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## Qatar Investment and Innovation Conference Convenes Regional Leaders to Advance GCC Entrepreneurial Ecosystem



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**Doha, Qatar – 4 November 2025:** The second edition of the Qatar Investment and Innovation

Conference: Driving GCC Entrepreneurial Growth successfully convened on 3 November at

Barahat Msheireb. Organised by The Business Year in partnership with Msheireb Properties, with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) as Strategic Partner, the conference brought together over 700 entrepreneurs, investors, and policymakers to explore opportunities in entrepreneurship, innovation, and digital transformation across the Gulf region.

Building on the momentum from the inaugural edition held in January, the conference provided a platform for meaningful dialogue on the region's rapidly evolving startup ecosystem. Against the backdrop of the GCC's ongoing economic diversification efforts, discussions centred on public-private collaboration, investment strategies, and the policy frameworks needed to support the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Eng. Ali Al Kuwari, CEO of Msheireb Properties, said: "The conversations and connections forged at this year's conference demonstrate Qatar's growing role as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship. As Msheireb Downtown Doha continues to serve as a platform for dialogue on the region's economic future, gatherings such as these strengthen the ecosystem needed to support emerging businesses and advance the GCC's economic diversification objectives."

Mr Faraj Jassim Abdulla, Director of the Digital Economy Department at MCIT, said: "This conference exemplified the power of public-private partnerships in advancing Qatar's digital economy and innovation ecosystem. The meaningful discussions and connections made here will

contribute to our ongoing efforts to position Qatar as a regional leader in entrepreneurship and sustainable economic transformation, in line with the Third National Development Strategy and Qatar Digital Agenda 2030.”

Vanessa Rameix, Regional Director at The Business Year, said: “This year’s conference reinforced that Qatar and the wider GCC are actively shaping the global innovation conversation. The collaboration between public and private sector partners is creating a uniquely supportive environment for high-growth businesses, and the quality of dialogue reflected the maturity of the region’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.”

### **Panel Discussions on Entrepreneurship and Investment**

The conference featured two high-level panel discussions examining the GCC’s entrepreneurial landscape. The first panel, “Fostering Entrepreneurship & Driving Economic Growth in the GCC,” explored how public policy, institutional leadership, and cross-border collaboration can create stronger conditions for entrepreneurship. Moderated by Vanessa Rameix, Regional Director at The Business Year, panelists included H.E. Hussain Al Mahmoudi (CEO, Sharjah Research, Technology and Innovation Park), Rama Chakaki (President, Qatar Science & Technology Park), and Fahad AlSharekh (Founder & Managing Partner, TechInvest).

The second panel, “Financing the Future: GCC Investment Strategies & Policy Insights,” examined how venture capital, private equity, and government-backed funding are evolving to support emerging entrepreneurs. Moderated by Sophia Swire, Founder of GEDI, the panel featured Mohammed Alzubi (Founder & Managing Partner, Nama Ventures), Abdulrahman AlJiffry (Partner, 500 Global), Steve Khayat (Founder, CEO & MD, Phoenix Venture Partners), and Dr Mohammed Al-Housani (Director of Research and Advocacy, Qatar Research Development and Innovation Council).

### **AI for Good Innovation Challenge**

A highlight of this year’s conference was the AI for Good Innovation Challenge, hosted in collaboration with the AI for Good initiative YAILs and its Doha chapter. Ten pre-qualified startups, each with solutions aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, delivered live pitches to a panel of judges. The winner, CLARRIO, received the opportunity to attend the AI for Good Global Summit 2025 in Geneva, alongside fast-track access to select international and local accelerator programmes. The award was presented by Eng. Faisal Al Malki, Chief Operating Officer of Msheireb Properties.

The challenge reinforced Qatar’s commitment to positioning itself as a regional leader in responsible artificial intelligence while showcasing how emerging technologies can address real-

world challenges in sustainability, digital transformation, and social impact.

### **Pre-Conference Insight Session**

Ahead of the main conference, HEC Paris in Qatar hosted a pre-event insight session titled “The Architecture of AI: Energy, Capex, and Capability,” providing a strategic overview of AI’s impact as both a tool and an industry. Dr Pablo Martin de Holan, Dean of HEC Paris in Qatar, guided participants through opportunities and challenges for founders, investors, and enterprises.

Alumni participants included Dr Fadi Nasser (CCO, MEEZA), Nouf Almarri (CIO, Civil Services and Government Development Bureau), Sarah Al-Mawlawi (Director of Corporate Information Security, Ooredoo Qatar), and Aysha Al Mudahka (Senior Director of RDI Programs, QRDI).

The Qatar Investment and Innovation Conference has established itself as a key platform for advancing the GCC’s economic diversification goals, bringing together the region’s most influential stakeholders to shape the future of entrepreneurship and innovation.