



SHEIKH SAUD BIN SAQR AL QASIMI
FOUNDATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH

ANNUAL
REPORT

2017



Table of Contents

Messages from Leadership	04
Who We Serve: Our Community	06
What We Do: Our Current Focus & Initiatives	08
What We've Done: Our Progress & Impact	
Research	10
Capacity Development	14
Community Engagement & Outreach	18
Organizational Development	22
Looking Forward: Plans for 2018	24
Who We Are: Our Team	26
Who We've Worked With: Our Partners	30

Managing Director's Message



As we reflect on the Al Qasimi Foundation's eighth year of research and outreach, we are grateful for the support and collaborative relationships that have formed the basis of our success. 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 it conducted over the past year. Talented visiting scholars and dynamic research collaborations have led to an influential collection of studies and publications in 2017, 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 and policy issues facing the region have continued to expand the Foundation's reputation and reach. I am proud to share that the Foundation was honored as one of the top Middle East and North Africa think tanks for the fourth consecutive year, a recognition resulting from votes by our fellow industry experts and peer institutions in the "2017 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report."

In addition, the Foundation spent 2017 collaborating with local and international partners to apply this compelling research to its capacity development programs and community engagement initiatives. Partnerships with local ministries and schools as well as scholarships, grants, and professional development opportunities represent an important part of the resources the Foundation provides to its stakeholders as it seeks to make meaningful contributions in the community.

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 is 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 2018, to embrace stewardship and excellence as part of the values of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates.

As the Year of Giving draws to a close, the Foundation looks forward to continuing to embody the principals of conscientious collaboration, advancing a culture of social responsibility in both the public and private sectors, as well as supporting local initiatives that further sustainably develop our community.

Dr. Mohamed Abdulatif Khalifa

Managing Director

Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research

Executive Director's Message



The Al Qasimi Foundation spent 2017 giving back to our community, investing in our research and programmatic endeavors, while deepening and widening our engagement in issues related to education, philanthropy, community development, the arts, and culture. While pursuing these focus areas, we also took a closer look at our relationships with stakeholders, ensuring our efforts remain responsive to the needs of our community, renewing our commitment to the holistic, sustainable development of our emirate and the UAE.

This year, the Foundation's ongoing research initiatives built relationships with leading academics, practitioners, and local and international non-profit organizations. This included co-organizing the *Inaugural Philanthropy in Education Symposium* with NORRAG, the Open Society Foundations, and the Graduate Institute in Geneva, funding five competitive Faculty Research Grants, and partnering with the Department of Education and St. Antony's College at the University of Oxford to support burgeoning scholars interested in conducting education research in the region. Long-term, it is hoped that these connections will produce additional research, increasing collaboration and the impact of our efforts.

Our engagement activities have also been varied and fruitful. 2017 saw the opening of our new Studio & Gallery space, which engages our community in arts and culture programming year round. Inspired by the success of our Hands on Learning pilot program, the Foundation also launched the Boys Enrichment Program; contributing to the improvement of the academic, social, and physical development of Emirati boys in Ras Al Khaimah. Our educator professional development programs and school reform initiatives continued to yield impressive results, bolstered by our formal collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Additionally, this year, in the spirit of the Year of Giving, we opened a library in the female prison in Ras Al Khaimah and began a series of programs for the inmates.

Through relevant research, evidence-based policy recommendations and programming, and an emphasis on relationships, we continue to contribute to strengthening the economic, social, and cultural development of Ras Al Khaimah. Our team looks forward to working with our neighbors both here and abroad for a 2018 dedicated to the sustainable development of education and community in the UAE and beyond.

Dr. Natasha Ridge

Executive Director

Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research



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 Al Qasimi Foundation seeks to support the 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 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. We approach our work collaboratively, and aim to establish relationships with talented scholars and world-class universities, innovative public policy research centers, established 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 collaborating with academics and non-profit organizations to co-organize the *Inaugural Philanthropy in Education Symposium* to partnering with top universities around the world to generate impactful, high-quality research, all of our initiatives remain focused on our community. We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with the people of Ras Al Khaimah and remain dedicated to championing their interests through our 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, we have expanded our priority areas to include health and wellness, urban and community development, and arts and culture. Signature initiatives include competitive international research grants, teacher and student professional development programs, and the annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival.

Research Initiatives

- Arab Father Involvement
- Gulf Comparative Education Society
- Philanthropy in Education
- Whole School Renewal
- Hands on Learning (pilot)
- Program to Improve Reading Fluency (pilot)
- Faculty Research Grants
- Doctoral Research Grants
- Seed Grants

Capacity Development Initiatives

- Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program
- Sheikh Saqr Overseas Scholarship Program
- English for Life Program
- Teacher Professional Development Program
- Ras Al Khaimah Teachers Network
- School Improvement Grants
- Teacher Scholarships
- UAE Teacher Exchange Program
- Ras Al Khaimah Prison Program

Community Engagement & Outreach Initiatives

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





Research

As part of our mandate to support evidenced-based planning among the region's policymakers, we view research as the cornerstone of our mission. The Foundation both conducts and promotes—through diverse grant offerings and partnerships—high-quality research focused on Ras Al Khaimah, the UAE, and the 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, health and well-being, urban and community development, and arts and culture.

This year the Foundation was pleased to co-organize the *Inaugural Philanthropy in Education Symposium* with NORRAG, Open Society Foundations, and the Graduate Institute, Geneva; honored to receive the Best Paper Award at the first UAE Public Policy Forum, hosted by the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government; and excited to collaborate with researchers at the

University of Texas, Arlington to conduct a highly successful pilot program that increased Arabic reading fluency in Grade 1 students.



"We are pleased that the Al Qasimi Foundation approached us to co-organize the Symposium. Their collaboration has been invaluable and has allowed the broadening of the scope and impact of the event. Discussions that took place at the Symposium and the forthcoming edited volume will undoubtedly influence the direction of research and policy around the world."

- Joost Monks, Executive Director of NORRAG





800+

Direct beneficiaries of research initiatives



5

Doctoral, Faculty, and Seed Grants awarded



13

Arabic and English publications



2

Ras Al Khaimah schools piloting programs



19

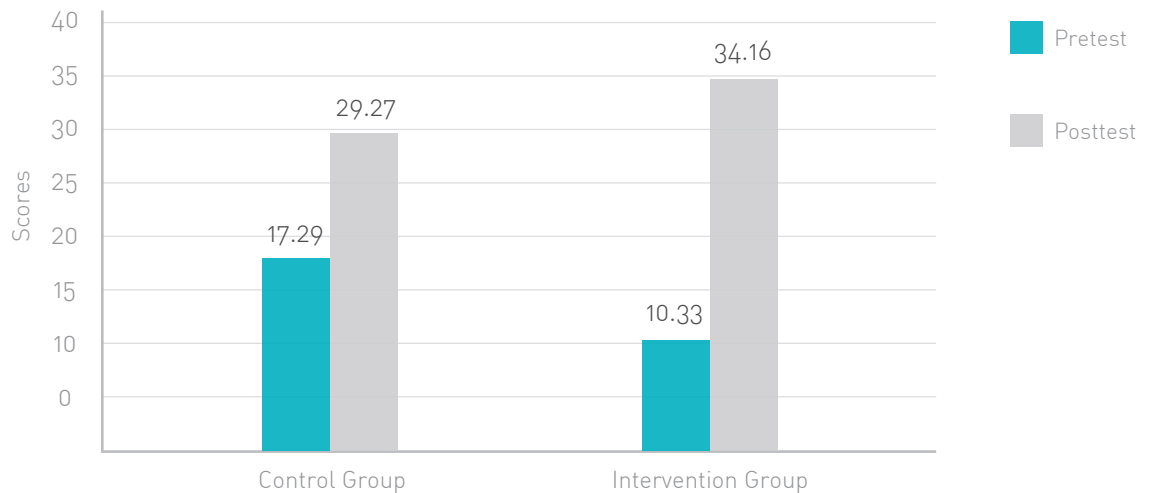
Presentations delivered



60%

Increase in number of academic publication citations

Arabic Reading Fluency Program Pilot: Difference in reading comprehension pretest and posttest scores between the Grade 1 control and intervention groups







Capacity Development

One way that we steward our 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 has focused on improving teacher quality through providing accredited professional development courses, establishing formal collaborations with the Ministry of Education, developing gifted and talented students, and serving at-risk youth through supplemental life skills programming.



“The Foundation offers a Teacher Professional Development program by choosing topics according to teachers’ needs, which has a magnificent impact on teacher’s teaching skills in the classroom as well as student achievement and gives teachers ideas of what they need to keep up to date with latest practice in teaching.”

- Muhammed Atta, Ras Al Khaimah secondary school teacher





2300+

Direct beneficiaries of capacity development initiatives



1525

Ras Al Khaimah Teachers Network members



300

Teachers enrolled in professional development programs (peer-to-peer)



13

Teacher professional development courses and workshops offered



17

Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program students sent to summer university preparation courses in the US and UK



9

Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program student fieldtrips and university campus visits



170

Students participated in the Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program



13

Sheikh Saqr Overseas Scholarship recipients



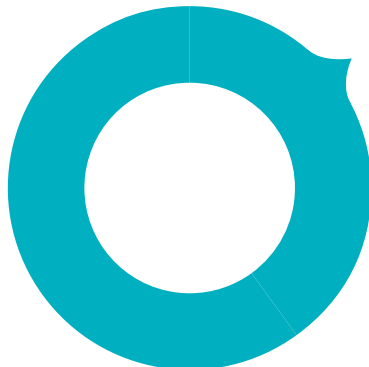
3

School Improvement Grants awarded



124

Ras Al Khaimah Prison inmates attended development courses



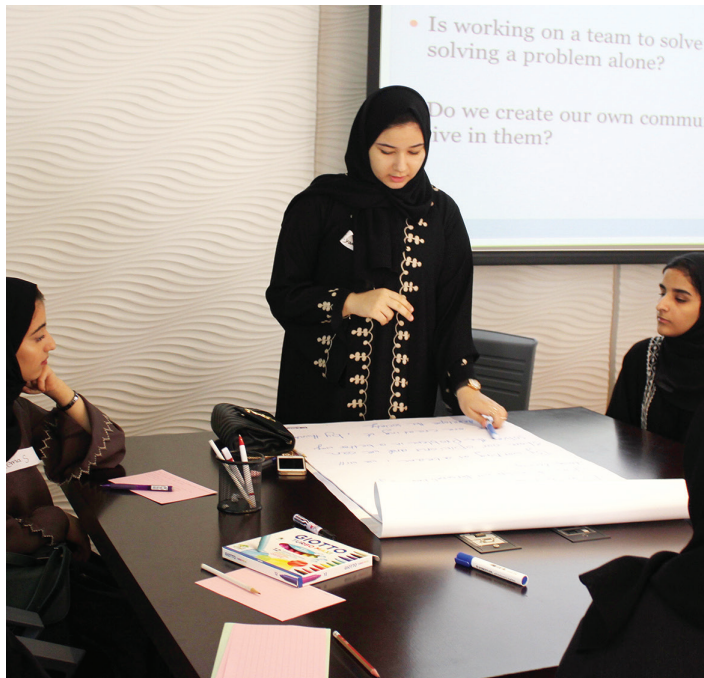
100%

of Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program Grade 12 students went on to university



21%

of Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program Grade 12 students went to universities overseas





Community
Engagement
& Outreach

Investing in people means nurturing collaboration and advancing a spirit of community while demonstrating transparency in all of our operations. The Foundation therefore remains committed to inclusiveness, open-source information, and straightforward communication as pillars of our community outreach activities. The Foundation's avenues of outreach include our quarterly newsletter, social media presence, podcasts, and various publications.

The Foundation's engagement is supported by our community service, volunteerism, and events. Our Community Gathering events and Majlis presentations brought our diverse community together to exchange ideas, experience Ras Al Khaimah, and share each other's cultures. This year the Foundation held the 5th Annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival and opened our new Studio & Gallery space to support the Northern Emirates' burgeoning arts scene through hosting educational programming and exhibitions.



"The events organized by the Al Qasimi Foundation have provided us with a platform to indulge in and appreciate the cultural and social aspects of life in the UAE. The Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival in particular encourages artists and gives them opportunities to shine. The Foundation is the heart of our cultural community."

- Cheshta Roy Sarkar, Ras Al Khaimah resident





23500+

Social media
followers



3350+

Local and international
recipients of quarterly
newsletters



26

Local and
international
university partners



24

Foundation appearances
and interviews in local and
international news coverage



935+

Staff volunteer
hours completed
in service to our
community



12

Peer leadership
boards and
committees served on
by Foundation staff



60

Care packages donated
and distributed as part of
the Foundation's Annual
Ramadan Giveback



5

Majlis events connected
researchers to
policymakers interested
in their work



2100+

Guests at
Foundation events



5

Art exhibitions held
at the Al Qasimi
Foundation Studio &
Gallery



8

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



52%

Social media follower
growth



40%

Growth in local Emirati
engagement with the
Foundation





Organizational Development

To be a resource for our 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 our endeavors. To achieve this, in 2017 the Foundation focused on conducting department assessments and organizational audits, updating our departmental policy and procedure manuals, and focusing on our staff professional development.



Looking Forward Plans for 2018

HOL
growth

2018

In 2018, the Al Qasimi Foundation will remain committed to strengthening the economic, social, and cultural sustainability of Ras Al Khaimah and the UAE through relevant research and evidence-based policy recommendations and programming.

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

- Host the 8th Biannual Gulf Comparative Education Society Symposium *Public, Private, and Philanthropy: Exploring the Impact of New Actors on Education in the GCC* in Ras Al Khaimah.
- Collaborate with the US Embassy and AMIDEAST in providing the Youth English Program to students in remote areas of Ras Al Khaimah.
- Increase the number of graduates from the Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program who travel overseas for university studies.
- Send teachers and school administrators to Vietnam through our UAE Teacher Exchange Program in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Institute of International Education.
- Launch an academic journal focused on education in the region.
- Transition to using the SAP system.
- Develop our strategic plan for the next five years.





Who We Are
Our Team



10

Interns and graduate
assistants



12

Nationalities



28

Staff



5

Visiting Faculty and
Doctoral Scholars

Collaborators



Helen Abadzi
Faculty Scholar

Dr. Helen Abadzi is a professor at the University of Texas at Arlington. She was an education specialist at the World Bank for 27 years and has two PhDs, one in psychology and one in educational administration. Her current research explores cognitive neuroscience applications that may improve early-grade reading fluency, and she recently completed the first phase of the Arabic Reading Fluency Program pilot.



Sandeep Agrawal
Faculty Scholar

Dr. Sandeep Agrawal is an internationally recognized urban planning scholar and practitioner with over 20 years of experience. Currently, he is a professor and the Inaugural Director of the Urban and Regional Planning Programs at the University of Alberta in Canada. His expertise lies in international development and planning, and he has been a recipient of multiple international faculty fellowships and grants. He has collaborated extensively with the American University of Sharjah and is currently researching the impacts of affordable housing policies and programs in Ras Al Khaimah.



Elizabeth Buckner

Faculty Scholar

Dr. Elizabeth Buckner is an assistant professor of Higher Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. She is interested in globalization, education and international development policy. She has researched various aspects of globalization's effect on education, including textbook portrayals of globalization, the growth of English language learning, and the privatization of higher education. She is currently researching the factors impacting gender differences of Emirati student achievement on international assessment.



William Reynolds

Faculty Scholar

William Reynolds is an adjunct assistant professor of preservation at the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, where he focuses on heritage conservation. He has worked on heritage projects throughout the MENA region and he is currently researching the historic felaj waterworks. His research describes the prospects and challenges associated with preservation, and identifies opportunities to better incorporate the waterworks into the historic narrative that Ras Al Khaimah presents to its citizens and the broader world.



William Cook

Doctoral Scholar

William Cook is a PhD student at York University in Toronto in the Linguistics and Applied Linguistics program. His research generally focuses on language policy and he has special interest in investigating how local, unwritten language policy is articulated and experienced by people in their everyday lives. His current research explores the lived language policy experiences of people working and studying at a school in Ras Al Khaimah.



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF CULTURE &
KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT



الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الثقافة
وتنمية المعرفة

مدينة

باب

القراءة



Who We've
Worked With
Our Partners

فجيرة
Fujairan Foundation For Regional Cooperation

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
Higher Colleges of Technology
Masafi Cultural Center
Ministry of Culture & Knowledge Development
Ministry of Education
RAK Bank
RAK Correctional Facility
RAK Department of Finance
RAK Economic Zone
RAK Education Zone
RAK Electronic Government Authority
RAK Gas LLC
RAK Hospital
RAK Investment Development Office
RAK Management Office
RAK Media Office
RAK Rock
RAK Schools
RAK Tourism Development Authority
RAK Waste Management Authority
Ras Al Khaimah Department of Antiquities and Museums
Ras Al Khaimah Department of Civil Services
Ras Al Khaimah Municipality

Ras Al Khaimah National Museum
Sheikh Saqr Program for Government Excellence
Young Men Social Foster Home

Other Local Partners

Abdulla Saleh AlJooan
Al Jazeera Aviation Club
Alive Advertising
American University of Ras Al Khaimah
American University of Sharjah
AMIDEAST
Art 276
Challenging Adventure
Emirates Airline Festival of Literature
Emirates Foundation
German Emirati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce
House of Beauty
Middlesex University Dubai
New York University Abu Dhabi
Ras Al Khaimah Academy
Ras Al Khaimah Medical and Health Sciences University
University of Sharjah
US Embassy in the United Arab Emirates
Zayed University
Clifford Chance
Clyde & Co
Dechert Law LLP
Ernst & Young

International Partners

Arab Foundations Forum

British Council

CCI Greenheart

Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT)

Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture,
Planning, and Preservation

Georgetown University

Goethe-University Frankfurt

Hands on Learning Australia

Institute of International Education (IIE)

John Hopkins University

Lewis School of English in Southampton

Nonprofit Tech for Good

NORRAG

Open Society Foundations

Oxford College Summer School

Peartree Languages Summer Junior School in Cardiff

Teachers College, Columbia University

The Graduate Institute, Geneva

The Gulf Comparative Education Society

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

Tribal Group

UNESCO

University of Alberta

University of Massachusetts

University of Münster

University of Oxford

University of Sydney

University of Texas at Arlington

University of Toronto

World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE)

York University in Toronto

A political economy of philanthropy

- Those concerns frame my analysis and discussion and an interest in what might be called the 'political economy' of philanthropy.
- I am interested in 'big' philanthropy, and the 'entanglements' (and constitution) of philanthropy and business, of reform and profit, of personal visions and education policy.
- Illustrate these issues and concerns via work on MSDF and 'impact investing' (Philanthropy 3.0) with a focus on India.
- I worry about neatness and typologies (doubles)

NORRAG

Network for International
Research in Education
Policy and Practice
Please see the website at www.norrags.net



Sheikh Saïd Bin Saïd Al Qasbi
FOUNDATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH



OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS

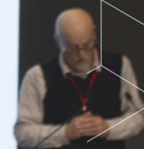


International Development
Research Centre

Centre for International
Development Research

Centre for International
Development Research

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Password: UIQJ-KGMW
#philanthropyinEd



International
Development
Research





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