

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



SHEIKH SAUD BIN SAQR AL QASIMI
FOUNDATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF CULTURE &
KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT



الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الثقافة
وتنمية المعرفة

مدينة

الكتاب

القراءة

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“No matter how many buildings, foundations, schools and hospitals we build, or how many bridges we raise, all these are material entities. The real spirit behind the progress is the human spirit, the able man with his intellect and capabilities.”

- Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Year of Zayed

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Managing Director's Message



Dr. Mohamed Abdulatif Khalifa
Managing Director

As we reflect on the Al Qasimi Foundation's ninth year of research and outreach, we are grateful for the support and collaborative relationships that have formed the basis of our success as an inclusive and accessible organization. The Foundation team continues to embody commitment to the people of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates, partnering with our stakeholders and peers to bolster education and community development efforts in the region.

One of the primary ways the Foundation has supported the sustainable growth of these efforts is through the research initiatives we supported over the past year. Talented visiting scholars, dynamic research collaborations, and a commitment to bilingual open-access publishing practices have led to an influential collection of world-class studies and publications in 2018, resulting in practical policy recommendations that are both robust and relevant to Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates. These important contributions to education, philanthropy, and public policy issues facing the region have continued to expand the Foundation's reputation and reach, influencing local and international discussions to ensure informed, contextualized decision making and agenda setting.

In addition, the Foundation spent 2018 collaborating and listening to our local and international partners and stakeholders to better apply this compelling research to our capacity development programs and community engagement initiatives. Technical and strategic partnerships with local ministries and schools, as well as the provision of scholarships, grants, and professional development opportunities, represent a key component of the resources the Foundation provides to its stakeholders as it seeks to make meaningful contributions in the community through nurturing an ecosystem of human development.

The Foundation shares with national leaders a vision of the United Arab Emirates as a competitive and innovative nation that is thriving across its economic, social, and cultural landscapes. Evidence-based research and practices are key to making policy decisions that help our community reach its long-term potential. To that end, we believe what we have accomplished this year challenges us to go further in 2019, as we continue to model and champion responsible stewardship and excellence.

As the Foundation celebrates its 10-year anniversary in 2019, we look forward to learning from our past and planning for our future. Through embracing the principals of conscientious collaboration and rigorous research, advancing a culture of social responsibility in both the public and private sectors, and nurturing creativity, innovation, and ownership of the economic, social, and cultural development of our emirate and nation, we will continue to embody service as part of the values of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates.

Executive Director's Message

The Al Qasimi Foundation spent 2018 listening to our stakeholders and focusing on the sustainability and strategic direction of our work. These efforts culminated in the development of our new five-year strategic plan, which charts our direction and ambitions for 2019-2023. The new plan builds on the investments we have made in our relationships, staff, and community over the past nine years to ensure that our commitment to high-quality research and programming continues to drive the growth and development of our emirate and nation. It also cements our dedication to forward-thinking initiatives that emphasize innovative, data-driven discourses being at the forefront of policy and governance discussions in Ras Al Khaimah and beyond.

During 2018 we also deepened and widened our partnerships and collaborations on issues related to education, philanthropy, community development, and the arts. The Foundation's ongoing initiatives established new relationships with ministers, policymakers, practitioners, other foundations, businesses, universities and leading academics. This has included partnering with the Ministry of Education on the UAE-Vietnam Teacher Exchange; collaborating on a parental involvement research project with the Education and Human Resources Council; organizing the 8th Biannual Gulf Comparative Education Society Symposium in Ras Al Khaimah; and supporting promising academics through our various scholarships and competitive research grants. Long-term, we hope these connections will produce additional research and collaborations, thereby increasing the impact of our efforts.

Our engagement activities over the past year have also been varied and fruitful. We bolstered the accessibility of our research and expertise, as well as that of our partners, through establishing bilingual blogs and podcasts. Our educator professional development programs, school reform initiatives, and college preparation programs also continued to yield impressive results. In 2018 we were proud to provide additional opportunities for the students of Ras Al Khaimah, such as the Future Careers Forum, to help students think about the world of possibilities available to them on leaving high school. Additionally, the Foundation has further established Ras Al Khaimah as a cultural focal point in the UAE—championing local artistic talent and the creative sector—through multiple partnerships with the Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development, hosting the Emirates Youth Council, and supporting art exhibitions and workshops year-round.

Through relevant research, evidence-based policy recommendations and programming, and an emphasis on relationships, we will continue to take a sustainable and long-term approach to strengthening the economic, social, and cultural development of Ras Al Khaimah. As the Foundation enters its 10th year of service to the community, our team looks forward to working with our neighbors both here and abroad to further support the growth and achievement of our emirate and nation while recognizing our place as a champion of local knowledge impacting global discourse.



Dr. Natasha Ridge
Executive Director



**Who We
Serve**

Our Community

The Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research was established in 2009 to aid in the social, cultural, and economic development of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Foundation seeks to support public and private sectors by helping them ground policy decisions and programming firmly in relevant bodies of research that reflect the best thinking in the world as well as the local Ras Al Khaimah and UAE contexts.

To this end, the Al Qasimi Foundation serves as a bridge between the research and policymaking communities—bringing to scholars' attention public policy questions important to Ras Al Khaimah, and, in turn, disseminating research findings to promote innovative policy tools and models that will impact positive social change. The Al Qasimi Foundation approaches its work collaboratively, and aims to establish relationships with talented scholars and world-class universities, innovative public policy research centers, government institutions, and strategic partners in the private and non-governmental sectors.

All of the Foundation's efforts are designed to support progress in our emirate and nation, and our activities impact a broad range of local and international stakeholders. From hosting educational actors from the private and public sectors at the 8th Biannual Gulf Comparative Education Society Symposium; collaborating with top universities around the world to generate impactful, high-quality research; to partnering with local ministries and foreign missions to provide innovative capacity development and arts and culture programming, all of our initiatives remain focused on our community. The Al Qasimi Foundation is grateful for the opportunity to partner with the people of Ras Al Khaimah and remains dedicated to championing their interests through its research, capacity development, and community engagement and outreach efforts.





**What
We Do**

Our Current Focus & Initiatives

The Al Qasimi Foundation generates a world-class body of research on Ras Al Khaimah and the broader UAE, develops local capacity, and engages the community in its work. Initially focused on education, the Foundation has expanded its priority areas to include arts and culture, community development, and health and wellness. Signature initiatives include competitive international research grants, teacher and student professional development programs, and the annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival.



Research Initiatives

- Gulf Comparative Education Society
- Policy & Practice Blog and Podcast Series
- Arab Father Involvement
- Philanthropy in Education
- Hands on Learning
- Iqra Program (Arabic reading pilot)
- Faculty Research Grants
- Doctoral Research Grants
- Seed Grants



Capacity Development Initiatives

- College Preparation Program
- Youth English Program
- Teacher Professional Development Program
- Ras Al Khaimah Teachers Network
- School Improvement Grants
- Teacher Scholarships
- UAE Teacher Exchange Program
- Ras Al Khaimah Prison Program



Arts & Community Engagement Initiatives

- Majlis Event Series
- Al Qasimi Foundation Studio & Gallery
- Community Gathering Event Series
- Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival
- Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival Film Grants





**What We've
Done**

Our Progress & Impact: Research

As part of its mandate to support evidenced-based planning among the region's policymakers, the Al Qasimi Foundation views research as the cornerstone of its mission. The Foundation both conducts and promotes—through diverse grant offerings and partnerships—high-quality research focused on Ras Al Khaimah, the UAE, and broader Gulf region. The Foundation collaborates with scholars and esteemed universities across the globe and works to connect these researchers with relevant policymakers. The result has been progressive, applied research in the areas of education, arts and culture, health, and community development.

This year the Foundation focused on increasing the accessibility of its research and sustainability of its efforts through expanding the corpus of its open-access and Arabic language content, as well as through the deepening of its partnerships and collaborations with local scholars, practitioners, ministries, and policymakers.

The Foundation was also pleased to host the 8th Biannual Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES) symposium, *Public, Private, and Philanthropy: Exploring the Impact of New Actors on Education in the GCC* in Ras Al Khaimah; establish a partnership with the UAE Education and Human Resources Council to collaborate on a parental involvement research project and forthcoming symposium; and to expand two research pilots on Arabic reading fluency and reintegrating at-risk boys into secondary schools.

“

“The Al Qasimi Foundation has done a great job hosting the 8th biannual GCES Symposium, which sparked deep discussions exploring the impact of new actors on education in the GCC in the public, private, and philanthropic sectors. Papers presented covered a wide range of topics on the national, regional, and global levels, providing a rich comparative stance for researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders of education in the Gulf. The Symposium will inform agendas and foster collaborations for years to come.”

Ahoud Alasfour, Vice-President of the Gulf Comparative Education Society

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7

Doctoral, Faculty, and
Seed Grants awarded



14

English publications



11

Arabic publications



10

Presentations
delivered at academic
conferences



5

Ras Al Khaimah
schools piloting
programs



16

Policy & Practice
podcasts



11

Bilingual blogs

24%



Increase in number of
academic publication
citations

3x



More Arabic
language content
Published

28%



of publications released
by education foundations
in the Middle East have
been published by the Al
Qasimi Foundation

100%



of in-house
publications were
open access

The 8th Biannual Gulf Comparative Education Society Symposium



4

Keynote speakers



40

Presentations



125+

Attendees



9

Articles published in the conference proceedings



2

Special panels with NORRAG, UNESCO, and UNDP



55+

Organizations and institutions represented





Our Progress & Impact: Capacity Development

One way the Al Qasimi Foundation stewards its research findings is by developing and providing strategic services and support in order to build individual and local capacity across public sectors. These capacity development efforts cultivate local talent and support institutional improvements through evidence-based education initiatives.

This year, the Foundation focused on improving teacher quality through providing accredited professional development courses, deepening its formal collaborations with the Ministry of Education, developing gifted and talented students, and serving at-risk youth through supplemental life skills programming. In addition, through its successful partnerships the Foundation was able to implement initiatives such as its third teacher exchange program in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Institute of International Education, and the 2018 Future Careers Forum in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development, among others.

“

“The Al Qasimi Foundation has been offering free courses in different educational fields for all educators; I have been very fortunate to have the opportunity to grow and develop both personally and professionally through the Foundation.”

Mohammed Husni, Ras Al Khaimah Teacher

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2300+

Direct beneficiaries of capacity development initiatives



300

Teachers enrolled in professional development programs



84

Students participated in the College Preparation Program



2

School Improvement Grants awarded



16

Sheikh Saqr Overseas Scholarship recipients



1000+

Ras Al Khaimah government school students attended the 2018 Future Careers Forum



20

Educators participated in the UAE-Vietnam Teacher Exchange



21

Professional development courses and workshops offered



1700+

Ras Al Khaimah Teachers Network members



101

Ras Al Khaimah Prison inmates attended development courses



8

Teacher Scholarships awarded



9

College Preparation Program student fieldtrips and university campus visits



10

College Preparation Program students sent to summer university preparation courses in the UK



396

Ras Al Khaimah Prison inmates borrowed books from the Foundation's prison library



89%

of Grade 11 College Prep students achieved a minimum of 5.5 on the IELTS exam



494

Books were read by 61 College Prep students, which was an increase of 17% from 2017





Our Progress & Impact: Arts & Community Engagement

Investing in people means nurturing collaboration and advancing a spirit of community while demonstrating inclusiveness and transparency in all of our operations. To increase the visibility and accessibility of the Foundation's mission, as well as its expertise, programs, initiatives, and impact, the Foundation strategically uses engagement and outreach activities and platforms, provides funding and capacity building opportunities, hosts collaborators, and has thoughtful partnerships with the aim of furthering the social, cultural, and economic development of the emirate.

This year the Foundation's engagement activities were supported by its focal arts and culture initiative. Through its arts and culture partnerships and programming the Foundation has become a cultural focal point of Ras Al Khaimah, offering opportunities for its diverse community to showcase and build upon its innovation and creativity. In addition, the Foundation's various event offerings encouraged cross-cultural dialogue and community building, and provided opportunities for other UAE-based organizations and foreign missions to engage with the emirate.



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“We have been working closely with the Al Qasimi Foundation, particularly on its annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival event, which we have been supporting for the past several years. Our longstanding collaboration with the Foundation is rooted in our common goal of engaging our community through events that celebrate creative expression and inspire talented artists.”

Ramy Jallad, Group CEO, Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone

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28000+

Social media
Followers



4500+

Local and international
recipients of quarterly
newsletters



26

Videos released



3

Majlis events connected
researchers to
policymakers interested
in their work



935+

Staff volunteer hours
completed in service
to our community



12

Peer leadership boards
and committees served
on by Foundation staff



20

Local and international
university partners



3000+

Guests at Foundation
events



7

Art exhibitions held at
the Al Qasmi Foundation
Studio & Gallery



8

Art workshops held at the Al
Qasimi Foundation Studio &
Gallery and during the Ras Al
Khaimah Fine Arts Festival



6

Community Gathering events
engaged the public in activities
related to heritage, art and
culture, outdoor adventure,
and the community





Our Progress & Impact: Organizational Development

To be a resource for its beneficiaries, stakeholders, other philanthropic and non-government organizations, and fellow start-ups in the region, the Foundation strives to embody industry best practices of transparency, accountability, and sustainability in all of its endeavors.

To achieve this the Foundation spent 2018 looking both inward and outward to better understand its role within the community. Key stakeholder interviews and focus groups highlighted how the Foundation's initiatives and programming currently align with the needs of the various groups it serves. The resulting five-year strategic plan models responsible stewardship of all facets of organizational operations, ensuring the relevance of agendas, initiatives, and programming as well as the efficiency of key functions that enable its success.

In addition, the Foundation focused on ensuring the relevant policies, procedures, and professional development were completed to guarantee the proper foundation for success is in place as it enters the next stage of its growth. This included expanding processes and programs that nurture an internal culture of excellence that aligns across departments, and focuses towards achieving the Foundation's priorities and vision. With its 10-year anniversary just around the corner, the Foundation remains committed to being an exemplary organization in the region and beyond.





5

Updated handbooks and policy and procedure manuals



4

Departmental and programmatic assessments completed



43

Interviews and focus groups conducted with stakeholders



5-year strategic plan completed



1000+

Hours of professional development completed by Foundation staff



Successfully transitioned to the SAP paperless system for administrative functions





CELEBRATE

The Memorandum
talks
between the Foundation
& Ministry of Education

* Burda Exhibition working on
a ~~successful~~ ~~successful~~ successful
project with Ministry of Culture.

* Collaboration with RAK Chamber on
Zayed year

* Working ~~and~~ ~~and~~ Attended by 3 Ambassadors
in 2018! ~~to our Event!~~

A Successful
Career Forum

GLCS
in RAK

Career
Fair

HH Attending
the Student

Almost 10 years
Since the Foundation
was founded

* We have been known more in the
Region of UAE.

* H.E. Noura Al Kaabi Minister Attending
AGF Events

* Publish the Book of RAK!!

Looking
Forward

Partnerships:
NORRAG
& HACC

ARABIC

Looking Forward: Plans for 2019

In 2019, the Al Qasimi Foundation is excited to celebrate our 10-year anniversary with the Ras Al Khaimah community and our local and international stakeholders. We look forward to reaffirming our commitment to sustainably strengthening the economic, social, and cultural development of Ras Al Khaimah and the UAE through relevant research and evidence-based policy recommendations and programming.

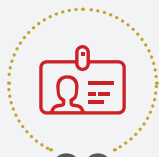
The team looks forward to working with our neighbors both here and abroad for a year dedicated to the improvement of education, arts and culture, health and wellness, and community development in the UAE and beyond. We are particularly excited to:

- Celebrate our 10-year anniversary with our community and stakeholders, documenting and sharing lessons learned and best practices from our first 10 years of service.
- Co-organize the *Global Trends in Parental Involvement Symposium* with the Education and Human Resources Council.
- Continue to deepen our research exploring philanthropy and education.
- Launch a new Artist-in-Residency program.
- Introduce the new Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival format and expanded exhibition and workshop schedules.
- Increase the number of graduates from the College Preparation Program who travel overseas for university studies.
- Implement our new five-year strategic plan.





**Who We
Are**

**30**

Staff

**11**

Countries

**7**

Interns

**5**Visiting Faculty and
Doctoral Scholars

Collaborators



Mariam Alhashmi & Naved Bakali

Seed Grant Recipients

Dr. Mariam Alhashmi is an Assistant Professor of Education at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi and Dr. Naved Bakali is a research analyst with Tabah Foundation. Their research focuses on the concept of tolerance in UAE secondary Islamic Education curriculum. Their work contributes to the growing body of literature in the field of multicultural and diversity education in Muslim majority nations. It will form the basis of further studies that will examine students' experiences with the Islamic Education curriculum in Ras Al Khaimah and other emirates of the UAE.



Emily Anderson

Faculty Grant Recipient

Emily Anderson is an Associate Professor of Education Studies at Centenary University, transitioning to Florida International University in 2019 as a Visiting Assistant Professor of International and Intercultural Education. Dr. Anderson holds dual-title PhD in Educational Theory and Policy and Comparative and International Education from The Pennsylvania State University, and Master's degrees in both Comparative and International Education and Educational Leadership from Lehigh University. Using qualitative, participatory and network approaches, her research investigates the construction, diffusion, and complex negotiation of gender in internationally comparative education policy discourses.



Marvin Erfurth

Visiting Scholar

Marvin Erfurth is an international and comparative education doctoral student at WWU Muenster, Germany whose research focuses on contemporary education reform, its increasing global interconnections, and the creation of 'education hubs' within countries as economically competitive and socially progressive zones. His dissertation surveys the policies and governance of education hubs in the UAE and Singapore.



Mira Mousa

Visiting Scholar

Mira Mousa is a PhD candidate in the Women's and Reproductive Health Department at the University of Oxford whose research focuses on women's health awareness and education. She is collaborating with Harvard University and the World Endometriosis Research Foundation to be part of a worldwide study to increase awareness of women's health conditions among the public and medical professionals, provide support for patients and families, and promote education to girls and women to increase reproductive health literacy.



Uday Kumar

Visiting Scholar

Dr. Uday Kumar is an Assistant Professor of Chemical Engineering and a Senior Research Engineer at the RAK Research and Innovation Center, American University of Ras Al Khaimah. Dr. Uday holds a PhD in Energy Technology from KTH, Sweden with more than ten years of experience in interdisciplinary applied research for sustainable development of integrated systems for energy, water, and environmental sustainability. With the support of the Foundation, and in collaboration with the RAK Waste Management Agency, he is currently researching the challenges and opportunities for the sustainable transformation of Ras Al Khaimah into a 'zero waste' emirate.





**Who We've
Worked
With**

Our Partners

The Al Qasimi Foundation values collaboration as a key to building a stronger community. Therefore, the Foundation remains grateful and honored to partner with esteemed organizations who remain dedicated to research, development, and outreach initiatives in Ras Al Khaimah and the UAE.

Ras Al Khaimah and UAE Government Partners

- Al Ghail Youth Center
- Education and Human Resources Council
- Higher Colleges of Technology
- Masafi Cultural Center
- Ministry of Culture & Knowledge Development
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Education: NAPO and MSAT National Exams
- Ministry of Higher Education
- RAK Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- RAK Correctional Facility
- RAK Department of Finance
- RAK Economic Zone (RAKEZ)
- RAK Education Zone
- RAK Electronic Government Authority
- RAK Gas LLC
- RAK Hospital
- RAK Human Resources Department
- RAK Management Office
- RAK Media Office
- RAK Rock
- RAK Schools
- RAK Tourism Development Authority
- RAK Waste Management Authority
- RAK Department of Civil Services
- RAK Municipality

- RAK National Museum
- Sheikh Saqr Program for Government Excellence

Other Local Partners

- Al Jazeera Aviation Club
- Al Marjan Island
- American University of Ras Al Khaimah
- American University of Sharjah
- AMIDEAST
- Consulate General of Peru in Dubai
- Desert Art Collective (DAC)
- Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation
- Edu Alliance
- Education USA
- Emirates Airline Festival of Literature
- Emirates Foundation
- German Emirati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce
- Institute of Applied Technology
- Khuzam Industries
- Masafi Cultural Center
- Outward Bound UAE
- New York University Abu Dhabi
- RAK Bank
- Ras Al Khaimah Academy
- Ras Al Kahimah Medical and Health Sciences University

- Sharjah Center for Astronomy and Space Sciences
- Sheikh Khalifa Specialty Hospital
- US Embassy in the United Arab Emirates
- Zayed University

Organizational Partners

- Ernst & Young
- Clifford Chance
- IDO

International Partners

- Arab Foundations Forum
- Autonomous University of Barcelona
- British Council
- Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT)
- Centro de Implementación de Políticas Públicas para la Equidad y el Crecimiento (CIPPEC)
- Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation
- Goethe-University Frankfurt
- Gulf Comparative Education Society
- Hands on Learning Australia
- Institute of International Education (IIE)
- International Education Funders Group
- Lewis School of English in Southampton
- National Foundation for Education Research
- Network of Foundations Working for Development (netFWD)
- Nonprofit Tech for Good
- NORRAG

- Oxford College Summer School
- Saville Foundation
- Teachers College, Columbia University
- The Graduate Institute, Geneva
- The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)
- Think20 (T20)
- Tribal Group
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- University of Alberta
- University of Cambridge, Queens College
- University of Massachusetts
- University of Münster
- University of Oxford
- University of St. Andrews, Oxford Royale Summer School
- University of Sydney
- University of Texas at Arlington
- University of Toronto
- York University in Toronto

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