The 7th Higher Education Leadership Forum

MENA

Global Challenges, Local Impact: Higher Education's Role in Shaping a Resilient Future

28th - 30th September, 2026 | Kempinski Central Avenue, Dubai - UAE

Call for Institutional Case Studies

Forum Organiser

CLICKS

Center for Learning Innovations & Customized Knowledge Solutions

Call for Institutional Case Studies

The MENA Higher Education Leadership Forum (MENA-HELF), organized by the Center for Learning Innovations and Customized Knowledge Solutions (CLICKS) in Dubai, UAE, has established itself as a leading regional platform specifically geared towards higher education leaders and decision-makers from around the world. Since its launch in 2013 as a biennial event, MENA-HELF has brought together over 1,600 higher education leaders from more than 60 countries to explore emerging trends, discuss pressing challenges, and exchange innovative practices that are shaping the future of higher education.

The 7th edition of MENA-HELF, held under the theme "Global Challenges, Local Impact: Higher Education's Role in Shaping a Resilient Future," will take place in person in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on September 29th & 30th, 2025, with pre-forum workshops scheduled for September 28th. This highly interactive gathering will feature a rich and dynamic agenda, including keynote addresses, panel discussions, fireside chats, roundtable dialogues, and hands-on workshops organized to equip participants with actionable insights.

One of the key objectives of the Forum is to share institutional good practices. We invite institutions to submit case studies that highlight how they are addressing global challenges while responding to local needs, adapting to shifting demands, and implementing innovative solutions that create long-term impact.
The institutional case studies will provide Higher Education Institutions with a platform to showcase their strategies for resilience, adaptation, and transformation.

We welcome case studies that align with the Forum's theme and sub-themes.
Selected case studies by the technical committee will be presented during the Forum, providing a platform for institutions to engage with peers, exchange insights, and contribute to the ongoing conversation about higher education's role in shaping a resilient and sustainable future.

Topical Guidelines

The Technical Committee of the 7th MENA Higher Education Leadership Forum invites higher education leaders and experts to submit original institutional case studies relevant to this year's theme and sub-themes.

Submitted case studies should align with the Forum's main theme and one of its sub-themes, offering practical insights and lessons learned that other institutions can adapt and implement within their own contexts.

Authors are kindly requested to specify the sub-theme under which they are submitting their case study when sending their extended abstract.

Sub-Themes and Suggested Topics for Submission to the 7th MENA HELF

1. Embedding Sustainability and Societal Responsibility in Higher Education

We invite institution case studies that:

- Highlight innovative approaches to integrating sustainability principles across curricula and research initiatives.
- Demonstrate the development and implementation of institutional policies promoting environmental stewardship and social responsibility.
- Provide examples of successful collaborations between HEIs, government bodies, and industries to drive sustainable solutions aligned with national and global priorities.
- Showcase university-led initiatives addressing climate change, resource management, and community engagement.

2. Strengthening University-Industry-Government Partnerships for Workforce Readiness

The Technical Committee under this sub-theme, solicits institutional case studies that:

- Explore strategic collaborations that enhance student employability and align education with workforce demands.
- Illustrate the implementation of work-integrated learning models, internships, and co-op programs.
- Demonstrate how universities position themselves within innovation ecosystems to foster entrepreneurship and economic development.
- Set the ground for policy development and governance frameworks that support industry-academic partnerships.

3. Advancing Digital Transformation and AI-Driven Innovation

The Technical Committee invites institutions to submit case studies that:

- Showcase how HEIs are leveraging emerging technologies to enhance teaching, learning, and institutional operations.
- Highlight initiatives aimed at fostering digital literacy among graduates to meet evolving economic demands.

- Provide examples of the successful implementation of AI-driven tools in curriculum development, assessment, and administrative processes.
- Examine challenges and successes in adopting digital transformation strategies in higher education.

4. Fostering Global Engagement and Social Impact

Institutions are encouraged to submit institutional case studies that:

- Illustrate effective university-community partnerships promoting social equity, civic engagement, and lifelong learning.
- Highlight inclusive education models that address diverse student populations and ensure equitable access to learning opportunities.
- Showcase initiatives that drive regional economic and social development.
- Provide insights into programs that enhance intercultural competencies, global citizenship, and student mobility.

5. Bridging Higher Education and Employability

The Technical Committee is looking for institutional case studies that:

- Examine career readiness programs and skills-based curricula that prepare students for an evolving job market.
- Highlight successful entrepreneurship education models fostering innovation and job creation.
- Showcase innovative credentialing approaches such as micro-credentials and stackable degrees that recognize diverse competencies.
- Demonstrate best practices in university-industry collaborations that ensure academic offerings align with labor market needs.

6. Strengthening Leadership and Governance for Institutional Resilience

This sub-theme calls for institutional case studies that:

- Explore adaptive leadership strategies that help institutions navigate internal and external pressures.
- Demonstrate policy development initiatives that promote institutional agility, sustainability, and long-term growth.
- Showcase governance frameworks that ensure financial sustainability, talent retention, and operational resilience.
- Provide lessons learned from HEIs managing challenges such as rapid innovation in teaching methodologies and curriculum reform.

Case Study Submission Guidelines

To ensure consistency and high-quality contributions, authors are requested to carefully follow the guidelines below when preparing their case study submissions.

I. Title Page

A separate title page must be included containing the following information:

- Title of the case study
- Author(s) full name(s)
- Author(s) title/position
- Institutional affiliation(s)
- Country
- Email address for correspondence

II. Abstract Requirements

Authors must include in their submission an **abstract of 150–200 words** summarizing the case study. The abstract should briefly address the following elements: introduction and institutional context, the problem or challenge addressed, the approach or initiative implemented, the outcomes or impact achieved, and the key lessons learned.

Authors should also include up to **10 keywords** describing the case study.

III. Full Case Study Requirements

- **Length:** The full case study should be **between 12 and 15 pages in length**, excluding the title page, abstract, references and appendices.
- **Format:** The document must follow the formatting requirements below:
- Submitted in Microsoft Word (MS Word) format
- Single-spaced text
- 12-point Arial font
- The title should be centered, bold, and written in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS
- The main text and subheadings should be left-aligned

IV. Case Study Structure

The full case study should expand on the submitted abstract and include the following sections:

1. **Background of the Institution(s):** Provide an overview of the institution(s) involved in the initiative, including relevant contextual information.

2. **Context of the Case Study:** Explain the broader context and the challenges addressed by the initiative. This may include:
   - Global and/or local higher education challenges
   - Institutional needs or opportunities
   - The problem or opportunity that motivated the initiative
   - Relevant examples or supporting information should be included where appropriate.
3. **Goals and Intended Outcomes:** Describe the objectives of the initiative and the outcomes the institution aimed to achieve.
4. **Implementation Strategy:** Explain the strategy, approach, and action plan implemented by the institution(s). This may include:
   - Planning and design process
   - Stakeholder involvement
   - Key phases of implementation
   - Partnerships and resources used
5. **Results and Outcomes:** Present the outcomes achieved following implementation. This may include:
   - Institutional impact
   - Effects on students, faculty, or other stakeholders
   - Measurable indicators of success where available
6. **Reflections and Lessons Learned**

   The final section should present the **key insights gained from the initiative.** This section should ideally include a **bulleted list of key takeaways**, including:
   - Lessons learned during implementation
   - Recommendations for other institutions
   - Challenges encountered and how they were addressed
   - Positive and negative insights that could inform similar initiatives elsewhere

V. Formatting and Referencing

References must follow the Harvard Referencing Style and should be carefully checked for completeness, accuracy, and consistency.

Figures and tables should follow the guidelines below:

- Figures and tables should be placed within the main text and numbered consecutively.
- Figure and table captions should be left-aligned, written in 10-point font, and positioned at the top of the figure or table.
- Legends should be concise and clearly define any acronyms, abbreviations, or symbols used.
- If figures, charts, or tables require additional clarity, authors may be requested to submit high-resolution versions separately in PNG, JPEG, or Excel format, if needed.

VI. Submission and Review Process

- Full case studies must be **submitted by email to:**inquiries@menahelf.com by the **final submission deadline.**
- All submissions will undergo a peer review process conducted by the Forum's Technical Committee. The committee may provide feedback and request revisions where necessary.
- Authors must incorporate any required amendments and resubmit the final manuscript by the specified deadline to ensure inclusion in the Forum Case Studies Booklet. Late submissions may not be considered.

VII. Presentation Requirements

- Each accepted case study must be presented by the author in one of the dedicated case study sessions of the Forum.
- These sessions will be scheduled on: September 29th (afternoon sessions).
- If a case study has multiple authors, at least one author must be registered for the Forum to ensure inclusion in the program.

VIII. Compliance with Guidelines

Submissions that do not comply with the submission guidelines outlined above may be rejected or returned for correction prior to review.

Presentation Guidelines

- Authors of accepted case studies will be invited to deliver a 15-minute presentation during the Forum.
- Case studies not presented by at least one of the authors will not be included in the program. At least one author must be fully registered by the deadline specified under the "Important Deadlines" section.
- Presentations should provide concrete examples and insights to stimulate discussion with the audience. Authors should consider the following:
  - **Presentation Format:** Authors may choose to present their case study using PowerPoint slides or a poster presentation, depending on what best suits their content.
  - **Time Allocation:** Each presentation is strictly limited to 15 minutes, followed by a Q&A session moderated by the session chair.
    If multiple authors are involved, they must share the allotted time—no additional time will be granted.
- Authors of approved case studies will receive detailed information regarding their presentation schedule once their submission is accepted. They must confirm their participation by completing their online registration.
- All PowerPoint presentations must be submitted by the specified deadline.
  - Figures and tables should be embedded within the presentation, but high-resolution versions may be requested separately if needed.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Full Case Study New Submission Deadline

30th May 2026

Final Full Case Study Submission Deadline

20th August 2026

Deadline for Authors' Registration

20th August 2026

Deadline for PowerPoint Presentation Submission

1st September 2026

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Main Organizer

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