5th Annual Forum for Open Research

19th-21st OCTOBER 2026

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Arabic Programme

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

To access an Arabic version of the Conference Booklet, please scan the QR code below.

Online Access

Conference sessions will be accessible online via Zoom. Registered delegates and speakers will receive an email before the event containing the links for each session. When joining, you will be asked to enter your name and email address before accessing the webinar.

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Welcome from the Organisers

Dear Delegates,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 5th Annual Forum for Open Research in the Arab World, on the theme: **Resilience in Research: The Role of Open Science in the Arab World.**

Bringing together leading international experts and key regional stakeholders, the Annual Forum for Open Research supports the Arab world's transition towards more accessible, sustainable and inclusive research and education models.

This is a special event this year, reflecting the serious nature of the topic. Usually we focus on a broad theme designed to encourage proactive engagement with every aspect of open science, reflecting the Annual Forum's purpose as a place for the region's open science communities to gather together, to learn from each other, to build collaborations and plan for the future. This year, however, against a backdrop of increasing geopolitical tension both within the Arab world and across the globe, we decided to focus this year's event on the challenges which we face as scientists, researchers, librarians, university administrators and policymakers – the challenges with developing and maintaining sustainable and resilient infrastructures in the face of conflict. These challenges do not simply occur during periods of crisis but extend well beyond, affecting recovery and longer-term development. And they do not merely affect the Arab region: countries in every part of the world are currently facing issues, or have in the recent past, or might in the near future.

We therefore feel it is important to address these challenges, to understand what barriers to open science exist in the specific circumstances surrounding times of

crisis and conflict, and their aftermath, and what we – as open science advocates, as regional organisations, and as scholarly communications solutions providers – can and should do to help overcome these challenges and ensure the resilience of our research communities.

Our Programme has brought together a range of voices and viewpoints from across the region to discuss these challenges, exchange insights and find solutions – and, while some of the discussions will be difficult, we hope you will all find their insights valuable and thought-provoking.

Thank you for joining us as we work together towards a more open and knowledgeable world.

Dr. Emily Choynowski
Co-Founder & Director, Forum for Open Research in MENA

Welcome from the Foundation

Dear Delegates

On behalf of the Knowledge E Foundation, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the 5th edition of the Forum for Open Research in MENA (FORM). This year we come together online, from 19 to 21 October, for a very special symposium: "Resilience in Research: The Role of Open Science in the Arab World."

This year's programme looks at open science in some of the most challenging circumstances our region faces. In these settings, open science policies and practices are often what allows scholarly and scientific communities to keep working, sharing and building knowledge. Holding the symposium fully online means colleagues can join us wherever they are, including those for whom travel is not possible.

Last year's Annual Forum, held in Sharjah, UAE, under the theme "Becoming Open: Capacity Building and Community Collaboration in the Arab World," brought together 827 delegates from more than 73 countries, in person and online. We were honoured to have the American University of Sharjah as our Host Partner, and to hear from 83 leading global experts and key regional stakeholders. The Forum for Open Research in MENA has grown into a strong community that runs activities throughout the year. Since 2021, we have been proud to convene many supporters of Open Science for the Annual Forum.

I would like to thank everyone who has supported us on this journey, and to warmly welcome those joining us for the first time. Reducing barriers to accessing

knowledge has been the Foundation's mission from day one. We are proud to have supported the Forum for Open Research in MENA since its start and to see what it has become.

The Knowledge E Foundation's initiatives have had a lasting positive impact in many countries around the world, including Cambodia, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal and across the Arab region, and we hope to reach many more.

I hope you will find the coming days inspiring and informative as we exchange ideas, explore opportunities and strengthen the partnerships that help research endure, even in the hardest of times.

Yours Sincerely

Kamran Kardan
Chairman, Knowledge E Foundation
CEO & Founder, Knowledge E

Think. **Check.** **Attend.**

The **Think.Check.Attend.** initiative was developed and launched by Knowledge E in 2017, to help raise awareness about predatory conferences.

The **Conference Checker Tool** helps researchers identify and avoid potential predators, ensuring they wont lose money, waste time, and miss out on valuable career development opportunities.

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www.thinkcheckattend.org

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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

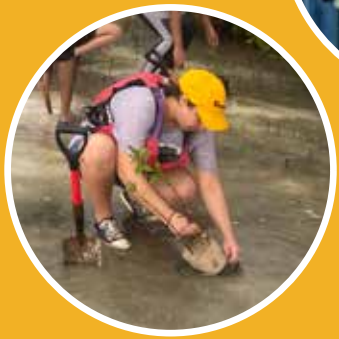
A catalyst for positive action, we work with key stakeholders to develop and implement a pragmatic programme to facilitate the transition towards more accessible, inclusive and sustainable research and education models in the Arab region.

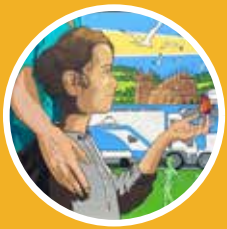
For more details, visit our website www.forumforopen.org

Knowledge E Foundation

Connecting science, education, and society to build a sustainable and open future

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.





knowledgeefoundation.org

Making open research visible, measurable and sustainable

Open research only creates value when it can be found, reused and understood. Yet many institutions still struggle to see what is being shared, who is engaging with it and what difference it makes.

The Digital Science portfolio

Dimensions

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Symplectic Elements

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Figshare

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Publish datasets, figures, code and other outputs in a repository built around FAIR principles, with DOIs, version control and clear licensing so work can be found, cited and reused.

Altmetric

Show the reach of open research

Track how research outputs are discussed in news, policy, social media and beyond, giving you evidence of engagement and impact that traditional metrics miss.

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DS_444_10/26

Become a Member of FORM

Our goal is to work as a catalyst of change, uplifting other Arab communities, institutions, and organisations to take ownership of their own development within the Open Science space. In order to achieve this, we need organisations like yours to help foster meaningful, sustainable advancements across the region through shared values, actionable insights, and collaboration.

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.

If your organisation has shown interest in FORM's activities, discourse, or mission to support the development of Open Science in the region, why not become a member and join us in working towards a more Open Arab World!

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MDPI

Agenda

Day 1 - 19 October

8:30-9:00	Welcome Ceremony & New Members Welcome
9:00-10:30	Plenary Session 1: Open Science During Times of Crisis
10:45-12:15	Plenary Session 2: Open Science During Times of Recovery
13:00-15:00	Plenary Session 3: Building Resilience With Open Science
15:15-16:45	Plenary Session 4: Long Term Strategies and Outlooks

Day 2 - 20 October

9:00-11:00	Parallel Panels 1 & 2
11:15-13:15	Parallel Panels 3 & 4
14:00-15:30	Parallel Panels 5 & 6
15:45-17:15	Plenary Round Table: Supporting Resilience in Countries Undergoing Crisis
17:15-17:30	Closing & Key Takeaways

Day 3 - 21 October

11:00-12:30	Members AGM
13:00-15:00	Workshop

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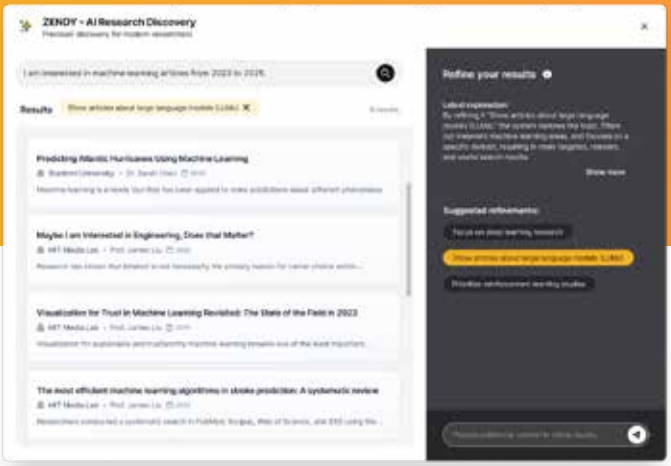

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Monday, 19th October

Day 1

08:30 - 09:00 – Welcome Ceremony
New Members Welcome
– Dr. Emily Choynowski, *Forum for Open Research MENA*

09:00 - 10:30 – Plenary Session 1: Open Science During Times of Crisis

Keeping an Open Access Journal Alive in Wartime: Lessons from the Sudan Journal of Medical Sciences
– Dr. Nazik Elmalaika, *University of Tabuk*

When Knowledge Systems Fracture: Designing Resilient Research and Knowledge Infrastructures in Times of Crisis
– Amina Itani, *Western Australian Museum*

Open Science in Times of Crisis: Documenting Scholasticide in Gaza
– Dr. Rana Dajani, *Hashemite University*

10:45 - 12:15 – Plenary Session 2: Open Science During Times of Recovery

Resilience in the Face of Crises
– Dr. Mahmoud Nasani, *Aleppo University for Scientific Affairs*

Building Research Resilience Through Open Science in Iraq: Challenges, Institutional Practices, and Lessons Learned
– Dr. Salwan M. Abdulateef, *Open Science Community Iraq (OSCI)*

Societal Polarization and Academic Freedom in the Time of Symbolic Liberalism
– Dr. Sari Hanafi, *American University of Beirut*

12:15 - 13:00 – Lunch Break

13:00 - 15:00 – Plenary Session 3: Building Resilience With Open Science

Advancing Open Science in the Arab Region: Challenges, Opportunities, and the Transformative Contribution of Earth Observation and Open Data
– Dr. Islam Abou El-Magd, *Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN)*

Strategising for Sustainability: National Open Policy Landscape in the Arab Region
– Dr. Emily Choynowski, *Forum for Open Research in MENA*

Open Educational Resources (OER) as a Tool to Enhance the Resilience and Sustainability of Public Education During Crises: An Applied Study and Developmental Vision Based on Schools in the Abu Salim Municipality
– Dr. Abdulsalam Mohammed Al-Shukri, *Ministry of Education (Libya)*

Open Science as a Resilience Strategy: Maintaining Research Autonomy During Times of Crisis
– Dr. Naeem Muhammad, *DataAI*

15:15 - 16:45 – Plenary Session 4: Long Term Strategies & Outlooks

Higher Education Resilience in the Arab Region: The Role of Open Science and AArU Strategies in Times of Crisis and Reconstruction
– Dr. Walid Salama, *Association of Arab Universities (AArU)*

When Research Infrastructure Collapses: Open Science, Academic Autonomy, and Resilience in Conflict
– Dr. Amani Ahmed, *University of Edinburgh*

Open Science and Research Resilience in Times of Crisis
– Dr. Lamis Elkheir, *African Reproducibility Network (ARN)*

Tuesday, 20th October

Day 2

09:00 - 11:00 – Parallel Panels 1 & 2

Panel 1: Regional Strategic Resilience Case Studies (Arabic)

Building Resilience and Research Independence in the Arab World Through Open Science: From the Libyan Platform to the Smart Arab Platform
– Dr. Omar Bouzid, *Libyan Centre for Electronic System Programming and Aviation Research*

From the Cost of Knowledge to the Sustainability of Knowledge: Toward a Sustainable Economic Model for Open Science in Arab Information Institutions
– Dr. Khaled Elhalaby, *Arab Institution of Knowledge Management*
– Dr. Hadeer Kamel, *Alwasl University*

Enhancing Scientific Research Resilience in the Arab World: The Role of Open Science in Making Arab Medical Knowledge Accessible and Developing AI-powered Translation Tools
– Dr. Rabab Almuqahwi, *RCSI-Bahrain*
– Dr. Kawthar Ali, *RCSI-Bahrain*

The Role of Open Scientific Publications in Research Resilience: A Diamond Open Access Journal in the Arab World
– Dr. Jamel Henchiri, *RED Laboratory & University of Gabes, Tunisia*

Panel 2: Enhancing Resilience with Research Infrastructures (English)

Beyond Open Access: Decolonizing Research Infrastructures for Resilient and Autonomous Knowledge Systems
– Favour Ayeni, *Federal University Oye-Ekiti*

Preserving Knowledge in Challenging Landscapes: Digital Preservation as a Foundation for Resilient and Autonomous Research Systems
– Dr. Gali Halevi, *CLOCKSS*

Pocket Archive: A Low-footprint Solution for Cultural Heritage at Risk
– Stefano Cossu, *Harvard University*

Building Cognitive Resilience: Challenges of Transitioning to Open Science in Transitional Environments – The Libyan Case as a Model
– Prof. Abulgasem Al Mashai, *Libyan Authority for Scientific Research (LASR)*

11:15 - 13:15 – Parallel Panels 3 & 4

Panel 3: Regional Strengths During Challenging Times (English)

From Open Research to Accessible Science: The Value of Scientific Community in Ensuring the future of a Resilient MENA Region
– Dr. Arwa Ahmed, *Scientific Arab Forum (SAF)*

Between Choice and Constraint: Family Resilience in Alternative and Interrupted Education
– Janaan Farhat, *Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research*

Open Science Against Misinformation in the Arab World
– Dr. Issam El Birch, *Ibn Tofail University*

Before Knowledge Can Be Open, It Must Survive: Archives, Metadata, and Community Custody as Research Infrastructure in Times of War
– Ghada Dimashk, *American University of Beirut*

Panel 4: Supporting Research Communities in the Arab World (English)

Power in Numbers, Protection by Design: Aligning Responsible Health-data Governance With Public Health Research Needs in MENA
– Dr. Douaa Mugahid, *Harvard School of Public Health*
– Dr. Abdalla Z. Mohamed, *United Arab Emirates University (UAEU)*

From Evidence to Action: The Role of Open and Transparent Research in Managing Human-made Crises in Developing Countries
– Nasif Chowdhury, *Anwer Khan Modern University*

Access Without Walls: Sustaining Research and Knowledge Access During Regional Disruption at RCSI Bahrain
– Dr. Bindhu Nair, *RCSI-Bahrain*
– Dr. Suchita Dsilva, *RCSI-Bahrain*

Advancing Open Science in the Arab Region: The Role of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI)
– Prof. Amany Elsayed, *Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI)*

13:15 - 14:00 – Lunch Break

14:00 - 15:30 – Parallel Panels 5 & 6

Panel 5: Building Resilient Research Cultures (Arabic)

Support from Arab Academic Institutions for Open Access Publishing and Its Role in Fostering a Culture of Open Access Among Their Faculty Members and Researchers
– Dr. Saif Al Jabiri, *Sultan Qaboos University*

Learning Without Borders: Empowering Displaced Students Through Open Educational Resources
– Joyce Aways, *Hamad Bin Khalifa University*

Open Science in Times of Crisis: Strengthening Research Resilience in the Arab Region
– Prof. Abdelrahman Farrag, *Arab Community of Open Access (ACOA)*
– Touria Slimani, *National Center for Scientific and Technical Research (CNRST)*
– Samira Nait Ajjou, *National Center for Scientific and Technical Research (CNRST)*

Panel 6: Enhancing Knowledge Equity in the Arab World (English)

From Access to Agency: Open Access Books as a Catalyst for Knowledge Equity and Research Resilience in the Arab World
– Dr. Anna Walek, *OAPEN*

Building Resilience With Open Research Network and Databases
– Dr. Cameron Neylon, *ORION*

Higher Education in Times of Conflict: Mapping the Research Terrain and the Conditions of Knowledge Production
– Dr. Rui da Silva, *Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research*

15:45 - 17:15 – Plenary Roundtable

Supporting Resilience in Countries Undergoing Crisis

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

– Bianca Kramer, Barcelona Declaration
– Nabil Ksibi, OA Switchboard
– Clare Redhead, OASPA
– Kamran Kardan, Zendy
– Rebecca Hill, Taylor & Francis
– Maria Cotera, Digital Science

17:15 - 17:30 – Closing & Key Takeaways

– Dr. Emily Choynowski, *Forum for Open Research MENA*

Wednesday, 21st October

Day 3

11:00 - 12:30 – Members AGM

13:00 - 15:00 – Workshop

Promoting Shared Understanding and Global Pathways for Open Science

Dr. Firas Al Laban
University of Potsdam

Jan Bernoth
University of Potsdam

Aligning open science services with institutional policies, strategic and governance objectives is extremely important in order to strengthen national resilience and develop international engagement opportunities. This 2-hour interactive workshop will initially identify challenges within the regional research environment. It will explore how open science policy and institutional strategies can strengthen the resilience of research in emerging research environments internationally.

The workshop activities will give participants the opportunity to:

- Discuss how researchers and academics can effectively participate in shaping open science policy and identifying institutional and regional priorities.
- Explore global policy developments for international collaboration and engagement.
- Examine how international initiatives can reduce barriers, bridge gaps and foster sustainable research collaboration.
- Co-create actionable components of an open science roadmap by synthesizing insights from showcased institutional examples.

The workshop provides a space for researchers and academics to engage in policy and strategic discussions that enable them to:

- Identify institutional needs and regional priorities for fostering open science policies.
- Engage with international initiatives and explore the benefits.
- Develop approaches for international collaboration and knowledge exchange.

The workshop is particularly aimed at:

- Researchers and academics
- Policymakers and open science advocates
- Research infrastructure providers

Participants are encouraged to bring examples and insights from their local institutions regarding open science policies, priorities and key barriers.

FORM'S 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.

Explore our available resources

Open Access Publishing

What are Pre-Prints?

Open Access Copyrights

Open Peer Review

Maximising Open Data

Open Access Policies

Building Open Science Communities

A Guide to Citizen Science

Data Management Plans

Building a Robust Open Access Policy

Transformative Agreements

Creative Commons Licenses

Open Data and FAIR Principles

Have a suggestion for a resource? Tell us about it in this survey:

Book of Abstracts

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

Al Wusul

THE ARAB JOURNAL FOR OPEN SCIENCE POLICIES & PRACTICES

Owned by the Knowledge E Foundation
Published by Knowledge E

INAUGURAL ISSUE
COMING SOON

Al Wusul **is a new bilingual journal, publishing original research and localised case studies in Arabic and English, with a focus on the role, implementation and impact of open science policies and practices in Arab higher education institutions.**

This is a Diamond Open Access journal, with no fees for publication. It is the official journal of the Annual Forum for Open Research.

Submit an article or case study to *Al Wusul* and share your insights with the region!

Speakers

Prof. Dr. Salwan M. Abdulateef

Open Science Community Iraq (OSCI)

Prof. Dr. Salwan M. Abdulateef is a Professor at the University of Anbar, Iraq, with extensive experience in academic leadership, scientific publishing, research development, and open science. He has served as Deputy Dean for Scientific Affairs and Postgraduate Studies at the College of Education for Pure Sciences, University of Anbar, and currently contributes to several institutional, regional, and international initiatives related to research quality and scholarly communication.

He is a Member of the QS Rankings Advisory Board, Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Scientific Publishing at the University of Anbar, and a Crossref Ambassador for Asia. He also serves as a Board Member of the International Network of Open Science & Scholarship Communities (INOSC) and as President of Open Science Community Iraq (OSCI).

Through these roles, Prof. Abdulateef has been actively involved in promoting open science, improving scholarly publishing practices, strengthening research metadata and persistent identifier adoption, supporting the international visibility of academic journals, and advancing collaboration between Iraqi researchers and the wider global research community.

His broader interests include open science policy, research resilience, scholarly communication, research evaluation, persistent identifiers, metadata quality, journal development, and the integration of Iraqi and Arab research institutions into the global scholarly ecosystem.

Dr. Amani Ahmed

University of Edinburgh

Dr. Amani Ahmed is a researcher, electrical engineer, and higher education internationalisation specialist based in Edinburgh, working at the intersection of entrepreneurship, artificial intelligence, global partnerships, and higher education in conflict-affected contexts. With around 20 years of experience in higher education internationalisation, she has developed and managed international partnerships involving universities across Europe, the UK, and Palestine. Her work focuses on building meaningful academic collaborations, strengthening institutional resilience, and advancing equitable international engagement.

Arwa Ahmed

Scientific Arab Forum (SAF)

Arwa Ahmed is Editor-in-Chief of the Scientific Arab Forum (SAF), where she leads the organisation's editorial activities and initiatives to make scientific research more accessible to Arabic-speaking communities. She joined SAF as an editor in 2020 and subsequently served as Life Sciences Editor for nearly two years before becoming Editor-in-Chief. During her time at SAF, she has organised science-writing competitions in collaboration with the Arab Science Journalism Forum and, most recently, led an Alzheimer's Research UK-funded campaign to raise awareness of dementia in the Arab world.

Alongside her work with SAF, Arwa is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Oxford, where she investigates mechanisms of DNA repair and genome instability in response to targeted cancer therapies. She obtained her PhD from the University of Sheffield, studying the role of DNA repair in maintaining genome integrity and regulating transcription under oxidative stress.

Her experience as both a researcher and science communicator informs her interest in bridging the gap between scientific research and Arabic-speaking communities, strengthening engagement with science, and supporting connections between researchers across the Arab world and its wider scientific community.

Samira Nait Ajjou

National Center for Scientific and Technical Research (CNRST)

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.

Dr. Kawthar Ali

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI)

Dr. Kawthar Ali is a physician and researcher specializing in medical education and health communication, and a graduate of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain). Her research interests focus on the use of the Arabic language in healthcare, medical translation and interpreting, artificial intelligence, medical education, and the development of technological solutions to facilitate communication between patients and healthcare providers. She has participated in various research projects concerning medical communication in Arabic, AI-supported translation tools, and student engagement in the development of medical education. Additionally, she has presented research on medical translation and artificial intelligence at regional academic conferences and aims to develop more comprehensive and accessible knowledge and technical resources for researchers and Arabic-speaking communities.

Dr. Saif AlJabri

Sultan Qaboos University

Dr. Saif AlJabri, Director of the Information Center at the College of Economics and Political Science, holds a PhD in Economic Sciences from the State University of Management in Moscow, Russian Federation (2004), and a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of North Carolina, USA (1997). He earned his Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from Sultan Qaboos University in 1993.

Dr. AlJabri is a member of numerous local, regional, and international professional associations. He is a founding member and former Vice President of the Oman Library Association; a member of the Executive Council of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI) and its representative in the Sultanate of Oman; a board member and former President of the Special Libraries Association (Arabian Gulf Chapter); a member of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and Chair of its Education and Training Section; a member of the Islamic Manuscript Association; and a founding member and Executive Council member of the Gulf Information Literacy Network.

In addition to teaching in the Department of Information Studies and the Department of Business Communication—and conducting training courses in libraries, records management, electronic archiving, and information management—Dr. AlJabri has participated in over 95 local, regional, and international conferences and seminars, primarily presenting research papers. He has also published more than 45 scholarly articles and research papers in his field of specialization in Arabic, English, and Russian.

Dr. Rabab Almuqahwi

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI)

Dr. Rabab Almuqahwi is the Arabic Language Program Coordinator and a lecturer in Arabic and English at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain). She is dedicated to enhancing the quality of education and research practices within higher education institutions. Her academic interests focus on medical education, institutional development, and student-faculty collaboration, as well as the integration of modern technology and innovation to support teaching and research. She has participated in academic and research projects aimed at promoting evidence-based educational practices, advancing health literacy, and fostering research collaboration within local and regional contexts. Additionally, she is committed to expanding access to scientific knowledge and developing research initiatives that address educational and health-related needs in the Arab world.

Joyce Aways

Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Joyce Aways is an Information Literacy (IL) Librarian at Hamad Bin Khalifa University Library in Qatar with 18 years of experience. She has worked at the American University of Beirut Libraries in Lebanon for 14 years before joining HBKU in 2022. Since then, she has established the IL program at HBKU while offering various types of research support to HBKU members. Joyce is currently a Ph.D. student in Library and Information Science at Simmons University in Boston. Her research interests focus on information seeking behavior, information literacy and open educational resources. She holds a MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh.

Favour Ayeni

Federal University Oye-Ekiti

Favour Ayeni is a fresh Geology graduate from the Federal University Oye-Ekiti with a strong interest in geoscience, petroleum exploration, and subsurface characterization. Her academic training has developed my skills in geological interpretation, research, data analysis, and scientific problem-solving. She has also gained leadership and collaboration experience through my involvement in the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) and student academic activities. In addition to geoscience, she has developed skills in software development and digital technologies, strengthening my ability to approach complex problems from interdisciplinary perspectives. She is passionate about continuous learning, innovation, and contributing meaningfully to the energy and technology sectors.

Jan Bernoth

University of Potsdam

Jan Bernoth, M.Sc., is a computer scientist working as a researcher, team lead, and PhD candidate at the chair of Prof. Dr. Ulrike Lucke at the University of Potsdam. Guided primarily by his work in NFDIxCS, his research focuses on supporting research data and software management by designing the necessary architecture behind the Research Data Management Container, in collaboration with the consortium and the computer science community. His PhD research explores how to visualize research topics in non-scientific media to support scientists in their science communication efforts.

Dr. Issam El Birch

Ibn Tofail University

Dr. Issam El Birch is a researcher and lecturer whose work lies at the intersection of communication, higher education, employability, and digital transformation. His research explores issues related to open science, science communication, soft skills, artificial intelligence in education, research employability, migration and identity, and the communication of extremism and radicalization. He is particularly interested in how universities can strengthen the societal impact of research by promoting innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the development of future-ready human skills. In addition to his academic research, he coaches doctoral candidates and early-career researchers in their transition from academia to industry, with a focus on translating scientific expertise into societal and business value. He has presented his work at international conferences and collaborates on projects that advance research capacity, knowledge transfer, and sustainable development in the Arab region.

Dr. Omar Bouzid

Libyan Centre for Electronic System Programming and Aviation Research

Dr. Omar Bouzid is an Associate Professor of Computer Engineering and a faculty member at the Libyan Academy for Postgraduate Studies in Tripoli, Libya.

He holds a PhD in Computer Engineering from Newcastle University (UK) and a Master's degree in Information Technology from Clausthal University of Technology (Germany). He possesses extensive academic and research experience in computer engineering, networking, artificial intelligence, and scientific research, having authored numerous research papers, scientific publications, and specialized books.

He is a recognized Libyan expert in Open Science for UNESCO and has served on various scientific and national committees related to Open Science, scientific research, and technology. He has also contributed to initiatives aimed at advancing scientific research and capacity building, including the establishment of the Libya Scientific Excellence Award and the training and professional development of researchers and faculty members.

His research and professional interests focus, in part, on leveraging digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and Open Science to foster research communication and partnerships, as well as to develop scientific research infrastructure.

Nasif Chowdhury

Anwer Khan Modern University

Nasif Chowdhury is a talented academic professional and researcher, distinguished by his expertise spanning advanced materials science, textile engineering, and nanotechnology. He is currently advancing his academic career as a Ph.D. research fellow at the European University Cyprus, building upon a strong academic base that includes a Master Degree in Textile Technology from Mawlana Bhasani University, Bangladesh. His commitment to the academic field is evidenced by his experience serving as a reviewer and editorial board member for several journals, and his role as a committee member for the International Conference on 3D Printing and Additive Manufacturing. Mr. Chowdhury is a prolific author, having published more than 15 papers in reputed journals and international conferences, with his Google Scholar profile recording an H-index of 4 and 26 citations. Beyond his academic pursuits, Mr. Chowdhury has significant professional experience as an Assistant Professor at Anwer Khan Modern University and City University of Bangladesh. This unique blend of technical research skills and professional experience positions him as a versatile expert in his field.

Stefano Cossu

Harvard University

Stefano Cossu has been working with technologies and communities related to digital archives and digital preservation in the cultural heritage sector since 2012. He has designed, built, and overseen large-scale systems for the Art Institute of Chicago, the Getty Trust, the Harvard University Library, and the US Library of Congress. He has been working pro bono on Pocket Archive since 2025.

Maria Cotera

Digital Science

Maria Cotera is a former academic librarian with a library degree from University of Granada, Spain. She is an Open Science advocate and a Chartered Member of CILIP, the library and information professionals association in the UK, where she lives.

Maria serves as a Standing Committee Member of SCORE, the scholarly communications Section of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). She has been active at IFLA for over twenty years. She joined Figshare at Digital Science in March 2022 and currently works as the Research Workflow Solutions Manager for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, supporting academic institutions to adopt solutions supporting open science practices.

Prof. Rana Dajani

Hashemite University

Professor Rana Dajani's area of expertise is epigenetics and biomarkers of trauma among refugees. Through her leadership, she has introduced national and regional stem cell laws and presided over numerous scientific boards and United Nations councils, most recently as the President of the Society for the Advancement of Science and Technology in the Arab World. She is a tireless supporter of building indigenous research capabilities in the developing world and creating a mentoring program to support women scholars in STEM that was recognized by the National Academy of Sciences. Her 2018 book Five Scarves: Doing the Impossible — If We Can Reverse Cell Fate, Why Can't We Redefine Success? challenged global policy makers to address ongoing inequities in education and employment, while also putting forward a new paradigm for measuring success in an evolving world. Prof. Dajani has also been recognized as a Fulbright fellow, Eisenhower fellow and Ashoka fellow and by joining the list of the 100 most influential Arab Women and receiving the Jacobs social entrepreneur award. Nansen UNHCR refugee award, and the Schwab Social Entrepreneur Award.

Ghada Dimashk

American University of Beirut

Ghada Dimashk is an experienced Archivist and Metadata Librarian specializing in Middle Eastern heritage, with a focus on preserving, cataloging, and providing access to the cultural heritage of Lebanon and Palestine. Project Management Team Member of the Fighting Erasure Project at the American University of Beirut (AUB). Former Librarian and Archivist at the Palestine Land Studies Center (PLSC) at AUB, where she led initiatives to establish precise cataloging and archival systems. Her work includes developing structured policies and a specialized thesaurus focused on Palestinian heritage, as well as leading the archiving of social media documentation of the wars on Gaza and Lebanon—recognized as the first real-time social media archiving project conducted during an ongoing war. She brings over a decade of experience in cataloging and implementing RDA standards at the Lebanese National Library. She is currently the Arabic Resources Specialist in Research and Instruction Services at Jafet Library, AUB.

Dr. Suchita Dsilva

RCSI Medical University of Bahrain

Dr. Suchita Dsilva is a Librarian specializing in teaching, learning and research support at RCSI Medical University of Bahrain, with over 18 years of experience in academic librarianship. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology, a Bachelor and Master of Library and Information Science, and a PhD in Library and Information Science. She also completed the Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (CLTHE) in 2026. Her work focuses on information literacy, evidence-based practice, systematic reviews, research support and curriculum-integrated teaching for medical and nursing students. She is actively involved in educational research, scholarly publishing and collaborative research projects, with particular interests in open access, responsible AI and evidence-informed teaching.

Islam Abou El-Magd

Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN)

Islam Abou El-Magd holds a Master's degree in Environmental Earth Sciences and PhD in Environmental Engineering from the University of Southampton, UK. He has nearly 35 years experience between academia, research, and industry. In academia, he has nearly 15 years teaching and training in various universities including Al Ain University - United Arab Emirates; Southampton university - UK; and both Ain Shams and Suez Universities - Egypt. Teaching includes courses in GIS, Remote Sensing, Environment, and climate changes and other related courses to remote sensing applications in various thematic areas. Prof. Abou El-Magd has supervised nearly 30 Postgraduate students in MScs and PhDs, in various national and international universities.

Prof. Dr. Khaled Mohamed Imam Al-Halabi

Arab Foundation for Knowledge Management

Professor of Library and Information Science at the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University; Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Foundation for Knowledge Management; and Editor-in-Chief of the *Arab International Journal of Information Technology and Data*. He previously served as President of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI) and is a member of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), as well as various other Arab and international professional associations and organizations.

He possesses extensive academic and professional experience in the fields of library and information science, knowledge management, and digital transformation. His recent interests focus on artificial intelligence and its applications in libraries, the future of information services, and the evolving roles of information professionals and users within smart environments. His scholarly portfolio comprises 36 works—including research papers, studies, books, and book chapters—and he has participated in the examination and supervision of numerous master's and doctoral theses.

He is actively involved in Arab and international professional conferences and events, including IFLA conferences, with current interests centering on the future of libraries in the era of artificial intelligence and intelligent agents.

Lamis Elkheir

African Reproducibility Network (ARN)

Lamis Elkheir is a Sudanese pharmaceutical chemist, researcher, and lecturer at the University of Khartoum. She is the Director of Training & Resource Development at the African Reproducibility Network (AREN), where she leads the development of open science training programmes and resources and supports research communities and capacity-building initiatives across Africa.

Her work in open science focuses on reproducibility, research capacity building, equitable participation, and strengthening research communities. She also serves as Co-Chair of Working Group 2 of the Open Science Monitoring Initiative (OSMI) and contributes to international initiatives advancing open and responsible research practices.

As a researcher displaced by the conflict in Sudan, Lamis has experienced first-hand the challenges that crisis and institutional disruption can create for researchers. This experience, alongside her work with research communities across Africa, informs her interest in how open science, networks, and distributed approaches to training and collaboration can support researchers and research systems during periods of crisis and recovery.

Prof. Nazik Elmalaika Obaid Seid Ahmed Husain

University of Tabuk

Prof. Nazik Elmalaika Obaid Seid Ahmed Husain is Professor of Pathology and a Consultant Histopathologist with 27 years in academic medicine. She has been a faculty member at Omdurman Islamic University (OIU), Sudan, since 1999. There she directs the Medical Education Development Center and heads the Department of Medical Education. She recently joined the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, as Professor of Pathology and Assistant Vice Dean for Graduate Studies, Scientific Research and Quality. Since 2022 she has been Editor-in-Chief of the Sudan Journal of Medical Sciences (SJMS), the official publication of OIU's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, after ten years as Assistant Editor-in-Chief. She has led the journal through the armed conflict in Sudan, and during this period SJMS was integrated into Scopus and other major databases. She has written on keeping research rigorous and medical education going in crisis-affected settings, including a 2025 study in BMC Medical Education on how a medical school adapted during Sudan's armed conflict. Her research covers cancer pathology, HPV biomarkers and molecular medicine in Sudanese populations. She holds an MD and a PhD in Histopathology, an MSc in Molecular Medicine and a Master of Health Professions Education.

Prof. Amany Mohamed Elsayed

Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI)

Professor at Information Science Department, Faculty of Arts, Capital University (Formerly Helwan University), Deputy General Coordinator of the Government Excellence Award at the Capital University, former Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and former Head of Information Science Department. Expert on the Arabic Language and Artificial Intelligence Committee at the Academy of Arabic Language in Cairo (October 2026 -).

- Published several scientific articles in Arabic and English in indexed scientific journals with an impact factor (H-index 5).
- Published 10 books in the field of library and information science.
- Has win 9 scientific awards (Recently Naseej Academy Award for Scientific Excellence 2025).
- Member of the Scientific Committee for the Promotion of Professors and Associate Professors (In Archives and Libraries), 14th Session, September 2022 – Present, Supreme Council of Universities, Ministry of Higher Education, Egypt.
- Reviewer for several Arabic and international conferences and journals.
- Member of the Editorial Board of the IFLA Journal, 2018 – Present.

Janaan Farhat

Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research

Janaan Farhat is a Research Associate at the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research, where her work focuses on education, social policy, and evidence-informed research in the UAE and wider GCC. Her research interests include educational access and inclusion, non-state education, youth employment, AI and the future of work, student well-being, and the relationship between education and socioeconomic development. She has contributed to qualitative and quantitative research projects, policy studies, strategic reports, and academic publications, and has presented research at regional and international conferences. Her work is particularly concerned with translating empirical evidence into policy-relevant insights and strengthening the connection between research, program design, and implementation. Janaan previously held research roles in humanitarian policy and digital humanities in the Netherlands. She holds a BA in International Studies from Leiden University, where she specialized in the Middle East and examined education and the UAE's transition toward a knowledge-based economy.

Dr. Abdelrahman Farrag

Arab Community of Open Access (ACOA)

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.

Dr. Gali Halevi

CLOCKSS

Dr. Gali Halevi is a librarian, information scientist, and scholarly communications expert with more than two decades of experience in scientific publishing, research evaluation, digital preservation, and open science. She is Collections Director at CLOCKSS, where she works with publishers and research libraries to preserve the scholarly record and expand participation in sustainable digital preservation.

Previously, Dr. Halevi served as Director of the Institute for Scientific Information at Clarivate, where she led research initiatives and scientific collaborations. She also held leadership and academic positions at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, where she worked on library services, open access, and faculty development, and previously worked with Elsevier on academic customer engagement and research metrics.

Sari Hanafi

American University of Beirut

Sari Hanafi is currently a Professor of Sociology, Director of Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies, and Chair of the Islamic Studies program at the American University of Beirut. He is the President of the International Sociological Association. Recently he created the “Portal for Social impact of scientific research in/on the Arab World” (Athar). He was the Vice President of the board of the Arab Council of Social Science. He is as well editor of Idafat: the Arab Journal of Sociology (Arabic) Among his recent books are: The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of the Middle East, Knowledge Production in the Arab World: The Impossible Promise. (with R. Arvanitis). He is the winner of 2014 Abdelhamid Shouman Award and 2015 Kuwait Award for social science. In 2019, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate (Doctor Honoris Causa) of the National University of San Marcos (the first and the leading university in Lima- Peru – established in 1551).

Jamel Eddine Henchiri

RED Laboratory & University of Gabes, Tunisia

Jamel Eddine Henchiri is a university professor based in Gabès, Tunisia. Specializing in financial markets, he directs the RED (Research, Enterprise, and Decisions) research laboratory, where he currently supervises around ten doctoral theses. He teaches finance within the "Financial Risk Management" research master's program—which he also directs—at the Higher Institute of Management of Gabès (ISGG) and has developed online courses for the Virtual University of Tunis. Jamel has published numerous scientific articles, edited several collective volumes, and serves on various scientific committees in Tunisia and abroad. Furthermore, he edits the Journal of Academic Finance. Since 2006, he has organized the annual CSIFA conference on finance and insurance. He is also the founder of the "Territorial Governance and Communication" professional master's program at ISET Djerba. In addition, he chairs the board of directors of Ulysse FM radio, which he founded in 2012. He is the president of the ISGG Faculty Association and a founding vice-president of the APREV association. Previously, Jamel worked as a consultant for the Tunisian Financial Market Council, a credit analyst at a bank in Tunis, and an executive at a portfolio management firm in Paris, France.

Amina Itani

Western Australian Museum

Amina Itani is a librarian and research information professional with more than 30 years of experience across academic and specialist libraries, scholarly publishing, electronic resources and research systems in Australia and the Middle East. She is currently Librarian at the Western Australian Museum and previously served as Expert E-Resources Librarian at United Arab Emirates University, where her work encompassed research systems, repositories, open access, research analytics and scholarly communication. Her career also includes roles with international information and publishing organisations, together with professional contributions to regional and international initiatives in open research, electronic theses and dissertations, and research knowledge infrastructure.

Dr. Hadeer Kamel

Al Wasl University

Dr. Hadeer Kamel is an Assistant Professor of Library and Information Science at Al Wasl University, where she also serves as Head of the University Library in Dubai. She holds an AI Expert Certification from IBM and earned her PhD in Arts with highest honors in 2020 from the Department of Libraries, Archives, and Information Technology at Cairo University, where she also taught as a Lecturer in Information Science.

Since October 2021, she has been the Managing Editor of the Arab International Journal of Information and Data Technology and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Knowledge Management Society. Her research interests focus on artificial intelligence, technical operations in libraries, and the integration of emerging technologies into the development of information institutions, as well as open science and open access policies.

Dr. Kamel has presented research papers at numerous conferences and workshops in Egypt and across the Arab world, consistently working to bridge academic scholarship with practical applications that advance the future of libraries and information centers.

Kamran Kardan

Knowledge E Foundation

Kamran Kardan is the Founder & CEO of Knowledge E since 2012, and plays an active role as Founder & Chairman in the Knowledge E Foundation. The Foundation supports education and research, particularly in developing nations and grew out of his lifelong commitment to community development. Its initiatives have reached countries including Cambodia, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Senegal, as well as the wider Arab region, and it has supported the Forum for Open Research in MENA since it began in 2021.

Kamran has more than 20 years of experience in publishing and higher education, working closely with leading consortia, libraries, ministries, hospitals, research centres and educational institutions. In 2019, he launched Zendy into a an AI-powered research library that has served close to a million users by removing barriers to scholarly content, research and AI tools. Zendy has now grown into an AI solutions suite specifically designed for trusted discovery and engagement with research.

Bianca Kramer

Barcelona Declaration

Bianca Kramer is Executive Director of the Barcelona Declaration on Open Research Information, an initiative she helped organize and coordinate. She combines this with her role as independent advisor, research analyst and facilitator at Sesame Open Science, with a focus on open science, open metadata and open infrastructure. She has a background in research communication and libraries, having worked as scholarly communication/open science librarian at Utrecht University Library for 15 years. She has been on the board of FORCE11 and on various advisory boards including for Crossref and EuropePMC. Recently, she helped set up ORION-DBs, an initiative to make open scholarly metadata available for analysis through cloud infrastructure.

Nabil Aziz Ksibi

Barcelona Declaration

Nabil Aziz Ksibi is a specialist in Open Science, research infrastructures, and scholarly communication, with more than 15 years of experience supporting research communities and developing digital infrastructures that enable and strengthen research.

An engineer by training, Nabil graduated from the National Engineering School of Monastir (ENIM) in Energy Engineering. He subsequently developed his career in the fields of research infrastructures, Open Science, Persistent Identifiers (PIDs), research data management, and research community development.

Nabil has extensive experience working with international research and scholarly infrastructure organisations. He previously served as Engagement Lead – Global Direct Members at ORCID, where he worked with research institutions and organisations around the world to advance the adoption and effective use of persistent identifiers and researcher identities. He now works as an independent consultant and advisor, with a particular focus on Africa and the MENA region.

His expertise includes Open Research infrastructures, Persistent Identifiers (ORCID, DOI, ROR and related infrastructures), FAIR data, institutional repositories, scholarly communication, research information systems, interoperability, and strategies for PID adoption. He also provides training and strategic advice to organisations seeking to develop sustainable Open Science and digital research infrastructure strategies.

Nabil is a co-founder of the Africa PID Alliance, an initiative focused on strengthening the adoption and development of persistent identifier infrastructures across Africa. He is also involved in NARIMA (Northern African Research & Innovation Management Association), a regional initiative supporting capacity development in research and innovation management across North Africa.

In 2025, Nabil founded Nexus Synergy, a company specialising in digital infrastructure, Open Science, consulting, and technology solutions for the research and innovation ecosystem. Through Nexus Synergy, he supports organisations in designing and implementing open and interoperable research infrastructures, including PID ecosystems, institutional repositories, scholarly publishing systems, and research information infrastructures.

His work also includes the development of DOCiD (Digital Object Container Identifier), an approach aimed at improving the identification, organisation, and interconnection of digital resources, with potential applications ranging from cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge to patents and African research data.

Nabil is actively engaged in international Open Science networks and collaborates with research and education networks, international organisations, PID infrastructure providers, universities, research institutions, and funding organisations. His work sits at the intersection of technology, research, international cooperation, and capacity development, with a particular focus on building more open, interconnected, inclusive, and sustainable research infrastructures for Africa and the MENA region.

Firas Al Laban

University of Potsdam

Firas Al Laban is an academic and researcher with a robust background in Computer Science and Mathematics. He holds a Ph.D. in Knowledge Management Systems and has international experience in higher education, including teaching diverse subjects, supervising student research, and contributing to international conferences and peer-reviewed publications. He currently works as a scientific staff member at the University of Potsdam, focusing on research data and software management within the NFDIxCS project. His work is driven by a deep commitment to innovation, open science, and the advancement of technology and education through research-based and sustainable practices.

Dr. Abdalla Z. Mohamed

United Arab Emirates University

Dr. Abdalla Z. Mohamed is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Cognitive Sciences at the United Arab Emirates University and Director of the Brain Imaging and Mental Health (BIMH) Lab. His research focuses on multimodal neuroimaging, clinical neuroscience, and brain health, with particular interest in traumatic brain injury, PTSD, sleep, cognition, and mental health. His work integrates MRI, PET, behavioral assessments, and computational methods to identify brain-based markers that support early detection, disease monitoring, and precision medicine. He is actively involved in international research collaborations, including the International Initiative for Traumatic Brain Injury Research (InTBIR) and the ENIGMA Consortium. Dr. Mohamed is also committed to advancing open, reproducible, and population-relevant neuroscience research, particularly for underrepresented populations in the MENA region.

Douaa Mugahid

Harvard School of Public Health

Douaa Mugahid, PhD is a systems biologist by training and currently a Research Scientist and faculty member at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health which she joined after the COVID19 pandemic revealed the importance of better digital infrastructure, more interdisciplinary research, and public-private partnerships for local and global pandemic preparedness. In her current role, she wears multiple hats, among which is serving as the Data Officer for a large NIH-funded consortium of international, interdisciplinary researchers focused on leveraging multi-modal data from multiple species to identifying principled therapeutic and diagnostic strategies for adults at risk of TB – the world's deadliest infectious disease by number of lives claimed. She also manages a partnership with Siemens Healthineers focused on using digitally-connected diagnostics for public health monitoring and improving health system performance. She is a part-time Senior Consultant at the Brussels-based boutique consulting firm myEUconsulting, where she helps high-risk but promising early-stage Biotech/Techbio/Digital Health startups obtain EU funding.

Dr. Naeem Muhammad

DataAI

Dr. Naeem Muhammad is the Founder of DataAI.be, a Brussels-based consultancy specializing in Open Science, Research Data Management (RDM), FAIR data, and AI-enabled research support. With nearly two decades of experience, including leadership roles at KU Leuven, he advises government bodies, universities, research organizations, and international projects across Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. He co-chairs the LIBER RDM Working Group and contributes to major initiatives via ELIXIR and the Research Data Alliance. Bridging policy and technical execution, Naeem speaks globally on Open Science, data stewardship, FAIR data, and responsible AI governance in research. Explore his full portfolio.

Dr. Bindhu Nair

RCSI Medical University of Bahrain

Dr. Bindhu Nair is Head of Library Services and Research Support Librarian at RCSI Medical University of Bahrain, with over 24 years of experience in academic and health sciences librarianship. She holds a PhD in Library and Information Science and specialises in research support, scholarly communication, systematic review services, AI-enabled library services, and open science. Dr Nair leads initiatives exploring the transformative role of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies in academic libraries and research. She is an active speaker on library innovation, research resilience, AI, and the future of scholarly communication.

Dr. Mahmoud Nasani

Aleppo University for Academic Affairs

Dr. Mahmoud Nasani is the Vice President of Aleppo University for Academic Affairs and the Former Dean the Faculty of Dentistry

Cameron Neylon

ORION

Cameron Neylon is and researcher and advocate for positive change in knowledge production. Cameron's work has focused on how research institutions function and can be improved, and how to make the internet more effective as a tool for scholarship. He writes and speaks regularly on scholarly communication, the design of web based tools for research, and the need for policy and cultural change within and around the research community.

From a start as a biomedical scientist Cameron has moved through roles in research infrastructures and publishing, as the first Director of Advocacy at PLOS. From 2015-2024 Cameron was Professor of Research Communication at the Centre for Culture and Technology at Curtin University where he was co-lead on the Curtin Open Knowledge Initiative.

Claire Redhead

OASPA

Claire Redhead is Executive Director of OASPA, a mission-driven foundation representing a diverse network of organisations engaged in open scholarship, including open access books, journals, infrastructures and service providers. Claire has worked for over 25 years in scholarly publishing, in recent years focused on open access at OASPA, and leading the organisation since 2016. Claire sits on a number of working groups and committees to represent the views of the open access publishing community and is Chair of the OA Switchboard.

Prof. Walid A. Salameh

Association of Arab Universities (AArU)

Prof. Walid A. Salameh is a distinguished academic and thought leader in the fields of Computer Engineering and Artificial Intelligence. He serves as a professor at Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT) and is a senior consultant to both the Association of Arab Universities (AArU) and the Arab Association for Digital Economy. Prof. Salameh has held significant leadership positions at PSUT, including Vice President, Dean of Engineering & IT school at PSUT, and Dean of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies. His extensive teaching and research experience include serving as an adjunct professor at the New York Institute of Technology and as a visiting professor at prominent institutions such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and (ASU). Prof. Salameh has led numerous national and regional ICT committees and has coordinated various EU and international projects executed at several places. With over 70 published scientific papers and five authored books, Prof. Salameh's research portfolio is vast and diverse. His current research interests include cybersecurity, data science, artificial intelligence, machine learning, natural language processing (NLP), data mining, artificial neural networks, and image and speech recognition, as well as computer networks and security.

Rui da Silva

Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research

Rui da Silva is the Director of Research and Grants at Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research, a researcher from the Centre for Research and Intervention in Education (CIIE) at the University of Porto, and a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Sussex. Rui worked as a researcher, consultant, and education specialist on projects in Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Timor-Leste, and South Sudan. As a practitioner-researcher 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.

Touria Slimani

National Center for Scientific and Technical Research (CNRST)

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.

Dr. Anna Walek

OAPEN

Dr. Anna Walek is the Head of Technology at OAPEN and DOAB, Former President of IATUL, and is an Open Science Infrastructure Leader. As Head of Technology (CTO) for OAPEN and the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB), she leads the development of trusted open infrastructure supporting scholarly communication and equitable access to knowledge worldwide. Her work sits at the intersection of technology, open science, research policy, scholarly communication, and digital transformation. I am particularly interested in how community-governed infrastructures, trusted content, high-quality metadata, and emerging technologies can strengthen the future of knowledge ecosystems. Throughout her career, she has combined leadership in academic libraries, research, policy development, and international collaboration. Dr. Walek has also served as President of IATUL (International Association of University Libraries), contributed to Open Science and EOSC initiatives, and participated in numerous international advisory and governance bodies.

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