



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES 2019-2023

"SUPPORTING RESEARCH, DEVELOPING MINDS"





INTRODUCTION

Supporting people, nurturing collaboration, and advancing a spirit of community are at the heart of the Al Qasimi Foundation's mission and values. Through conversations and partnerships, we can ask the right questions and address complex challenges to strengthen Ras Al Khaimah and support its vision for the future. Accordingly, community engagement plays a central role in the Al Qasimi Foundation's work and is embedded across its research, capacity development, and outreach missions.

At the Al Qasimi Foundation, engagement represents a purposeful exchange and leveraging of knowledge, resources, and partnerships to the mutual benefit of all those involved. The Foundation's engagement efforts revolve around various communities: researchers, policy makers, civil servants, education professionals, students, artists, and residents who call Ras Al Khaimah home. The Al Qasimi Foundation not only views engagement as a social responsibility, but also as a tool for improving the value, relevance, and effectiveness of our own work.

This Community Engagement Strategy and Priorities document (Engagement Plan) articulates the core values and framework that underpin the Al Qasimi Foundation's communication, outreach, and broader engagement efforts. It also provides an overview of the Foundation's engagement goals and strategies over the next five years (2019-2023). As the Al Qasimi Foundation builds and expands its engagement program, inclusiveness and mutual respect serve as guiding principles.

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AL QASIMI FOUNDATION'S VISION & MISSION

VISION

Our vision is the sustained social, cultural, and economic development of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates and the enhanced capacity, satisfaction, and quality of life for all members of its community, attained through effective public policy research and strategic service delivery.

MISSION

The Foundation believes in a people-centered approach to equipping the community to find creative, collaborative approaches that aid in the social, cultural, and economic development of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates.

- Generating and supporting innovative, high-quality research focused on education and related policy areas in order to inform decisions and support the creation of relevant, effective public policies;
- Developing and providing strategic services and support to build individual and local capacity in education and the public sector;
- Building a spirit of community, collaboration, and shared vision through purposeful engagement that fosters meaningful relationships among individuals and organizations.

The Engagement Plan builds on the existing Vision and Mission statements in order to create a framework and goals for the Al Qasimi Foundation's outreach and engagement activities over the next five years.



PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Engagement Plan aims to provide a framework to build community, share information, and cultivate collaboration and partnerships for the benefit of Ras Al Khaimah and the broader United Arab Emirates (UAE). Specifically, the purposes of the Engagement Plan are to:

- Foster and strengthen meaningful relationships with diverse individuals and organizations – both with the Foundation and among members of the Ras Al Khaimah, UAE, and international communities.
- Focus and improve the quality of the Al Qasimi Foundation's communication and outreach activities locally and internationally, including their choice to create public dialogue.
- Ground the Al Qasimi Foundation in the local community and ensure it remains responsive to the needs of Ras Al Khaimah and the emirate's future vision.

GOALS OF THE PLAN

Accordingly, the Engagement Plan identifies five primary goals for the Al Qasimi Foundation's outreach and engagement efforts over the five years:

1. Improve accessibility and strengthen communication channels to share bilingual news and information on the Al Qasimi Foundation's impact and initiatives.
2. Champion Ras Al Khaimah's growing arts and culture sector and promote creativity in the broader community.
3. Host in-person and online forums that create opportunities to form relationships, exchange ideas, and discuss public policy issues.
4. Administer strategic scholarship and grant programs that support local talent development, foster collaborations with world-class universities, and advance research and capacity building initiatives relevant to Ras Al Khaimah and the UAE.
5. Identify and promote opportunities for residents of Ras Al Khaimah and the



TARGET AUDIENCES

The Al Qasimi Foundation approaches its work collaboratively and aims to establish relationships with a broad range of individuals and organizations across different sectors. These include:

INDIVIDUALS

- Residents of Ras Al Khaimah, including both Emiratis and expatriates
- Civil servants in Ras Al Khaimah
- Artists, film directors, and other creatives in the UAE and abroad
- Academic researchers (including established and emerging scholars) within the UAE and abroad
- Policy makers at the local, regional, and international levels

ORGANIZATIONS

- Government departments in Ras Al Khaimah as well as UAE federal ministries
- Arts organizations across the UAE and region
- Foundations and non-profit organizations
- Universities and other research institutions
- Embassies
- Funders at the national, regional, and international levels
- Media outlets



ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Al Qasimi Foundation Engagement Plan is situated within a broader framework that emphasizes the following:

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY AS PARTNERS AND RESOURCES

Those who live, work, or have a personal interest in the emirate and broader UAE are the most important resources available in realizing the Al Qasimi Foundation's mission to strengthen the Ras Al Khaimah community. Their rich local knowledge, on-the-ground experiences, and personal/organizational networks bring new ideas, deeper understanding, and additional expertise to the activities that the Al Qasimi Foundation undertakes. In addition, it is only through cultivating a spirit of community and shared purpose that long-term goals will be achieved and ultimately sustained. Therefore, working in partnership with local institutions and fostering local ownership are critical components of the Foundation's engagement efforts.

OPEN SOURCE INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION

The Al Qasimi Foundation seeks to encourage a culture of knowledge-sharing and collaboration. It believes transparency is necessary for establishing relationships and building trust among partners. All research conducted and workshop materials developed are open-access and available through the Al Qasimi Foundation website or those of its affiliates (e.g. Ras Al Khaimah Teachers Network). The Al Qasimi Foundation also plays an active role in gaining access to datasets for researchers, and considers the data it gathers to be a public resource.



INCLUSIVENESS

The Al Qasimi Foundation will only realize its full potential through an inclusive approach to its research, capacity development, and engagement activities. To this end, the Foundation is committed to reaching out and engaging diverse individuals and organizations at the local, national, regional, and international levels. As an organization firmly grounded in the unique context of Ras Al Khaimah, the Foundation seeks to create welcoming, open spaces that engage the entire community Emirati and expatriate alike with a special focus on underserved and vulnerable populations. All publications, events, and professional development workshops are offered in both Arabic and English to increase accessibility. The Foundation also uses both in-person and online platforms to overcome geographical boundaries in order to create dialogues and opportunities for collaboration. Additionally, the Al Qasimi Foundation seeks to connect its partners directly to one another, as a web of relationships is stronger, more dynamic, and ultimately more effective.

CREATIVITY

While easily recognized as a key element in the Foundation's arts and culture programming, especially its signature Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival, creativity plays an important role in the Foundation's broader work. As an organization focused on continuous learning, the Foundation seeks to be pioneering and resourceful, identifying opportunities where it is uniquely positioned to make a difference. The Foundation is eager to try new approaches, develop new relationships, and embrace new ideas. It also seeks to help other individuals and organizations tap into and foster their own creativity as a means for creating positive change and impact.



STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) sits at the heart of the Foundation's engagement strategy. ABCD is a community-led approach originally developed by John McKnight and John Kretzmann (1993) that focuses on a particular community's strengths, assets, and resources as key ingredients for developing the community's positive vision for the future. ABCD stands in contrast to more traditional models of development that often focused on a community's needs, problems and weaknesses. By emphasizing opportunities and embedding ABCD in its work, the Foundation engages the community as a key partner in facilitating local, sustainable development that positions Ras Al Khaimah for success in achieving its long-term vision.

SHORT-TERM ENGAGEMENT GOALS

COMMUNICATIONS

- Develop and launch a redesigned Foundation website to highlight the full breadth of the Foundation's work and make it easier for key audiences to find and access relevant information.
- Increase engagement with the Foundation's digital media—including social media, blogs, videos, and podcasts through content tailored for different audiences.
- Implement a revised research dissemination strategy to bring greater visibility to important findings and encourage adoption of resulting policy recommendations.
- Implement a communications framework to improve the consistency of key messages across the Foundation that advances the organization's reputation for positive impact.



PARTNERSHIPS

- Create a new Community Impact Grants program that encourages adoption of an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach in public and non-profit organizations throughout Ras Al Khaimah.
- Establish a formal Scholarship Office to award and administer domestic and overseas scholarships for promising Emirati students and professionals on behalf of the Ras Al Khaimah Government.
- Launch an artist residency program at the Foundation to support local and international artists and promote cultural exchange within the Ras Al Khaimah community.
- Identify novel collaboration opportunities with other arts organizations across the UAE to expand the reach and visibility of the Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Publish regular reports and conduct formal evaluations of individual Foundation programs to document the organization's activities and impact.
- Seek regular, on-going feedback from the full range of Foundation stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvement and remain responsive to stakeholder needs and interests.



LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT GOALS

BENCHMARKS AND EVALUATION

- Conduct an economic impact study for the Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival.
- Increase the competitiveness of overseas scholarships and international research grants, with a focus on awards being made to Emirati students attending, and researchers affiliated with, top-ranked global universities and academic programs.
- Track employment affiliations (and pursuit of postgraduate studies) among domestic and overseas scholarship alumni to support Ras Al Khaimah Government's talent development and talent management strategies.
- Develop a strategy for measuring awareness of the Foundation's work among stakeholders to inform timely adaptation of key messages and communication approaches.

FUNDING

- Increase external partnership support for the Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival, positioning it for eventual financial independence in the long-term.
- Continue to identify and pursue relevant grant opportunities to leverage in support of the Foundation's research, capacity development, and engagement missions.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Create a network of public and nonprofit organizations in Ras Al Khaimah employing Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) to build on the emirate's strengths and unique value proposition.
- Develop a plan for engaging scholarship recipients and alumni that supports an active peer network, sustained interest in the Foundation's efforts, and desire to remain connected.

Kretzmann, John; McKnight, John (1993). Building Communities From the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets (3rd ed.). Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications. ISBN 978-0-87946-108-9. OCLC 36708153

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