panel H - Practical Applications of Open Science Policies and Practises (English)

Chair: Jacir Hilmi, Forum for Open Research in MENA

Teaching Predatory Journal Appraisal Using Persuasive System Design and Gamification

- Mohamed Elahi, University of Doha of Science & Technology
- Esther Makumbe, University of Doha of Science & Technology
- Khadija Mahsud, University of Doha of Science & Technology
- Kevin McCormick, University of Doha of Science & Technology
- Muzan Abbas, University of Doha of Science & Technology
- Antonio Miguel, University of Doha of Science & Technology

UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme's Water Information Network System (IHP-WINS)

- Dr. Mohamed Alaoui, UNESCO

Open Finance: Building Collaborative Ecosystems for Economic Development in the Arab World

- Dr. Muhamad Jumaa, Jumeira University

Localising Open Science Practices in Clinical Research: A Capacity-Building Framework for the Arab Region

- Sherif Kamal, Tawasol

19:00-20:00 – Welcome Reception and Early Registration

Centro Hotel Sharjah, Garden



Tuesday, 21st October

📍 Main Conference Rotunda

8:00-9:30 – Registration & Coffee

Main Conference Rotunda

9:30-10:00 – Welcome Ceremony

Lecture Hall (A)

- Dr. Emily Choynowski, Forum for Open Research MENA
- Kamran Kardan, Knowledge E Foundation
- Tod A Laursen, Chancellor, American University of Sharjah

10:00-11:00 – Keynote

Lecture Hall (A)

- Prof. Dr. Mohamad Sanad Abu-Darwish, Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)

11:00-11:30 – Coffee Break

Main Conference Rotunda

11:30-12:30 – UAE Leadership Panel

Lecture Hall (A)

Chair: Kamran Kardan, Knowledge E Foundation

- Dr. Fareed Al Amiri, Chief Strategy Officer, SRTIP
- Dr. Steven Griffiths, Vice Chancellor for Research, American University of Sharjah
- Mr. Hamad Al Hamiri, National Library and Archives

12:30-14:00 – Lunch

Main Conference Rotunda

Library Tour – Including Arabic Art exhibition – 30 minutes

Meeting Point: Registration Desk

14:00-15:00 – State of Play: Overview of Open Science Policies and Practises in the Arab World

Lecture Hall (A)

Dr. Emily Choynowski, Forum for Open Research MENA

15:00-15:30 – Coffee Break

Main Conference Rotunda



15:30-17:00 – Parallel Panels - Session 5

Panel I - Open Science Advancements – Arab States Case Studies (Arabic)

Lecture Hall (A)

Chair: Batool Almarzouq, Open Science Community Saudi Arabia

Almayzab Digital Library: A Sudanese Experience in Advancing Open Access and Building Research Capacity

– Abdallah Elgaili, Almayzab Digital Library

Enhancing Teachers' Research Engagement: A Capacity-Building and Community-Oriented Initiative in Arabic

– Dr. Ibrahim Alamoush, Sharjah Education Academy

Open Access and Open Science Trends in the Arab Region: A Bibliometric Study of FORM Proceedings, 2021–2024

– Abdelrahman Farrag, Beni-Suef University, Egypt

– Doaa Abdelkader, Open Science Community Egypt

– Touria Slimani, National Center for Scientific and Technical Research

Panel J - Open Science Advancements in the UAE (English)

Lecture Hall (B)

Chair: Dr. Alwaleed K. Alkhaja, Qatar National Library

Building Cohesive Open Science Communities in the UAE

– Dr. Zeina Hojeij, Zayed University

Navigating a New Copyright Environment: Localising Open Access and Licensing Practices in the UAE

– Veronique Lecat, American University of Sharjah

– Thomas Hodge, American University of Sharjah

Building Research Impact Literacy through Open Educational Resources: The AUS Research Impact Challenge

– Fiona Glasgow, American University of Sharjah

17:00-17:15 – Comfort Break

17:15-18:45 – Parallel Roundtables - Session 6

Panel K - Building for Openness in the Arab World (English)

Lecture Hall (B)

Chair: Kara Jones, American University of Sharjah

Open Research Infrastructure: Increasing Social Science Research Visibility in the Arab Region

– Seteney Shami, Arab Council for the Social Sciences



From Preservation to Participation: Localising an Open Repository for Archival Access and Capacity Building in Morocco

– Khawla El Akkili, Al Akhawayn University

Localising Open Research: The American University of Bahrain Repository as a Model for Capacity Building

– Bindu Kambath, American University of Bahrain

– Maria Cotera, Figshare

Roundtable: Planning for Open: Identifying and Addressing Regional Challenges and Priorities (English)

Lecture Hall (A)

Chair: Dr. Emily Choynowski, Forum for Open Research in MENA

Open Research Infrastructure: Increasing Social Science Research Visibility in the Arab Region

– Rui da Silva, Al Qasimi Foundation

– Victorien Doughton, University of Abomey-Calavi

– Melissa Hagemann, BOAI

– Raed Al Zoubi, Jordan University of Science & Technology

– Luciana Machado, Science Integrity Alliance

– Lamis Elkheir, AREN

– Batool Almarzouq, OSCSA

– Dr. Imad Bachir, American University of Iraq (AUIB)

– Dr. Rabab Isa Saleh Almuqahwi, RCSI Bahrain

18:45-19:30 – Transport to Gala Dinner

Collection Point: Bus Stop/Main Roundabout.

19:30-21:00 – Gala Dinner

Chedi Al Bait in Sharjah



Wednesday, 22nd October

📍 Main Conference Rotunda

9:30-10:00 – Signing Ceremony for New Members

Lecture Hall (A)

10:00-11:00 – Keynote

Lecture Hall (A)

FASRC Programs: Advancing Open Science in the Arab Region

– Dr. Nahed Salem, Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils (FASRC)

11:00-11:30 – Coffee Break

Main Conference Rotunda

11:30-13:00 – Parallel Panels - Session 7

Panel L - Strengthening Open Science Capacities and Capabilities (English)

Lecture Hall (A)

Chair: Raed Al-Zoubi, Jordan University of Science & Technology

Embracing Open Research: Lessons Learned across Europe and the UK

– Dr. Andrea Chiarelli, Research Consulting

AREN's Local Network Leads Training Program: Building Open Science Champions Across Africa

– Dr. Lamis Yahia Mohamed Elkheir, African Reproducibility Network

Strengthening Open Science in the Arab World: The Role of Institutional Repositories in Enhancing Research Accessibility

– Abeer Saad, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research

Panel M - Using Technologies to Advance Openness in the Arab States (English)

Lecture Hall (B)

Chair: Nikesh Narayanan, Zayed University

Building the Future of Evidence: AI-Assisted Open Access Revolution in Scientific Publishing

– Khairya Elmuttardi, Libyan International University

– Reida El Oakley, Libyan International University

– Ghyth A. Elmehrik, Libyan International University



From Fragmented Access to Reliable Knowledge: Using AI to Enhance Open Access Content

– Rodrigo Pinto, Zenty

From Concept to Community: Practical Insights on Building Collaborative Open Access Journals in the Middle East

– Sterling Jensen, Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities

13:00-14:30 – Lunch

Main Conference Rotunda

Annual General Assembly (for Members)

Senate Room, by Main Conference Rotunda

14:30-16:00 – Parallel Panels - Session 8

Panel N - Open Science Capacity Building in the Arab World (Arabic)

Lecture Hall (A)

Chair: Raed Al-Zoubi, Jordan University of Science & Technology

Local Roots, Global Reach: A Roadmap for Building Open Science Capacities in the Arab World

– Dr. Fatima H. Bailey, Sharjah Education Academy

Bridging the Gap: Persistent Identifiers Adoption in the MENA Region

– Nabil Ksibi, ORCID

15 Years of a Sustainable Publication Practice with the Journal of Academic Finance

– Dr. Jamel Hanchiri, RED-ISGG Laboratory, University of Gabes

Panel O - Open Access Success Stories (English)

Lecture Hall (B)

Chair: Batool Almarzouq, Open Science Community Saudi Arabia

A Decade of Open Access Funding in Qatar: From Challenges to Opportunities

– Dr. Alwaleed Alkhaja, Qatar National Library

Empowering Scholarship through Institutional Publishing: The Case of King Saud University's Scholarly Journals

– Dr. Raha Orfali, King Saud University

– Dr. Nasser-Eddine Rikli, King Saud University

Preserving Access: building Open Science Resilience through Collaborative Archiving

– Dr. Alicia Wise, CLOCKSS



16:00-16:30 – Coffee Break

Main Conference Rotunda

16:30-17:30 – Roundtable: Investing in Open

Lecture Hall (A)

Unlocking Open Science: Why Open Infrastructure Matters for the Arab World

- Rosalie Lack, Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services
- Dr. Alwaleed K. Alkhaja, Qatar National Library
- Dr. Mohamed Boufarss, Zayed University
- Kamel Belhamel, Directory of Open Access Journals

17:30-18:00 – Closing and Takeaways

Lecture Hall (A)

- Dr. Emily Choynowski, Forum for Open Research MENA



Thursday, 23th October

📍 AUS Library

09:00-11:00 – Parallel Workshops

WORKSHOP 1: Research Impact

Library, Room LIB 011

- Dr. Emily Choynowski, Knowledge E
- Dr. Andrea Chiarelli, Research Consulting

WORKSHOP 2: Open Source AI and AI scenarios

Library, Room LIB 019

- Sayeed Choudhury, Carnegie Mellon University
- Keith Webster, Carnegie Mellon University

11:00-11:30 – Coffee Break

Library Entrance

11:30-13:30 – Parallel Workshops

WORKSHOP 3: Negotiating Publishing Agreements

Library, Room LIB 011

- Dr. Alwaleed Alkhaja, Qatar National Library

WORKSHOP 4: Research Integrity

Library, Room LIB 019

- Eleanora Colangelo, The Embassy of Good Science



Book of Abstracts

If you want a peek into the work presented you can read their abstracts here:
<https://forumforopenresearch.com/book-of-abstracts>





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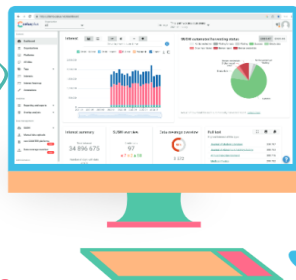
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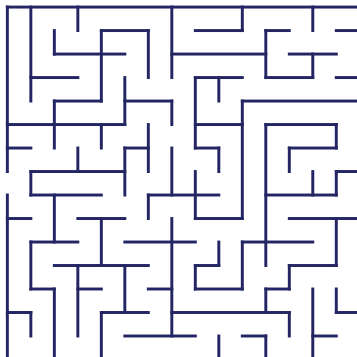
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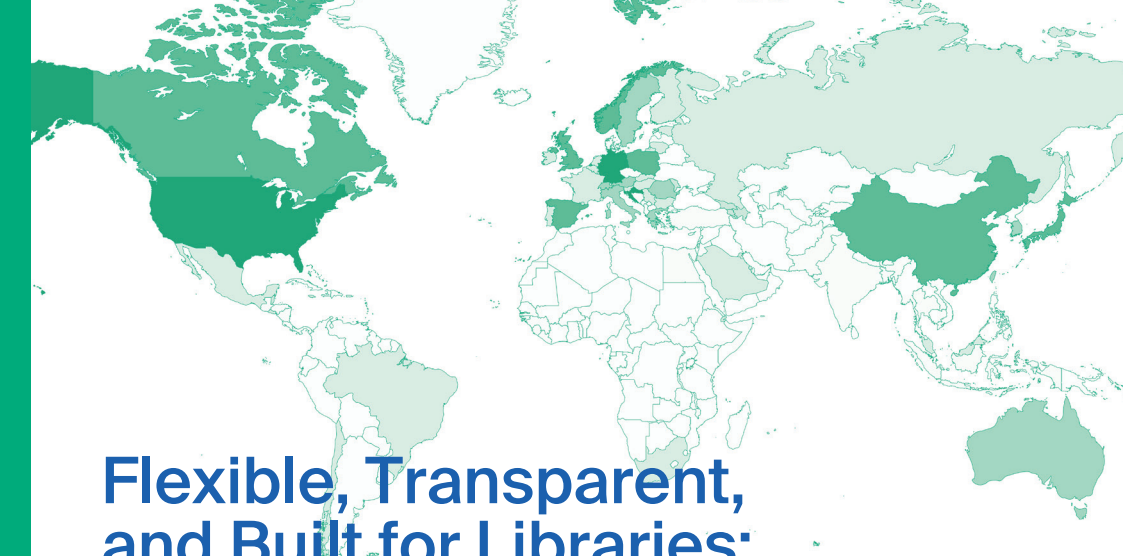


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A world map with green highlights on various countries, including Canada, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, several European countries, Russia, China, India, and Australia.

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Workshops

Workshop 1 - Research Impact

09:00 – 11:00 | Library, Room LIB 011



Dr. Emily Choynowski
Knowledge E

In today's globalised world, universities are expected to go far beyond their original mission to produce and preserve knowledge. Once focused mainly on education and training, they are now seen as key players in solving local and global challenges. They contribute to building strong, knowledge-based economies by developing skilled workers, shaping policies, creating technology and tackling social problems. As their role expands, universities face increasing pressure to show accountability and demonstrate their impact on society.

This 2-hour workshop explores how to develop an effective research culture that focuses on long term impact that extends beyond the narrow boundaries of the individual academic institution. It will cover the scope and scale of potential impacts, pathways to impact, how to track and articulate impact, and how to suitably recognise and reward impact-centric activities and outputs.



Dr. Andrea Chiarelli
Research Consulting

Designated audience:

- Researchers
- Research offices
- Institutional policymakers and administrators

What you will learn:

- How to plan and develop an impact-centric research culture at your institution
- How to track potential impact-generating activities, and trace long term impacts beyond the university
- How to articulate potential impacts, as an individual researcher and as a senior administrator
- How to establish suitable recognition and reward frameworks



Workshop 2- Open Source AI and AI Scenarios

09:00 – 11:00 | Library, Room LIB 019



**Sayeed
Choudhury**

Carnegie Mellon
University

This workshop will connect the Forum for Open Research MENA to two international AI programs, the Open Source AI Definition (OSAID) and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL)/Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) AI Scenarios: AI Influenced Futures.

The OSAID is part of the global exchange regarding open source AI, which has profound importance, particularly given its role in the European Union's AI Act, and attempts by private sector companies such as Meta to use its own definition as a global default. The Open Source Initiative (OSI) led a community co-design process to develop version 1.0 of OSAID, and seeks to build upon this initial definition with feedback from the global community.

The ARL/CNI AI provides a critical asset for research libraries and organizations aiming to strategically plan for the transformative power of artificial intelligence. The ARL/CNI Joint Task Force on Scenario Planning for AI/ML Futures led a consultative process with the ARL and CNI communities to develop their report, which includes scenarios, strategic context report, and a provocateur interview report. ARL/CNI are in the process of developing a toolkit based on these reports, which would offer a roadmap and plan for implementation. One of the co-presenters (Webster) is leading this effort, with workshops already planned for the US and Canada. This proposed roundtable or workshop would be the first in the MENA region.



Keith Webster

Carnegie Mellon
University

Designated audience:

- Research library leaders and digital strategy officers
- Policymakers and research administrators
- AI researchers and practitioners interested in open source and governance

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Gain an overview of OSAID version 1.0 and its development process.
- Understand the strategic importance of open source AI definitions in policy and practice.
- Explore the ARL/CNI AI scenarios and related reports.
- Learn about the emerging toolkit for roadmap and implementation.
- Contribute feedback to shape future global developments in both programs.



Workshop 3 - Navigating Fully Open Access Publishing Agreements: From Workflows to Negotiations

09:00 – 11:00 | Library, Room LIB 011



**Dr. Alwaleed
Alkhaja**

Qatar National
Library

With the growth of open access (OA), researchers are looking for ways to fund their OA publications. Many libraries are exploring agreements with publishers to support these publishing efforts. However, navigating these agreements can be complicated. This workshop will help participants understand how to set up and manage fully OA agreements. The workshop will guide participants through setting up fully OA publishing agreements, from assessment of institutional requirements, agreement evaluation, understanding publisher workflows, and negotiating the agreements.

Designated audience:

- Librarians and scholarly communication officers
- Consortia managers and administrators
- Research funding and open access funding administrators
- Researchers involved in OA publishing decisions

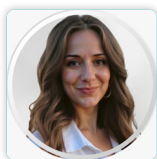
What you will learn:

- Understand the different types of publishing agreements.
- Recognize the value proposition of publishing agreements.
- Identify the key components of a fully OA publishing agreement.
- Have an understanding of different publisher workflows
- Assess the financial and policy implications of such agreements for their institutions.
- Apply practical strategies to negotiate fair and sustainable terms with publishers.



Workshop 4 - Research Integrity in Open Science: A Regional Policy Analysis

11:30 – 13:30 | Library, Room LIB 019



Eleanora Colangelo

The Embassy of
Good Science

As Open Science gains momentum across the MENA region, research integrity is emerging as a structural component in the design and operationalization of national and institutional research strategies. This workshop will provide a critical policy and regulatory analysis of how research integrity can be systematically embedded into broader Open Science agendas — not as a parallel concern, but as a foundational principle enabling transparent, equitable, and trustworthy research ecosystems. Framed by comparative policy studies, international benchmarks, and empirical insights from the Open Science Monitoring Initiative, the session will dissect the regulatory instruments, governance models, and institutional mechanisms that facilitate the alignment of integrity norms with Open Science implementation. Emphasis will be placed on policy interoperability, enforcement modalities, and the role of monitoring and evaluation frameworks in driving sustained reform across diverse national contexts.

Participants will subsequently be able to (r)evaluate their respective policy environments, share case-based insights, and contribute to the articulation of regionally relevant, integrity-first Open Science models that reflect local legal frameworks, resource distributions, and epistemic cultures.

Designated audience:

- Policy-makers working in higher education and research governance
- University administrators and research office leaders designing or implementing Open Science policies
- Researchers and research ethics committee members across disciplines
- Librarians, repository managers, and data stewards involved in research assessment, archiving, or scholarly communications
- Regional organizations and funders interested in cross-border alignment of research quality standards

What you will learn:

- How to integrate research integrity into national or institutional Open Science policies, with examples of regulatory and operational levers that support this integration.
- Which models of monitoring and evaluation can be adapted regionally to track research integrity and open science progress in tandem.
- What convergence opportunities exist across MENA countries, and how to navigate cultural, legal, and institutional differences while promoting aligned, scalable policy frameworks.

الوصول

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Keynotes



Prof. Dr. Mohamad Sanad Abu-Darwish

Director of Science and Scientific Research at the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)

Prof. Dr. Mohamad Sanad Abu-Darwish is a professor of pharmaceutical sciences and currently the Director of Science and Scientific Research at the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) in Tunisia. A professor of pharmaceutical sciences, he previously served as the president of Aqaba University of Technology (AUT) in Jordan from 2019 to 2022. Prior to this, he was the dean of a university college at Al-Balqa Applied University in Jordan, and has also held visiting professor positions at Johannes Gutenberg University in Germany and the University of Mississippi, USA, supported by a Fulbright scholarship. He has received several prestigious awards, including the Distinguished Academic Award from the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development in Kuwait. Widely published, accruing over 2,000 citations and an h-index of 23, Prof. Dr. Mohamad Sanad Abu-Darwish serves on the editorial boards of multiple scientific journals and is a member of various national and international scientific organizations, including serving as the founder and chair of the Society of the Medical Heritage in Jordan.



Nahed Salem

Project Manager of the Arab Research and Innovation Co-funded Alliances (ARICA)

Nahed Salem is the Project Manager of the Arab Research and Innovation Co-funded Alliances (ARICA), led by the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils (FASRC). She currently serves as Deputy Director at the Egyptian Science, Technology and Innovation Observatory (ESTIO) within the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Egypt. With extensive experience in the field of science, technology, and innovation (STI), she specializes in the design and analysis of STI indicators, survey development, and both quantitative and qualitative analysis. She previously managed the joint project “Mobilizing the Egyptian Innovation System for SMEs’ Innovation Capabilities,” funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research. Her work also includes monitoring and evaluating the performance of universities and research institutions, as well as contributing to Egypt’s community innovation survey covering 4,000 SMEs. Additionally, she is a member of the national committee dedicated to improving Egypt’s ranking in international indices such as the Global Innovation Index (GII) and the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI).



Speakers



Dr. Abdelrahman Farrag

Professor of Information Science at Beni-Suef University in Egypt

Dr. Abdelrahman Farrag, Professor of Information Science at Beni-Suef University in Egypt, holds a PhD in Library and Information Science from Cairo University. Over the past years, he has devoted his efforts to promoting Open Science, Open Access, and Research Data Management (RDM) in the Arab region. He has participated in numerous international, regional, and national events in this field, authored many books and studies, and won the Sharjah Prize for Library Literature in 2019 for his study on “Open Arab Digital Content on the Internet.” He also co-translated UNESCO’s Policy Guidelines for the Development and Promotion of Open Access, and contributed to the review of the Arab Statement on Open Science, which was launched in October 2021. He served as a consultant to the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS) in Beirut, where he translated training materials on Research Data Management (RDM) in the social sciences from English into Arabic, and successfully completed a Training of Trainers (ToT) course offered by the Council. He is the founder and General Coordinator of the Arab Community of Open Access (ACOA) and the Regional Open Science Alliance (ROSA) in the Arab Region.



Alicia Wise

Executive Director of CLOCKSS

Alicia Wise is Executive Director of CLOCKSS, a crucial open infrastructure service. This international digital archive ensures the long-term preservation of the scholarly record and is collaboratively governed by libraries and publishers around the world. Content deposited in the archive is stored in 12 secure vaults around the world. If the original publisher ever stops providing access, the CLOCKSS archive restores access under an open license. Alicia has been active in increasing access to research information in diverse roles within the academic, funding, library and publishing communities.

**Dr. Alwaleed Alkhaja**

Head of Open and Copyright at Qatar National Library

Dr. Alwaleed Alkhaja is the Head of Open and Copyright at Qatar National Library and is leading the Library's open access program team. Before joining the Library, Dr. Alwaleed worked in open access publishing with QScience.com / HBKU Press. He holds a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from the Göttingen / International Max Planck Research School and an MBA from the Alliance Manchester Business School.

**Dr. Andrea Chiarelli**

Associate Director at Research Consulting Limited

Dr. Andrea Chiarelli is an Associate Director at Research Consulting Limited, a mission-driven consultancy dedicated to improving the effectiveness and impact of research and scholarly communication across the global academic landscape. With over nine years of experience at the firm since joining in 2016, Andrea has established himself as a leading expert in open research practices, scholarly communication, digital infrastructures and research policy. Andrea's work focuses on helping organisations develop sustainable strategies for open science implementation, navigating the complexities of digital transformation in scholarly communication. As Associate Director, Andrea serves as a trusted advisor to a diverse portfolio of clients spanning universities, research organisations, charities, learned societies, government actors, research funders and academic publishers. Throughout his tenure at Research Consulting, he has successfully delivered over 140 projects, employing quantitative data analysis, interviews, focus groups, workshops and large-scale surveys.

**Batool Almarzouq**

Founder for Open Science Community Saudi Arabia

In her day job, Batool works as a Data Service Research Project member at Imago (Imagery Smart Data Service), part of the Smart Data Research UK programme funded by the ESRC. Imago addresses issues such as housing, environmental risk, and health equity. The project is a joint effort between the University of Liverpool, Newcastle University, and Harvard University. Outside of this, she leads the Open Science Community Saudi Arabia (OSCSA), which introduces and contextualises Open Science practices in Arabic-speaking countries. She also has the privilege of serving on the Open Science Expert Group of the International Association of Universities (IAU), representing Arab countries. Initiated by UNESCO in 1950, the IAU has been a vital global institution for higher education and research. Her work with



the Expert Group involves developing recommendations and sharing best practices to guide universities in their transition toward Open Science. She focuses on changing cultural norms to enable the adoption of open research practices, tools, and values, while addressing power dynamics and inequalities in knowledge production. Batool believes that Open Science is fundamentally about decolonisation — challenging the legacy of settler colonialism that has marginalised Indigenous knowledge systems and promoting their integration into global research practices.

**Bindu V. Kambath**

Senior Library Manager at the American University of Bahrain

Bindu V. Kambath is an accomplished Senior Library Manager at the American University of Bahrain, bringing over 15 years of extensive experience in academic libraries. In her current role, she leads and oversees all aspects of library operations, playing a pivotal role in enhancing teaching, learning, and research across the university. Her leadership is marked by a commitment to creating user-centered services and cultivating a vibrant, resource-rich environment for students, faculty, and researchers. Bindu holds a master's degree in library and information science and possesses deep expertise in information management, digital resource integration, institutional repository development, and library user education. Her career reflects a strong dedication to academic excellence, quality assurance, and the continuous advancement of modern academic library services.

**Dr. Cem Birol**

Research Data Coordinator at Koç University

Dr. Cem Birol, earned his BA in Economics in 2010 and his MA in International Relations in 2012 from Koç University. In 2019, he completed his PhD in Political Science at Rice University (Houston, TX). He worked as a junior and senior research assistant to T. Clifton Morgan on the Threat and Imposition of Sanctions (TIES) Dataset. Later, he developed his own Missile Tests Dataset—a project for which he wrote his dissertation and later published internationally. Between Summer 2019 and late 2020, Dr. Birol also worked as a policy analyst at the Baker Institute for Public Policy for one year. During the pandemic, he returned to Turkey and taught a course on Contemporary Issues in International Politics at Yeditepe University in Istanbul. In January 2023, he started working as a Research Data Coordinator at Koç University. Currently, he continues to assist scholars with research data management, helps coordinate AI projects and sponsorship applications at the Suna Kiraç Library, and publishes on topics related to open science, data governance, and international security. Since May 2025, Dr. Birol has also served as the co-chair of the EARMA Open Science Thematic Group.

**Doaa Mohamed Abdelkader**

Founder & Project lead Open Science Community Egypt, Specialist librarian for Research Service

As a Specialist Librarian for Research Services at The British University in Egypt, Doaa has supported over 200 researchers by providing tailored information retrieval and research support. She specialises in open science, research data management, and information literacy. Holding a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from Cairo University and having completed the McKinsey Forward Program, she is well-equipped to lead and innovate in her field. As a Project Lead at Open Science Community Egypt, Doaa is dedicated to advancing open science practices and fostering collaboration across the Egyptian academic community.

**Eleonora Colangelo**

Public Affairs Officer at Frontiers

Eleonora Colangelo is a Public Affairs Officer at Frontiers, where she provides strategic guidance on science, technology, and innovation (STI) policies, supporting the alignment of publishing operations with international regulatory frameworks. Her work also focuses on research integrity, open science, and the role of scholarly publishing in science diplomacy and global knowledge equity. Before moving from the bench to publishing, Eleonora pursued a career in academic research and teaching. She earned her PhD in Classics and Anthropology from Université Paris Cité and the University of Pisa, and held research and teaching positions at the École Française d'Athènes, Oxford University, Fondation Hardt, and Université Paris Cité.

**Dr. Emily Choynowksi**

Director of Operations, Forum for Open Science in MENA

Dr. Emily Choynowksi is a distinguished literary scholar with a PhD in Religion and Nineteenth-Century Literature from the University of Bristol. She has presented papers at international conferences and delivered public lectures on poetry and 19th-century culture at universities, schools, and museums. As Head of Publishing at Knowledge E, she provides editorial guidance, strategic oversight, and develops publishing services. She also serves as Director of The Byron Society, Digital Editor for the British Association for Romantic Studies, and sits on editorial boards for Liverpool University Press and Anthem Press. She has over eight years of experience in the commercial publishing sector.

**Esther Makumbe**

Electrical Engineering student at the University of Doha for Science and Technology

Esther is an Electrical Engineering student at the University of Doha for Science and Technology. She contributed to pioneering research under QRDI's UREP program, with the research title: "Teaching Predatory Journal Appraisal Using Persuasive System Design and Gamification." She was also the Vice Team Lead of Wolves Racing. She led and developed a solar-powered vehicle that proudly represented Qatar in South Africa, integrating advanced automation and renewable energy solutions. Currently, she has maintained a 3.75 CGPA in her degree. Lastly, she presented a nationally broadcast STEM television show with over 30 million viewers in South Africa.

**Dr. Farah Sbeiti**

Lebanese University

Dr. Farah Sbeiti is an academic, researcher, and consultant in the field of Information Sciences.

1. Academic at the Lebanese University,
2. Head of Research & Indexing at Academia Smart Firm (ASF),
3. IFLA MENA Regional Coordinator – Libraries Boosting Connectivity Project
4. President of the Information and Knowledge Management Committee at the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI).

**Dr. Fareed Al Amiri**

Chief Strategy Officer – Sharjah Research Technology and Innovation Park (SRTIP)

Dr. Fareed has dedicated his career to advancing the UAE's R&D and innovation ecosystem, aligning science and technology with national priorities to boost competitiveness. As Chief Strategy Officer at SRTIP, he connects academia, industry, and government to transform research into scalable ventures. He helped launch the National Science and Technology Policy, co-founded the ATRC and Khalifa Innovation Center, and previously worked with the Arab Science and Technology Foundation. Holding a PhD from UAE University and an Executive MBA from the University of Sharjah, he continues to champion innovation-driven, sustainable growth.

**Dr. Fatima Bailey**

Department Chair and an Associate Professor, Teacher Education and Teacher Leadership at Sharjah Education Academy

Dr. Fatima Bailey is a distinguished academic and equity-centered leader who currently serves as a Department Chair and an Associate Professor, Teacher Education and Teacher Leadership at Sharjah Education Academy. With a formidable career spanning over 25 years across the United Arab Emirates and the United States, she has cultivated a unique and powerful role at the intersection of hands-on school leadership, national policy architecture, and forward-thinking scholarship. As a visionary and dynamic leader, Dr. Bailey has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to driving systemic improvement, pioneering innovative learning environments that foster excellence from Pre-K–12 schools through to higher education landscapes. She champions a new generation of forward-thinking teachership and leadership.

**Dr. Fatma F.S.Said**

Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at Zayed University

Dr. Fatma F.S.Said is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at Zayed University, UAE. Her research lies at the intersection of Sociolinguistics and Applied Linguistics, with a focus on Arabic-English bilingualism among children and families, Gulf expatriates' home language practices, and the role of reading for pleasure in biliteracy development. Her work engages with interdisciplinary questions of identity, agency, language development, language socialisation, and family language policy, while also exploring methodological innovations for multilingual research. She serves on the Editorial Boards of *Multilingua* (De Gruyter) and *Arabic Sociolinguistics* (Edinburgh University Press). Beyond her core research, Fatma is deeply interested in working with hard-to-reach communities and advancing open access practices. She is committed to demonstrating to the general public the importance of research and their role as a co-creator of knowledge, ensuring that scholarship is inclusive, transformative, culturally responsive, and impactful in people's everyday lives.

**Fiona Glasgow**

Scholarly Communications Librarian at the American University of Sharjah

Fiona Glasgow is the Scholarly Communications Librarian at the American University of Sharjah, where she leads initiatives in research impact literacy, open access, and bibliometrics. She co-chairs the IATUL Special Interest Group on Metrics and Research Impact (SIGMaRI) and has developed international programs that support faculty in enhancing the visibility and influence of their research. Fiona's work focuses on practical strategies for increasing research engagement, strengthening scholarly communication practices, and advancing open access across institutions.

**Mr. Hamad Alhemeiri**

Director of the Research and Knowledge Services Department at the National Library and Archives

Mr. Hamad Alhemeiri has held the position of Director of the Research and Knowledge Services Department at the National Library and Archives since 2016. Mr. Alhemeiri obtained a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the American University in Dubai in 2005. Then, he joined the University of Wollongong in Dubai from where he received a Master's degree in international business in 2006 in addition to a Master's degree in Human Resource Management in 2007. He also obtained a Master's degree in Strategic and Security Studies in 2017 from the National Defense College at the UAE Armed Forces General Headquarters. Mr. Alhemeiri held several positions in various government and private sectors. Among them: membership of the Board of Directors of the Emirates Association for Libraries and Information (ELIA), and membership of the Middle East and North Africa Regional Division Committee (2025-2027) in IFLA. Mr. Alhemeiri also served as Director of the National Library Committee (CDNL). He is one of the effective leaders of the National Library and Archives in knowledge and research content management, contributing to the promotion and dissemination of the National Library and Archives' publications on both local and regional levels.

**Dr. Ibrahim Alamoush**

Sharjah Education Academy

Dr. Ibrahim Alamoush has over 20 years' experience in education. Previous to SEA, Dr. Alamoush served as an Educational Training Specialist in the Emirates Schools Establishment. He has also served as an expert lecturer and adjunct faculty at various institutions in the UAE, Jordan, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, including Skyline University College Sharjah, the Queen Rania Teacher Academy, Al-Albayet University, King Saud University, among others. In his various roles, Dr. Alamoush has provided expertise on learning strategies, assessment and evaluation, and cognitive neuroscience for teachers. Research interests include learning and teaching strategies, Arabic language education, cognitive neuroscience, and its impact on reading comprehension. Dr. Alamoush also leads a research group focused on literacy for fluency and reading comprehension in the UAE.

**Dr. Imad Bachir**

Dean of Libraries at American University of Iraq – Baghdad (AUIB)

Dr. Imad Bachir has been the Dean of Libraries at American University of Iraq – Baghdad (AUIB) since March 2021. He is leading AUIB libraries to enhance the research and teaching processes at the University as well as to serve the research and academic community at large. In addition, AUIB libraries are constantly working on the development of the digital resources and print collections required to improve research, teaching and to keep abreast of all institutional and programs accreditation requirements at AUIB. Prior to his appointment Dr Bachir was director of the Faculty of Information at the Lebanese University for two rounds from 2002 until 2007 and from 2018 until 2021. In between, he assumed the position of Director of Libraries at Qatar University from 2012 until 2017. Before that Dr Bachir was Manager of Media training program for three years between 2007 and 2010 at the Institute for Strategic Studies in Beirut. In 2008, he was appointed by the Lebanese government as member of the Supervisory Commission for the 2009 Parliamentary Elections and was hired afterwards by the UNDP as an election monitoring expert to produce the election report of 2018. He was the Chair of the IFLA MENA Regional Division Committee from July 2021 until August 2023.

**Pr. Jamel Eddine Henchiri**

Head of the RED (Research, Enterprise & Decisions) Laboratory and serves as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Academic Finance

Pr. Jamel Eddine Henchiri is a distinguished academic and professional leader with extensive contributions across research, education, and community engagement. He is the Head of the RED (Research, Enterprise & Decisions) Laboratory and serves as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Academic Finance (Diamond Open Access). Actively engaged in advancing open science, he is a member of the Open Science Monitoring Initiative and a scientific referent with the Tunisian Agency of Evaluation and Accreditation (ATEA). Beyond academia, he is Chairman of Radio Ulysse FM and President of the AEISGG Association. He also plays a key role in international academic events, serving as Conference Chair of CSIFA and Co-chair of the IEDI Conference. In higher education, he coordinates the Research Master's program in Finance at ISGG and is the founder of the Master's degrees in Gouvernance et Communication Territoriales at ISETJ and Financial Engineering at ISGG.

**John Willinsky**

Professor, Simon Fraser University

John Willinsky is a Professor, Simon Fraser University; Khosla Family Professor Emeritus, Stanford University; and founder of the Public Knowledge Project. His latest book is the open access Copyright's Broken Promise: How to Restore the Law's Ability to Promote the Progress of Science (MIT 2023).

**Kamel Belhamel**

Managing editor and ambassador for North Africa and the Middle East, DOAJ

Kamel Belhamel is the DOAJ's managing editor and ambassador for North Africa and the Middle East. He is also a full professor of chemistry at the University of Bejaia in Algeria. His research focuses on scholarly communication and new developments in academic publishing. Since 2016, Kamel Belhamel has been a strong advocate for open access, open science, and knowledge equity in Africa and Arab world.

**Kamran Kardan**

Founder, Knowledge E Foundation, UAE

Kamran Kardan is the Founder and CEO of Knowledge E and plays an active role in the Knowledge E Foundation. He founded Knowledge E in 2012, with the aim of providing unique, professional, and high-quality services to information professionals in the MENA region and beyond. Kamran has 20 years of experience working in the publishing industry on both the publisher and agency front. Working closely with some of the top consortia, libraries, ministries, hospitals and corporations within research and education in the region, he has experienced the birth and growth of many digital libraries. Driven by his interest in learning societies, he has initiated and participated in the completion of various special development. Kamran has also launched Zendy.io, a new flagship massive online library platform enabling enhanced discovery, collaboration possibilities, and analytical tools that serve the global research community by removing the barriers to access research.

**Dr. Kareman Baknam**

Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University

Dr. Kareman Baknam has over 13 years of experience in delivering lectures and training in the field of library and information science and is currently an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University. With extensive expertise in implementing library and information science programs, she is dedicated to supporting students in achieving their academic and professional goals. Her research interests include artificial intelligence and its applications in libraries and information institutions, electronic publishing, information organizations, information services, information systems, and information literacy. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, she supervises research methods courses for master's and doctoral students. She consistently seeks to expand her professional experience in libraries and information science, complementing her extensive academic background.

**Keith Webster**

Dean of University Libraries at Carnegie Mellon University

Keith Webster was appointed Dean of University Libraries at Carnegie Mellon University in July 2013 and was additionally appointed as Director of Emerging and Integrative Media Initiatives in July 2015. He was installed to the Helen and Henry Posner Jr. Deans Chair in 2021 and has a courtesy academic appointment at the University's H. John Heinz III College. Keith has also held Deanships in major research universities in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Before joining CMU he was Vice President for Global Strategy at international publisher Wiley, based in the company's US headquarters. Keith has served as Chair of the National Information Standards Organization, is a member of the steering committee of the Coalition for Networked Information, and is a Trustee of OCLC, a global, nonprofit cooperative library organization with 30,000 members in more than 100 countries. Keith is a professional futurist, known for blending foresight, change leadership, and digital transformation, who regularly consults with corporate, not-for-profit and professional organization boards. His professional interests include AI, research evaluation, and the economics of scholarly communication. He is a regular speaker on topics such as the future of communication and the impact of open science on publishing and libraries.

**Khairya Elmuttardi**

Research Coordinator, Libyan International University

Khairya Elmuttardi is a molecular biologist, editor, and research coordinator whose work bridges research, publishing, and mentorship. She graduated summa cum laude from The American University in Cairo with a BSc in Biology (Molecular and Cell Biology) and a Chemistry minor. Her projects span antimicrobial discovery, cancer biomarker analysis, and gene characterization. As Managing Editor of JBAEM and co-founder of Open Science Press, she leads initiatives integrating AI into publishing. Now Research Coordinator at the Libyan International University, she mentors multidisciplinary projects, advancing accessible, innovative, and globally impactful science.

**Khawla El Akkili**

Head of the Mohammed VI Library's Archives & Special Collections Unit, Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco

Khawla El Akkili is the Head of the Mohammed VI Library's Archives & Special Collections Unit, at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco. With over a decade of professional experience, she has built a career that combines librarianship, records management, and archival preservation. In her current role, which she assumed in 2023, she leads the university's efforts to safeguard its institutional memory by documenting official records, building collections, and establishing a formal archival system that ensures long-term access for future generations. Before becoming an archivist, Khawla worked for several years as a Research and Learning Services Librarian at the Mohammed VI Library. In that position, she supported academic research, collaborated closely with faculty, and designed training sessions to strengthen students' information literacy skills. Her work helped empower the university community to navigate complex information environments with confidence and critical thinking. Khawla holds a strong academic background that bridges both library and archival science as well as international studies and diplomacy. This combination of disciplines shapes her perspective on knowledge management, allowing her to see archives not only as technical repositories of records but also as vital instruments for cultural identity, historical continuity, and institutional transparency. She is committed to advancing archival practices in Morocco while contributing to the broader global conversation on access, preservation, and the ethical responsibilities of archivists.

**Kira Hopkins**

Publishing Outreach Officer at Copim Open Book Futures (Birkbeck College, University of London)

Kira Hopkins is the Scholarly Publishing Outreach Officer at Copim Open Book Futures (Birkbeck College, University of London). In this role, she implements Opening the Future, a Diamond Open Access revenue model for books, and contributes to establishing the Open Journal Collective, a collective funding initiative for OA journals. She previously worked at Ubiquity Press as a book editor, journal manager, and partner account manager, and continues to work as a freelance book editor and copyeditor. Kira completed her PhD at the University of Oxford in 2019.

**Lamis Yahia Mohamed Elkheir**

Senior lecturer at the University of Khartoum's Faculty of Pharmacy

Lamis Yahia Mohamed Elkheir is a senior lecturer at the University of Khartoum's Faculty of Pharmacy and serves both as the Co-Director of the African Reproducibility Network (AREN) and a Research Assistant at the Mycetoma Research Center. With an extensive academic foundation in medicinal chemistry, molecular medicine, and pharmacy, Lamis is dedicated to improving global health, specifically targeting neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). Originating from Sudan, she brings a unique perspective shaped by her direct experiences with the impacts of conflict and displacement on healthcare systems. This background ignites her drive to mitigate health disparities among vulnerable groups. Being an outspoken advocate for open science, Lamis works tirelessly to foster a more inclusive and equitable global scientific community with a particular focus on the needs of Africa.

**Luciana Machado**

Founder and Executive Director of the Science Integrity Alliance (SIA)

Luciana Machado is the Founder and Executive Director of the Science Integrity Alliance (SIA), where she leads a global effort to unite initiatives that promote scientific rigor, transparency, and open science practices. A Senior Research Scientist with over 20 years of experience, her work has informed clinical practice guidelines worldwide and advanced understanding of the shared mechanisms underlying noncommunicable diseases. She is deeply committed to advancing evidence-based healthcare and strengthening integrity across the research ecosystem.

**Lucy Barnes**

Senior Editor and Outreach Coordinator, Open Book Publishers

Lucy Barnes is Senior Editor and Outreach Coordinator at Open Book Publishers, a leading non-profit, scholar-led Open Access book publisher based in Cambridge, UK. She also works on outreach for the Copim Open Book Futures project and is on the board of the ScholarLed collective. She coordinates the Open Access Books Network (oabooksnetwork.org) in collaboration with OAPEN, OPERAS, and SPARC Europe, and she is on the Editorial Advisory Board for the OAPEN Open Access Books Toolkit. You can find her on Bluesky @ [alittleroad.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/alittleroad.bsky.social).

**Malak Benkirane**

PhD researcher in political science at the Centre for the Study of Crises and International Conflicts (CECRI) at UCLouvain

Malak Benkirane is a PhD researcher in political science at the Centre for the Study of Crises and International Conflicts (CECRI) at UCLouvain and a member of the Research Group on the Contemporary Arab World (GERMAC) in Belgium. She holds a dual bachelor's degree in political science from the International University of Rabat (Morocco) and Sciences Po Grenoble (France), and a master's in international relations—specializing in diplomacy and conflict resolution—from UCLouvain. She also completed advanced training at the Institute for Applied Geopolitics Studies (EGA) in Paris, focusing on the geopolitics of the Near and Middle East. Malak has contributed to academic seminars and policy workshops at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the NAVI Research Institute under the NATO Veterans Initiative. As a former intern at the Royal Higher Institute for Defence (IRSD), she researched insecurity in the Sahara-Sahel and geopolitical dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Her research centers on Maghreb foreign policy toward the Sahel conflict, Iran's African policy, and the role of the African Union in peacekeeping and interregional cooperation. Through her work, she seeks to deepen understanding of state fragility, radicalization, and regional security across Africa and the Middle East.

**Ms. Maria Cotera**

Research Workflow Solutions Manager at Digital Science and Research Solutions Inc.

Ms. Maria Cotera is a former academic librarian with a degree in library and information sciences from University of Granada, Spain. She is a Chartered Member of CILIP: the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in the United Kingdom, and a Standing Committee Member of SCORE, the scholarly communications Section of IFLA: the International Federation of Library and Information Associations and Institutions, where she has been an active member for over twenty years. Ms. Maria Cotera joined Digital Science and Research Solutions Inc. in March 2022 as Partnerships Development Manager for its repository solution Figshare, tasked with supporting open science and responsible research by developing strategic relationships which bring Figshare data and institutional repositories to universities and research institutes across Africa, the Middle East and Southern and Eastern Europe. In January 2025 she was promoted to the role of Research Workflow Solutions Manager, responsible for both Figshare and Symplectic elements for the entire EMEA Region. Prior to this, Ms. Maria Cotera worked as a library cataloguer at prestigious academic institutions in London, United Kingdom, including University College London and the London School of Economics and Political Science.

**Maryam Sayab**

Director of Communications at the Asian Council of Science Editors (ACSE)

Maryam Sayab is the Director of Communications at the Asian Council of Science Editors (ACSE) and Co-Chair of Peer Review Week. She also serves on the Editorial Committee of *Katina*, contributing to its Open Access Knowledge section. With a background rooted in research integrity and publication ethics, she actively works to advance regional conversations around responsible peer review, transparent editorial practices, and inclusive open science. Maryam is dedicated to building bridges between global publishing standards and the practical realities faced by researchers and editors, particularly across Asia and the Arab world. She also supports initiatives that strengthen community-driven collaboration, ethical scholarship, and the sustainable development of research ecosystems.

**Melissa Hagemann**

Director of the BOAI Org

Melissa Hagemann is the Director of the BOAI Org and has been at the forefront of the Access to Knowledge movement for over twenty years. She managed the Open Society Foundations' work to define Open Access through the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) and went on to support the development of the global Open Access movement. To mark the 20th anniversary of the BOAI, she spearheaded the development of new recommendations which emphasize that Open Access is not an end in itself, but a means to further ends, above all, to the equity, quality, sustainability, and usability of research. She is a member of the Board of Creative Commons and has served on numerous boards, including the Advisory Board of the Wikimedia Foundation, as well as the Steering Committee of the Open Climate Campaign.

**Menna Bahloul Emam**

Co-Founder and Project Admin Assistant for Open Science

As a Co-founder and Project Admin Assistant of the Open Science Community Egypt (OSCE). A graduate of the INOSC Incubator Program and certified in Community Building, she has solid expertise in establishing and sustaining grassroots scientific communities. Through OSCE, she supports event organization, project management, and stakeholder engagement to advance transparency, accessibility, and inclusivity in research. In parallel, Menna works



as Central Archive Supervisor at Samcrete, where she applies her background in document control and knowledge management to drive digital transformation and ensure effective information governance. Her combined experience in community building and archiving enables her to bridge structured information management with the open science movement, empowering researchers and institutions in the MENA region.



Mirjam Walpot

International Network of Open Science & Scholarship Communities

Mirjam Walpot is a board member of the International Network of Open Science & Scholarship Communities (INOSC) and a co-founding board member of the Open Science Community Amsterdam (OSCA). She currently works at Uppsala University in Sweden as a data steward at SciLifeLab, a state-of-the-art national infrastructure for life science with a strong commitment to Open Science. Previously, she served as a research and educational advisor at the central staff department of Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS), where she and her colleagues developed the institution's guidelines and recommendations for Open Science. Having recently relocated to Sweden, she continues to advance her work in promoting and supporting Open Science practices.



Dr. Mohamed Alaoui

Head of the Science Sector at the UNESCO Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen

Dr. Alaoui is a senior expert in water sciences and sustainable development. His vast multidisciplinary expertise has been developed during 30 years of professional career in the public and private sectors, international consulting and within the United Nations System. Dr. Alaoui currently serves as Head of the Science Sector at the UNESCO Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen. He is responsible for developing and implementing scientific programs that support these countries' efforts to harness science for sustainable development, in line with UNESCO's priorities and strategic objectives related to water, climate change, biodiversity, science, technology, and innovation.

**Dr. Mohamed Boufarss**

Assessment and User Experience Librarian at Zayed University

Dr. Mohamed Boufarss is an accomplished information professional, academic, and entrepreneur with over two decades of experience in library leadership, scholarly communication, and digital transformation. A holder of a Master's in Translation, a Master's of Applied Science in Library and Information Management, and a Doctoral Degree in Information Studies and Interactive Media, he currently serves as Assessment and User Experience Librarian at Zayed University. Dr Boufarss has held librarian roles at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, the ECSSR, the Petroleum Institute, the Abu Dhabi Vocational Education and Training Institute, and the House of Wisdom, where he led strategic library development and innovation. His PhD research at Tampere University focused on open access, science policy, and scholarly publishing. Published and internationally active, he champions user-centric, digitally enabled library services that promote equitable access to knowledge.

**Mohamed Owais Elahi**

Undergraduate student in Chemical and Processing Engineering at the University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST)

Mohamed Owais Elahi is a 3rd year undergraduate student in Chemical and Processing Engineering at the University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST). His research portfolio includes contributing to a QRDI-funded UREP project where he has developed an educational tool via gamification on teaching predatory journal appraisal. The research from QRDI has gained international recognition, with the opportunity to deliver a poster presentation at the IFLA WLIC 2025 conference in Kazakhstan, as well as an online publication of the poster. Previously supporting teaching initiatives as a Student Assistant within the University, Mohamed now applies his expertise to an advanced research role, focusing on the optimization of a mini hydrogen reactor through innovative 3D printing design and prototyping. His academic excellence has helped him perform with a perfect 4.0 CGPA. In addition, his work has also branched into pioneering work on the saponification of used cooking oil in a recent Zero-waste Hackathon event.

**Dr. Mohamed Elsayed Yahia Ali Elsayed Kelib**

Assistant Professor of Physics and Head of the Academic Support Department at Abu Dhabi Polytechnic

Dr. Mohamed E. Yahia is an Assistant Professor of Physics and Head of the Academic Support Department at Abu Dhabi Polytechnic. He holds a Ph.D. from Cairo University and brings over two decades of academic and research experience across the UAE, Europe, and Egypt. His work focuses on quantum plasmas, laser applications, and the integration of artificial intelligence in scientific modeling. Dr. Yahia actively contributes to international research collaborations and initiatives advancing quantum and applied sciences within the MENA region.

**Moumita Koley**

Senior Research Analyst at DST-Centre for Policy Research, IISc, Bangalore, and a Research Fellow at the Research on Research Institute (RoRI), UK.

Moumita Koley is a leading voice in science policy and metascience in India. She holds a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the Vienna University of Technology, Austria, where her research focused on synthesizing small molecules to direct the differentiation of pluripotent stem cells toward heart muscle cells. Transitioning from the lab, her interest evolved towards exploring the structure and evolution of science itself. Now, in dual positions as a Senior Research Analyst at DST-Centre for Policy Research, IISc, Bangalore, and a Research Fellow at the Research on Research Institute (RoRI), UK. Her work focuses on advancing the accessibility of scientific knowledge, fostering an efficient and responsible research ecosystem, and promoting research that responds to local needs. She has authored many research papers and newspaper articles on these topics. Moumita serves on the steering committee for DORA (representing Asia), the IAU Open Science Expert Group, is editor of the Open Knowledge section of Katina: Librarianship Elevated, and is part of the 2025 Open Access Week Advisory Committee. She worked as a consultant with the International Science Council on the Future of Scientific Publishing project from 2023–2024.

**Muhamad Muhamad Saleh Jumaa**

Full Professor at the Faculty of Business at Jumeira University, Dubai

Muhamad Muhamad Saleh Jumaa is a Full Professor at the Faculty of Business at Jumeira University, Dubai, a position he has held since August 2021. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Damascus University, awarded in 2002. Dr. Jumaa's expertise encompasses a broad range of areas including economics, finance, and accounting. His research interests prominently feature the intersection of financial technology (FinTech) and economic development, with a specific focus on the UAE. He has contributed significantly to the understanding of how technological innovations impact the banking and financial services sector, as evidenced by his article "How effective is the banking and financial services sector in the United Arab Emirates in using technological innovations" (2023). His recent publications also include work on sustainable production practices, combating money laundering, credit risk assessment through deep learning, and the impact of digitization on bank efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic. Beyond his academic roles, Dr. Jumaa has extensive professional experience, including serving as Director of Research Planning and Statistics Department at the Central Bank of Syria (2002-2006) and as a Member of the Board of Directors at Popular Credit Bank, Syria (2006-2008). His diverse background also includes vocational certificates in Sustainable Development in Practice, Introduction to Sustainable Finance, and Green Fiscal Policy, highlighting his commitment to sustainable economic frameworks.

**Nabil Ksibi**

Advises and represents ORCID in the MENA region, Africa PID Alliance's Project Lead, consults on the AfricArXiv initiative.

As an independent consultant, Nabil advises and represents ORCID in the MENA region, is the Africa PID Alliance's Project Lead, and consults on the AfricArXiv initiative. Having worked at ORCID for many years growing international adoption and creating communities of practice, Nabil brings his expertise to foster meaningful connections and drive participation in global initiatives. His focus lies in spearheading engagement strategies, driving growth in membership, and establishing strategic partnerships to enhance ORCID's impact worldwide.

**Dr. Nadia Smaili**

Khemis Miliana University

PhD in Library Science and Documentation, Khemis Miliana University, Algeria.
Head of the Information Technology and Documentation program and Manager of the Scientific Production Repository at the University of Algiers 2.

Research interests include grey literature, informal publishing, open access, open science, and open archives, with a particular focus on developing institutional repository policies in Algerian universities.

Author of several studies and active participant in international forums on these topics.

**Nicholas Muga Omino**

Program Officer at the Training Centre in Communication (TCC Africa)

Nicholas Muga Omino is an Open Science advocate and Program Officer at the Training Centre in Communication (TCC Africa), a capacity-building organization based at the University of Nairobi. He is committed to advancing the visibility, preservation, and global representation of African research, indigenous knowledge, and cultural heritage through innovative open science infrastructures. At TCC Africa, Nicholas plays a central role in driving the Africa PID Alliance (APA), an open infrastructural program designed to develop the Digital Object Container Identifier (DOCID™)—Africa's own persistent identifier. His work focuses on building partnerships with universities, research institutions and cultural heritage organizations to strengthen metadata integrity, research infrastructure, and digital sovereignty across the continent. He is passionate about equitable access to knowledge and champions for inclusive participation in Open Science to ensure that Africa's innovations and cultural contributions are visible and valued globally. His efforts continue to foster sustainable collaborations that empower African institutions and position the continent at the forefront of shaping the future of scholarly communication.

**Nicole Mulaku**

Open Science advocate and Programs Officer for Library and Consortia at the Training Centre in Communication (TCC Africa)

Nicole Mulaku is an Open Science advocate and Programs Officer for Library and Consortia at the Training Centre in Communication (TCC Africa), a capacity-building organization based at the University of Nairobi. She holds a degree in International Relations and Diplomacy and is dedicated to advancing the visibility of African research through Open Access and Open Science initiatives. At TCC Africa, Nicole plays a key role in strengthening library consortia networks, supporting research infrastructure, and contributing to data-driven projects such as the Africa PID Alliance. Her work has been instrumental in regional efforts to promote Open Access policies and improve scholarly communication across institutions in Africa. Passionate about equitable access to knowledge, Nicole champions inclusive participation in Open Science and actively fosters partnerships that elevate African research within the global scientific community.

**Nikesh Narayanan**

Information Technology Librarian at Zayed University in Dubai

Nikesh Narayanan is an Information Technology Librarian at Zayed University in Dubai, specializing in advanced library systems and the integration of emerging AI technologies to enhance discovery, access, and research support in academic libraries. His expertise spans Web-scale Discovery platforms, library service platforms (LSP/ILS), repository development, and remote access management, with hands-on experience using ALMA, EBSCO Discovery Service, Summon, and WorldShare Management System. He holds a Master of Technology in Information Systems and Management, as well as master's degrees in Library and Information Science and Business Studies. Before joining Zayed University, he served as a Systems Librarian at Khalifa University and as an EBSCO Discovery Engineer, implementing discovery solutions across South Asia. Nikesh's current work explores generative AI, agentic systems, and ORCID API integrations to streamline research workflows and advance digital scholarship, Open Access, and innovation within academic libraries.

**Pragya Chaube**

CODATA Connect, Open Science Monitoring Initiative and is co-founder of the Open Science South Asia Network (OSSAN)

Pragya Chaube is a science policy professional with research interest in open science, data governance, and equitable access to research. Her work focuses on inclusive participation in science, with a special emphasis on genomics, AI, open data and vulnerable communities. She has worked extensively at the intersection of science, technology, and society, including at the Department of Science & Technology (Government of India) – Centre for Policy Research, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru and UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research & Social Responsibility in Higher Education. She co-chairs the CODATA Connect, Open Science Monitoring Initiative and is co-founder of the Open Science South Asia Network (OSSAN). She is presently working as an Assistant Professor at UPES University, India.

**Dr. Rabab Isa Saleh Almuqahwi**

Arabic Language Programmes Coordinator & English Language Lecturer, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland- Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI-Bahrain)

Dr. Rabab Almuqahwi is the Arabic Language Programmes Coordinator and an English Language Lecturer at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI-Bahrain). She holds a Doctorate in Higher Education from the University of Liverpool, UK, specializing in Professional Education and Curriculum Development. Dr. Rabab serves as Research Lead in the Language and Culture Unit and has published research on language communication and teaching languages for specific professional purposes in both Arabic and English. Her research interests extend to emerging issues in international and GCC higher education, aiming to inform policy development aligned with global standards. She is also dedicated to promoting Arabic language research internationally through initiatives and AI-integrated sustainable projects. Dr. Rabab has actively participated in the Forum for Open Access Research in MENA, presenting in New Cairo (2022), Abu Dhabi (2023), Doha (2024), and Sharjah (2025). She serves on the Forum's Advisory Board, chairs research panels, publishes on the Open Access Research Zendo platform, and contributed to the 2023 Open Access Arabic-English Glossary of new terms.

**Raed Al Zoubi**

Library Director at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)

Raed K. Al-Zoubi serves as Library Director at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST). More than 30 years of management and technical experience have been accumulated, with over 15 years devoted to academic library services. Responsibilities have included oversight of operations, staff coordination, IT infrastructure, digital resources, budgeting, and policy development. At JUST, library services have been expanded through the adoption of technology-based solutions, with emphasis placed on research support and digital access. Work has been directed toward the development of data repositories, discovery systems, and integrated platforms that connect users with global scholarly content. Particular attention has been directed toward advancing Open Science infrastructures. Efforts have concentrated on establishing institutional data repositories, enabling discovery through interoperable systems, and implementing persistent identifiers (PIDs) to ensure reliable citation and tracking of scholarly outputs. Focus has also been placed on applying FAIR data principles, promoting metadata standardization, and exploring cloud-based services that support long-term accessibility and collaboration in research. Additional emphasis has been given to building regional collaborations, aligning practices with international frameworks, and promoting sustainable approaches that integrate global Open Science standards into local research ecosystems.

**Prof. Raha Saud Orfali**

Professor at the College of Pharmacy, King Saud University (KSU), and the Director of the Journals Unit at KSU.

Prof. Raha Saud Orfali is a Professor at the College of Pharmacy, King Saud University (KSU), and the Director of the Journals Unit at KSU. She earned her Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Natural Sciences from Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf, Germany, in 2015. With over five years of experience in administrating and managing more than 45 KSU journals across a wide range of disciplines, she has played a pivotal role in strengthening the university's publishing ecosystem. Prof. Orfali also serves as an Associate Editor and Guest Editor for several national and international journals, contributing to editorial strategy, peer-review quality, and publishing standards. Her research focuses on drug discovery and development from natural resources, and she has published more than 100 research articles in high-impact journals. She actively delivers workshops, lectures, and training sessions on scholarly publishing, research ethics, and journal management. Driven by her passion for empowering the scientific community, Prof. Orfali plays an active role in initiatives that support capacity building, research quality enhancement, and editorial leadership across the Arab region and beyond.

**Dr. Reida El Oakley**

Libyan International University

Dr. Reida El Oakley is an accomplished cardiac surgeon with decades of experience in clinical practice, research, and medical education. A graduate of Benghazi Medical School (1983), he earned his FRCS from Edinburgh (1989), MD from the University of Manchester (1995), and Accreditation in Cardiothoracic Surgery from Singapore (2000). Following advanced surgical training in London and Manchester, he has served as a Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon since 1999. He has played a pivotal role in developing and leading successful cardiac surgery programs worldwide, including at Gleneagles JPMC Heart Centre in Brunei, the Prince Salman Cardiac Centre in Riyadh, and KASH in Taif. In academia, Dr. El Oakley has served as a Lecturer in Cardiac Surgery at the University of Manchester and as Professor and later Adjunct Professor at the University of Singapore. His research, conducted in collaboration with multidisciplinary teams, has explored innovative treatments for heart disease, including muscle and cell-based therapies for myocardial repair. Beyond surgery, he maintains a strong interest in health system governance, particularly in developing sustainable funding models for healthcare delivery.

**Rodrigo Pinto**

Chief Technology Officer, Zendy

Rodrigo Pinto is the Chief Technology Officer at Zendy, where he leads the development of AI-driven solutions that make research more accessible and impactful. With a background in systems engineering and a Master's degree in Artificial Intelligence, Rodrigo specializes in software development, architecture, and natural language processing. He has led the creation of Zendy's AI companion, ZAIA, a large language model designed to enhance research discovery through summarization, keyword highlighting, and contextual understanding. His work also spans advanced techniques such as quantization, pruning, and knowledge distillation to optimize large-scale AI systems. Rodrigo's academic research focused on text-to-speech, where he introduced Fourier transforms into the FastSpeech architecture to replace the attention mixing mechanism. He is passionate about bridging software engineering and AI to create scalable, user-centric technologies.

**Rosalie Lack**

Leads SCOSS Family community activities, manages strategic initiatives, and crafts communications to strengthen connections and collaboration, SCOSS

Rosalie Lack, SCOSS Coordinator, leads SCOSS Family community activities, manages strategic initiatives, and crafts communications to strengthen connections and collaboration. She previously worked for the University of California, Los Angeles, and the California Digital Library, managing international cultural heritage projects and collaborating with institutions across California. She holds a Master's in Information Management and Systems from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Master of Studies in Law from the University of California Law, San Francisco. Rosalie has a deep personal commitment to, and passion for, providing the broadest possible access to knowledge.

**Rui da Silva**

Deputy Director of the Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research

Rui da Silva holds a Ph.D in Curriculum Studies and serves as Deputy Director of the Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research. He is also a researcher from the Center for African Studies of the University of Porto, and a Visiting Research Fellow from the School of Education and Social Work at the University of Sussex. A practitioner-researchers working at the intersection of policy, practice, and research, his work examines the dynamics between the public and the private in education in the Global South, philanthropy and education, and global education policy and the right to education.

**Prof. Dr. Salwan M. Abdulateef**

Founder for Open Science Community Iraq

Prof. Dr. Abdulateef is the Deputy Dean for Scientific Affairs and Postgraduate Studies at the University of Anbar. He is the President of the Open Science Community Iraq (OSCI), Managing Editor of the Anbar Journal of Agricultural Sciences (AJAS, indexed in Scopus) and the Journal of Life Science and Applied Research (JLSAR), as well as the Scientific and Executive Manager of the Anbar Science Journal (ASJ). His research expertise focuses on animal behavior and endocrinology. Prof. Dr. Abdulateef is an active member of the Advisory Board for the QS World University Rankings, Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Reputable Scientific Publishing,



and an Ambassador for Crossref in Asia. Over the course of his career, he has held several key academic and administrative positions, including Director of Scientific Research, Director of the Academic Journals Unit, and member of the Scientific Sobriety Committee for Research and Publications. In addition to his extensive academic contributions, Prof. Dr. Abdulateef has played a leading role in indexing more than ten scientific journals in prestigious databases such as Scopus and Clarivate, significantly enhancing their global visibility and impact. With a distinguished academic record, he has authored over forty-four scientific papers in his field, contributing substantially to advances in animal science and endocrinology.



Prof. Samir Hachani

Professor at the Institute of Library Science and Documentation,
Abul Kacem Saad Allah University (University of Algiers II)

Prof. Samir Hachani is a Professor at the Institute of Library Science and Documentation, Abul Kacem Saad Allah University (University of Algiers II). He is passionate about open access and specializes in open peer review and predatory publishing. He has attended numerous conferences and authored many papers on the subject. His main interest is cooperation in the Global South and its advantages for the Arab World and its different constituencies.



Samira Nait Ajjou

Head of the Library and Public Services Department, Moroccan
Institute for Scientific and Technical Information

Samira Nait Ajjou is the Head of the Library and Public Services Department at the Moroccan Institute for Scientific and Technical Information, part of the National Center for Scientific and Technical Research. With a master's degree in Governance and Human Resources Management from Mohammed V University in Rabat and a bachelor's degree in Information Science, she has extensive experience in library management and scientific information services. Since 2003, she has contributed to developing and modernizing research library services in Morocco. She is a founding member of the Open Science Community Morocco (OSCM) and a member of the Arab Community of Open Access (ACOA) and the Open Science Monitoring Initiative (OSMI). She has also led training workshops for researchers on the use of global scientific databases and AI tools in research.

**Sarah Lippincott**

Senior Researcher at Invest in Open Infrastructure (IOI)

Sarah Lippincott is a librarian and researcher with over a decade of experience supporting open access, digital scholarship, and scholarly communications. Sarah started her career as the founding Program Director for the Library Publishing Coalition and has consulted on projects for the Educopia Institute, Candid, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and Dryad, among other organizations. In addition to her role as Senior Researcher at Invest in Open Infrastructure (IOI), she is a Principal Investigator on the Next Generation Library Publishing (NGLP) project. She is the co-author of the FOREST Framework for Values-Driven Scholarly Communication and a lead contributor to IOI's Infra Finder tool.

**G. Sayeed Choudhury**

Associate dean for Digital Infrastructure and director of the Open Source Programs Office (OSPO) at Carnegie Mellon Libraries

G. Sayeed Choudhury is the associate dean for Digital Infrastructure and director of the Open Source Programs Office (OSPO) at Carnegie Mellon Libraries and an affiliated faculty member of the Block Center for Technology and Society as well as the Executive Director of the Open Forum for AI. He is the director of an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant for coordination of University OSPOs and a co-investigator for the Black Beyond Data Project. Choudhury is a member of the Open Source Initiative (OSI) Board and Human AI Collective Advisory Board - BGV & EAIGG. He is the Software Area Expert and member of the Steering Committee for the Research Data Alliance (RDA) - US. Choudhury was a President Obama appointee to the National Museum and Library Services Board. He was a member of the National Academies Committee on Forecasting Costs for Preserving, Archiving, and Promoting Access to Biomedical Data and a member of the National Academies Board on Research Data and Information. He was also a member of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Sustainable Digital Preservation and Access. He has testified for the Research Subcommittee of the Congressional Committee on Science, Space and Technology.

**Seteney Shami**

Founding Director-General of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS)

Seteney Shami is the founding Director-General of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS), established in 2012. A Jordanian anthropologist, she earned her BA from the American University of Beirut and her MA and PhD from the University of California, Berkeley. She taught at Yarmouk University, where she founded Jordan's first graduate anthropology department, and later directed the Population Council's Middle East Awards in Cairo. From 1999 to 2012, she was Program Director at the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in New York, leading initiatives for the Middle East, Eurasia, and InterAsia. Under her leadership, ACSS has become a key institution supporting social science research across the Arab region. Shami has held visiting professorships at major universities and conducted fieldwork in Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, and the North Caucasus. Her research explores ethnicity, nationalism, urban politics, and migration. She has authored and edited numerous influential books and publications.

**Seyed Mahdi Taheri**

Associate Professor at Allameh Tabataba'i University

Seyed Mahdi Taheri holds a PhD in Library and Information Sciences and is currently an Associate Professor at Allameh Tabataba'i University. His research focuses on knowledge organization, metadata, the semantic web and linked data, ontologies and semantic systems, knowledge and information retrieval, and networked knowledge organization systems (NKOS). He has published 14 books and over 200 articles, delivered more than 60 lectures, participated in 50 scholarly panels, and conducted 140 workshops internationally. From 2009 to 2012, he served on the administrative board of the Iranian Library and Information Science Association and was recognized as a Top Elite by the Iranian Elite Society in 2010. He recently completed the full Persian translation of Resource Description and Access (RDA), designed the RDA application profile for Iranian academic libraries, and developed a multi-ontological knowledge representation and discovery system (KDR) based on LRM, RiC, BIBFRAME, Schema.org, ONIX, and RDA. He currently chairs data management systems in the Iranian Network of Academic Libraries and developed the national academic libraries union catalog.

**Sherif Kamal**

Associate dean for Digital Infrastructure and director of the Open Source Programs Office (OSPO) at Carnegie Mellon Libraries

Sherif Kamal is a second-generation Egyptian clinical pharmacist with over 20 years of experience in pharmaceutical care for oncology centers and hospitals. He serves as Advisor to the Chairman of the EHA Board for Medication Management and Pharmacy Affairs. He holds a BS and MSc in Pharmacy and is a PhD candidate at Cairo University. He completed a visiting fellowship at St. Jude Children's Hospital (2008) and a healthcare management diploma at AUC, where he became a certified professional trainer. Founder of the Egyptian Association of Clinical Pharmacists (2010), he has led the implementation of clinical pharmacy services across Egypt and the region. Sherif is Vice President of the European Society of Oncology Pharmacy Global, Board Member of the International Accreditation of Hospital Pharmacy (ASHP), and collaborator with global pharmacy organizations to develop advanced PharmD and residency programs. His research focuses on patient safety, pharmacogenomics, and pediatric oncology.

**Sterling Jensen**

Associate professor of tolerance and co-existence at the Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities in Abu Dhabi

Sterling Jensen is an associate professor of tolerance and co-existence at the Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities in Abu Dhabi and is editorial manager for three Open Access journals with Brill: Applied Linguistics Journal, Islamic Studies Journal and Philosophical Studies Journal. He received his doctorate from King's College London and has been teaching in the UAE since 2014. Prior to his current position, Dr. Jensen taught at the UAE National Defense College (NDC) as well as the U.S. National Defense University in Washington D.C. and publishes his research within Middle East studies and the political economy of the Gulf.

**Dr. Steven Griffiths**

Professor and Vice Chancellor for Research, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Dr. Steven Griffiths is Professor and Vice Chancellor for Research at the American University of Sharjah (AUS), where he oversees research services, infrastructure, partnerships, intellectual property, and the management of research centers. Previously, he was Senior Vice President for Research and Development and Professor of Practice at Khalifa University, helping elevate it to the top research university in the UAE and among the top 200 globally. His research focuses on energy technology development and adoption within sociotechnical systems. Dr. Griffiths serves as advisor to the UAE Research Program for Rain Enhancement Science, sits on the Global Energy Prize International Award Committee and the Board of Graphene Innovations Manchester, and has contributed to UAE and Canadian innovation councils. He is Associate Editor for several Elsevier journals and a non-resident Fellow at the Payne Institute for Public Policy. He previously held leadership roles at Masdar Institute, MIT, and Light Pharma. Dr. Griffiths holds a PhD in Chemical Engineering and an MBA from MIT.

**Prof. Dr. Thafer Thabit Mohammed**

Professor of Poultry Nutrition at the University of Anbar

Prof. Dr. Thafer Thabit Mohammed, Professor of Poultry Nutrition at the University of Anbar, is recognized as one of the leading academics in the field of poultry science and poultry nutrition. He served as the Head of the Animal Production Department (2021-2023), in addition to being the Editor-in-Chief of the Anbar Journal of Agricultural Sciences indexed in Scopus, and the Chairman of the Scientific Committee of the International Collaborative Conference of Modern Agricultural Technologies (ICCMAT2023, ICCMAT2023). In addition, he is Chairman of the Scientific Committee of the Animal Production Department and Chairman of the Postgraduate Studies Committee of the Animal Production Department. He has an extensive research record comprising more than 60 scientific papers, including 42 published in journals in Scopus, with an h-Index of 14 in Scopus. He has peer-reviewed over 35 papers for prestigious international publishers such as Wiley, Elsevier, and Taylor & Francis, and is a member of the editorial boards of several international journals. In addition to his memberships in distinguished scientific societies, he possesses extensive experience in teaching and supervising undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students, has delivered numerous training courses, and participated in both local and international scientific conferences. He has also contributed to developmental projects within and beyond the university, including enhancing animal production, supporting student activities, and advancing scientific journals, reflecting his leadership role in serving scientific research and the academic community.

**Thomas Hodge**

Associate University Librarian for Technology and Technical Services at AUS

Thomas is the Associate University Librarian for Technology and Technical Services at AUS. He has worked here in Sharjah since 2007.

**Touria Slimani**

Information Specialist and Head of the Electronic Resources Consortium, Moroccan Institute for Scientific and Technical Information

Touria Slimani is an Information Specialist and Head of the Electronic Resources Consortium at the Moroccan Institute for Scientific and Technical Information, part of the National Center for Scientific and Technical Research. She holds a master's degree in International Studies and Diplomacy from Mohammed V University in Rabat, a bachelor's degree in Public Law from Mohammed I University in Oujda, and a diploma in Information Science from the School of Information Science in Rabat. With over two decades of experience in library and information management, she has led major national initiatives including the Moroccan higher education library network, the national digital repository, and the open access movement. She is a founding member of the Arab Community of Open Access (ACOA) and the Open Science Community Morocco (OSCM), and serves on several organizing and strategic committees promoting open science and access to knowledge across the Arab region.

**Tuba Akbaytürk Çanak**

Library director at Koç University

Tuba Akbaytürk Çanak has been working in academic libraries since 1998 in different capacities. She started her career as a systems librarian after graduating from Indiana University with an MLS. Currently, Tuba works as the library director at Koç University, one of the most prominent universities in Turkey. Within the scope of this position, she manages five libraries in 3 different cities in the country. She is responsible for collection development, e-resources management, library automation, resource sharing, and scholarly communication. She was involved with the Turkish National University Libraries Consortium (ANKOS) governance, and she was a former president between 2016-2018. She is an active advocator of open science in the region. She serves on various national, regional, and international advisory boards. She was the chair of the IFLA Document Delivery and Resource Sharing Standing Committee for 2023-2025 and the chair of the IFLA Division F for 2025-2027. Tuba also helped the Association of Research Libraries in Turkey (UNAK) to establish the Sustainable Libraries Standing Committee in 2022.

**Véronique Lecat**

Cataloging and Metadata Librarian at the American University of Sharjah

Véronique Lecat is the Cataloging and Metadata Librarian at the American University of Sharjah, a role she has held since 2014. She contributes to the university's copyright and repository teams, advancing open access initiatives and promoting the responsible use of content. Veronique earned her MLIS from McGill University in 2012 and previously worked at the Canadian Museum of History and the Library of Parliament.

**Dr. Victorien Dognon**

Associate Professor of Microbiology at the Polytechnic School of Abomey-Calavi, University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin

Dr. Victorien Dognon is an Associate Professor of Microbiology at the Polytechnic School of Abomey-Calavi, University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin. He holds a PhD in Environmental and Health Sciences and has extensive experience in molecular microbiology, hygiene, and public health. He leads the Research Unit in Applied Microbiology and Pharmacology of Natural Substances, where his team focuses on antimicrobial resistance and the therapeutic potential of African plant species. A recipient of multiple international research awards, Dr. Dognon has coordinated over 20 national and international projects and published more than 160 peer-reviewed articles. He also serves as Head of the International Cooperation Department at his university and is a Young Affiliate of the World Academy of Sciences (TWAS). Passionate about science capacity-building in Africa, he founded and mentors a team of young researchers advancing innovative and sustainable health solutions across the continent.

**Dr. Zeina Hojeij**

Full Professor in the College of Interdisciplinary Studies at Zayed University

Dr. Zeina Hojeij is a Full Professor in the College of Interdisciplinary Studies at Zayed University. She holds an EdD in Educational Leadership and Administration from Saint Louis University, USA. A certified peer reviewer for the UAE Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), and Quality Matters (QM), and Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA). Prof. Hojeij combines expertise in leadership and curriculum development with a strong research portfolio focusing on educational technology, leadership development, and teaching innovation. She has taught and coordinated undergraduate and graduate courses in Education and interdisciplinary studies while maintaining a ten-year commitment to teacher mentoring with the Al Jalila Foundation. Prof. Hojeij holds professional certifications including Blackboard Certified Specialist, Accredited Facilitator, Certified Online Instructor, and CELTA & CELTYL qualifications. Fluent in English, Arabic, and French, Professor Hojeij brings a global perspective to advancing educational excellence through regular presentations at international conferences and publications in peer-reviewed journals.

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Please take a moment to fill out this quick survey that will help us
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