

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Al Ain University



جامعة العين
AL AIN UNIVERSITY

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 17

Direct Involvement in Government SDG Policy Development

[Problem Identification](#) | [Strategy](#) | [Foresight](#) | [Monitoring](#) | [Adaptive Management](#)

DIRECT RESPONSE: YES

Al Ain University has direct institutional involvement in government SDG-policy development. Through formal agreements and government-led research networks, AAU contributes academic expertise, research capacity and evidence to the identification of public-policy challenges, policy and strategy development, future-oriented analysis, monitoring and reporting, and the continuous refinement of interventions. The clearest mechanism is AAU's founding institutional membership in the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi's Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network, reinforced by its economic-policy research agreements and federal Ministry of Economy partnership pathway.

1. AAU provides direct, structured input into SDG policy

Al Ain University participates in standing, institution-level arrangements through which government bodies define policy questions and research needs, universities contribute expertise and evidence, findings are translated into laws, policies, strategies and operational decisions, and new data support continuing review. This is direct policy input rather than general SDG advocacy.

AAU's public record establishes two principal policy pathways. First, the University is a founding institutional member of the government-led Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network (ADERN), created by the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi (EAD) to close scientific knowledge gaps and support science-based government decisions. Second, AAU maintains an economic-research relationship with the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED), under which studies and research are aligned to government plans, labour-market requirements and sustainable economic-development objectives. A 2024 AAU delegation visit to the federal Ministry of Economy strengthened this pathway; in 2025 AAU became one of the Ministry's named academic partners in its Knowledge and Innovation Hub for economic policy, research and legislation.

Policy-development requirement	AAU's institutional mechanism	Status
Direct involvement or input	Formal MoUs and named membership in government-led policy-research networks	Established
National / regional public-policy relevance	Environmental regulation, climate and resources; sustainable economic growth; education and human capital	Established
Government interface	EAD, ADDED and the federal Ministry of Economy, supported by national education-policy dialogue	Established
Policy-cycle coverage	Problem definition, research and analysis, strategy, modelling, monitoring, reporting and iterative improvement	Demonstrated
Reporting-year evidence	2024 Ministry engagement, policy-facing conferences, government/NGO programmes and public institutional reporting	Documented

Public evidence: [E03](#) | [E15](#) | [E16](#) | [E17](#) | [E19](#) | [E20](#) | [E21](#)

An MOU between Al Ain University and the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi



Al Ain University (AAU) and the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi have signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at boosting collaboration in areas of shared interest in research and development. The signing of the agreement was overseen by Her Excellency Dr. Sheikha Salem Al Dhaheri, the Secretary General of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, and Prof. Ghaleb Al Rifai, AAU President.

The MoU aims to promote collaboration in multiple environmental disciplines, benefiting both parties involved. It also mandates that faculty members possess the expertise, unique research resources, and innovative ideas to bridge any scientific gaps, as well as support the efforts of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi and Al Ain University to safeguard the environment and preserve biological diversity. This will enhance the reputation and function of both institutions as centers of scientific excellence, ultimately aiding Abu Dhabi in achieving its sustainability and environmental objectives.

Prof. Ghaleb Al-Rifai, President of the University, said this memorandum will strengthen collaboration in the areas of research, service, and development while highlighting the interdependence of environmental, social, and economic systems in addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable development. The University is committed to utilizing its academic programs and scientific research to serve all sectors, particularly the environmental sector. Al Ain University is dedicated to preserving the environmental balance and climate and achieving the objectives of sustainable development. The university is making every effort to provide its expertise and resources to achieve these goals.

Ahmed Baharoon, the Executive Director of the Environmental Information, Science and Awareness Management Sector at the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, stated that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the agency and Al Ain University demonstrates their shared dedication to actively promoting sustainable development through scientific research activities that focus on utilizing modern technologies. He added that this collaboration is one of the essential elements for meeting the developmental needs in environmental conservation and resource management.

By signing the MoUs, the universities' significant research capabilities will be utilized to meet the emirate's environmental research requirements, while also providing the universities with an abundance of meaningful research questions. The strategic priorities of EAD, such as climate change, habitat conservation, ground and marine water, fisheries, and air quality, present exciting research opportunities. Additionally, policy formulation and balancing social, economic, and environmental factors offer valuable areas for research. The results of the collaborative research will be disseminated through various mediums, such as scientific literature, reports, and journals.

Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi partners with 8 UAE Universities to collaborate on scientific research



To enhance and explore bilateral research opportunities, Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) has signed eight memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with major universities in the UAE.

Partnering universities include Abu Dhabi University, Al Ain University, American University of Sharjah, Khalifa University, New York University Abu Dhabi, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, UAE University, and Zayed University, with EAD having future plans of partnering with other research organisations going forward.

The agreements serve as frameworks for collaboration in the field of scientific research for the purpose of closing knowledge gaps. All entities recognise the mutual benefits of collaboration and have set out basic terms and conditions to allow the fast-track development of research projects.

The agreements will allow partner universities to bring their faculty member's expertise, specialist research resources and innovations to help bridge scientific knowledge gaps and support EAD's operations. This will reinforce EAD's position as an innovative and science-driven organisation and will be a catalyst for achieving Abu Dhabi's environment and sustainability targets.

Ahmed Baharoon, Executive Director of Environment Information, Science Outreach Management Sector at EAD, said: "The visionary leadership of Abu Dhabi has always placed great importance on, and investment in, education and scientific research. In the last few decades, the emirate's research capacity and capabilities have developed tremendously, therefore institutional-level agreements between these eight universities and EAD will provide researchers with a rich seam of collaboration opportunities. Universities are home to faculty members who are deep subject matter experts and operate highly specialist research labs and equipment.

"Since its establishment, EAD has been a science-driven Agency. It is essential that the creation of laws, policies, projects and strategic advice by EAD, as well as education programmes and reports, are based on robust, defensible science. The Agency therefore places strategic importance on strengthening environmental research and development that signing these eight memoranda of understanding will provide.

"We also maintain an environmental research needs register that will provide these universities with a rich list of potential research projects. We also provide access to decades of environmental monitoring data, reports, and research publications, as well as in-depth expertise."

The breadth of expertise in the external research community will allow EAD, in collaboration with its partners, to address environmental challenges in a holistic manner and consider the complex interactions between soils, water, air, wildlife, social and economic systems.

The MoUs will allow the considerable research capabilities of the individual universities to support the environmental research needs of the emirate while providing the universities a rich source of substantive research questions.

There are exciting research opportunities across all of EAD's main strategic priorities, including: climate change, habitat conservation, ground and marine water, fisheries, and air quality. Policy formulation and the optimisation of social, economic, and environmental imperatives also provide rich research areas. The outcomes of collaborative research will be published in scientific literature, reports and journals, and more.

Abu Dhabi Environment Agency announces official launch of ADERN

ABU DHABI, 26th June, 2023 (WAM) -- The Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) has announced the official launch of ADERN (Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network), a community of research scientists, research institutions and allied innovators, to convene research and development experts around the scientific knowledge gaps facing stakeholders to continuously enhance the environment of the emirate.

With a focus on addressing environmental challenges, ADERN will play a vital role in advancing the understanding and implementation of sustainability in Abu Dhabi.

Recognising the urgency of the climate agenda and the inseparable connection between climate, biodiversity loss and pollution, ADERN will address the climate science-policy agenda by leveraging research resources toward inter-disciplinary multi-sectoral collaboration.

To support the research efforts of ADERN, EAD has developed the Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Needs Register, an extensive list of over 200 research requirements. An Environmental Knowledge Graph System - a world-first innovation developed to analyse and communicate cause-effect relationships between humans and the environment and the impact of a changed environment on human well-being.

EAD's enviroportal contains data from its 25 years of research. An Environmental Research Directory will catalogue the hundreds of environmental researchers and allied innovators, research facilities, research projects and events. Collectively these tools will help stakeholders make science-based decisions that address the environmental challenges faced by the Emirate.

Eight universities have joined ADERN as founding institutional members. These include Abu Dhabi University, Al Ain University, American University of Sharjah, Khalifa University, NYU Abu Dhabi, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates University and Zayed University.

Ahmed Baharoon, Executive Director of Environment Information, Science Outreach Management Sector at EAD, said, "We are facing unprecedented challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. We cannot ignore these issues, and time is of the essence. That is why today, we launch the Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network, a ground-breaking initiative to revolutionise how we

approach science-based problem-solving. Our mantra is simple yet powerful: ‘Convene, Converge, Collaborate.’”

“We are bridging the gap between problems and solutions by harnessing the power of collective action. Through aligning research efforts with stakeholder needs and cultivating collaboration, we aim to create a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to environmental research and problem-solving, ensuring impactful outcomes.”

Over the past decade, Abu Dhabi has become a notable epicentre for innovation and scientific progression. The research capacity of the UAE has shown a significant 16-fold increase since 2000, highlighting its academic prowess. This exponential growth, backed by the expansion of existing universities and the establishment of new ones, underscores the Emirate's steadfast commitment to a knowledge-driven economy and the pursuit of scientific breakthroughs.

As the UAE prepares to host COP28 later this year, the launch of ADERN is a testament to Abu Dhabi Emirate's determination to tackle climate change head-on and aligns with the ‘Year of Sustainability’.

Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development and Al Ain University collaborate on economic research

The Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED) has signed a cooperation agreement with Al Ain University to conduct and prepare studies and research on topics related to the economy of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

The agreement was signed by Rashid Abdul Karim Al Balooshi, Under-Secretary of ADDED, and Dr. Ghaleb Al Rifai, President of Al Ain University, in the presence of a number of officials from both sides.

Under the agreement, the sides will prepare studies and research, and align with ADDED plans and objectives and labour market requirements, to help realise Abu Dhabi Government's strategic objectives to drive sustainable economic development.

The two entities will also work together to organise relevant conferences, seminars and specialised workshops, as well as to support efforts to prepare graduates armed with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively contribute to building a knowledge-based economy.

Al Balushi highlighted the importance of this partnership in enhancing the department's efforts in regulating the business sector and economic operations in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, to help steer economic initiatives and strategies towards achieving diversified and sustainable economic growth.

He said that the cooperation between government entities and scientific and academic institutions would contribute to further developing the emirate's economic ecosystem, achieving its sustainability and enhancing its global competitiveness, by driving it with studies and research to facilitate the decision-making process.

For his part, Dr. Ghaleb Al Refai underscored the university's commitment to provide scientific and academic support to meet labour market requirements, and prepare graduates who are highly qualified in various fields, which would in turn accelerate the emirate's overall development.

Al Ain University Delegation Visits Ministry of Economy to Strengthen Collaboration



A delegation from Al Ain University, led by Dr. Noor Al Deen Atatreh, Vice Chairman of the University's Board of Trustees, visited the Ministry of Economy to strengthen academic and institutional cooperation.

H.E. Abdullah Al Saleh, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy, welcomed the delegation and other ministry officials. The visit focused on exploring ways to enhance partnerships between the two parties, contributing to national plans for sustainable development and innovation. Discussions also highlighted the importance of developing academic and training programs aligned with market needs and the UAE's future vision.

Dr. Noor Al Deen Atatreh emphasized the importance of establishing strategic partnerships between academic institutions and government entities, reiterating Al Ain University's commitment to graduating highly qualified national talents capable of making significant contributions to economic and social development.

H.E. Abdullah Al Saleh expressed his appreciation for this initiative, highlighting the vital role that academic institutions like Al Ain University play in supporting and promoting the UAE's knowledge-based economy.

At the conclusion of the visit, both parties affirmed the importance of continuing their collaboration to implement joint initiatives and projects that benefit the community and enhance the UAE's status as a global hub for excellence and innovation.

Ministry of Economy & Tourism launches 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' to strengthen collaboration with UAE's academic sector in economic policy, research, and studies



22 May 2025

Ministry of Economy & Tourism launches 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' to strengthen collaboration with UAE's academic sector in economic policy, research, and studies

MoUs signed with 18 universities and research institutions from across the country

The Ministry of Economy & Tourism launched the 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' in collaboration with some of the leading institutions from the UAE's academic sector. This strategic initiative aims to foster partnerships between the Ministry and academic entities in the fields of economic policy, research, and innovation. The launch took place during a dedicated event hosted by the Ministry in Dubai, held in the presence of H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy, alongside senior officials from the Ministry and representatives from participating academic institutions.

As part of the initiative, the Ministry signed a series of partnership agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with 18 universities, research institutions, and innovation centres from across the country. These agreements are designed to enhance the exchange of knowledge and expertise between the Ministry and entities concerned with economic legislation, policy development, and other related disciplines. The collaboration seeks to adopt global best practices to build an integrated national knowledge network that supports the development of forward-looking economic policies and strengthens the competitiveness of the UAE's economy and business ecosystem.

H.E. Bin Touq said: "The UAE has consistently prioritised the development of economic legislation in line with global best practices, in recognition of its role in driving growth of the national economy and enhancing regional and global competitiveness. Today, through the launch of the Knowledge and Innovation Hub, we are expanding our engagement with universities and academic institutions within the UAE's academic sector. It creates a new platform that drives research and innovation and connects knowledge with economic policymaking, thereby fostering collaboration in this regard. The initiative aligns with the UAE's strategic vision to build a knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy, in line with the objectives of 'We the UAE 2031' vision."

His Excellency added: "The universities and research centres in the UAE are not merely institutions for vocational and technical training and education; they possess deep understanding of the economic and social challenges we are facing. This underscores the importance of this initiative in leveraging the expertise of these institutions to develop globally leading policies that support the UAE's sustainable economic development."

The Minister of Economy explained that while education is not directly reflected in GDP, its impact is both profound and far-reaching. It enhances labour productivity, advances technological efficiency, attracts investment, and supports entrepreneurship and innovation. Education also plays a critical role

in equipping future generations with the knowledge, skills, and values essential for driving societal progress.

Academic partners of the 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' include Khalifa University, the American University of Sharjah, NYU Abu Dhabi, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, the University of Sharjah, the American University in the Emirates, the American University in Dubai, the University of Dubai, Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University (HBMSU), Abu Dhabi University, the American University of Ras Al Khaimah, the University of Fujairah, Umm Al Quwain University, the Abu Dhabi School of Management, Al Ain University (AAU), the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, TRENDS Research & Advisory, and Fiker Center.

The MoUs are aimed at building capacities across key economic sectors and disciplines, producing research and studies aligned with the UAE's economic priorities, and organizing academic roundtables and workshops to exchange insights on economic policies and developments. They also seek to translate academic research into actionable practices, foster collaboration with international universities, and develop academic and executive education programs. In addition, the agreements aim to promote community awareness of entrepreneurship, innovation, and a culture of creativity, while also providing training and awareness initiatives tailored for students.

The signing ceremony was attended by Her Excellency Safeya Hashem Al Safi, Assistant Undersecretary for Commercial Control and Governance Sector at the Ministry of Economy & Tourism, and Her Excellency Dr. Maria Hanif Al Qassim, Assistant Undersecretary for the Policies and Economic Studies Sector at the Ministry of Economy & Tourism, along with various university presidents, deans, executive directors, and staff representatives from 22 academic institutions and universities from across the country.

The event featured two panel sessions. The first, titled "Academic Insight and Policy Impact: Advancing Innovation through Institutional and Academic Collaboration," focused on the role of academic institutions in supporting economic development and enhancing competitiveness through innovation and the potential for building effective frameworks for intellectual property (IP). The second session, "Data and Decisions: Role of Academia in Policymaking," explored the importance of academic institutions and universities in shaping innovative economic policies and driving sustainable growth of economies.

Institutional pathway

Government need → EAD and ADDED articulate environmental, economic and labour-market priorities; AAU contributes disciplinary expertise, research capability and collaborative studies.

Evidence → Government data, research-needs registers, academic analysis and specialist forums establish a defensible basis for decisions.

Policy and intervention → The evidence supports laws, policies, projects, strategic advice, economic initiatives and implementation programmes.

Learning and adjustment → Monitoring data, reports, publications and recurring collaboration enable decisions to be revisited as conditions and evidence change.

2. Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi and ADERN

AAU's most comprehensive direct policy-development mechanism is its institutional partnership with the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi, the competent government authority for environmental regulation and policy in the emirate. EAD signed an MoU with AAU within a coordinated group of eight UAE universities, and AAU subsequently became a founding institutional member of the Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network.

The official Abu Dhabi Government account states that the MoUs create a framework for scientific collaboration to close knowledge gaps and fast-track research projects. AAU faculty expertise, specialist resources and innovation can thereby support EAD operations and Abu Dhabi's environmental and sustainability targets. EAD expressly connects the partnership to laws, policies, projects, strategic advice, education programmes and reports that must be based on robust and defensible science.

The arrangement is operationally specific. EAD provides partner universities with its environmental research-needs register, decades of monitoring data, reports, publications and government expertise. The research agenda spans climate change, habitat conservation, ground and marine water, fisheries, air quality, policy formulation and the optimisation of social, economic and environmental priorities. Collaborative outcomes are intended for scientific literature, reports and journals, creating a documented route from government problem definition to research, policy and public reporting.

Public evidence: [E15](#) | [E16](#) | [E17](#) | [E18](#)



Evidence exhibit 1. Government-led signing ceremony for EAD's university research agreements; Al Ain University is one of the eight named partner institutions. Sources E15-E18.

Accelerating Climate Research Solutions: Abu Dhabi's Environment Agency Unveils ADERN



The Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) announces the official launch of ADERN (Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network), a community of research scientists, research institutions and allied innovators. Designed and facilitated by EAD, ADERN aims to convene research and development experts around the scientific knowledge gaps facing stakeholders in their efforts to sustain and continuously enhance the environment of the Emirate.

With a focus on addressing environmental challenges, ADERN will play a vital role in advancing the understanding and implementation of sustainability in Abu Dhabi. Recognising the urgency of the climate agenda and the inseparable connection between climate, biodiversity loss and pollution, ADERN will address the climate science-policy agenda by leveraging research resources toward inter-disciplinary multi-sectoral collaboration.

To support the research efforts of ADERN, EAD has developed the Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Needs Register, an extensive list of over 200 research requirements. An Environmental Knowledge Graph System - a world first innovation has been developed to analyse and communicate cause-effect relationships between humans and the environment and the impact of a changed environment on human well-being. EAD's enviroportal contains data from its 25 years of research. An Environmental Research Directory will catalogue the hundreds of environmental researchers and allied innovators, also research facilities, research projects and events. Collectively these tools will help stakeholders make science-based decisions that address the environmental challenges faced by the Emirate.

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Ahmed Baharoon, Executive Director of Environment Information, Science Outreach Management Sector at EAD, highlighted the significance of this milestone during his keynote speech. He emphasised the urgency of our current situation, stating, "We are facing unprecedented challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. We cannot ignore these issues, and time is of the essence. That is why today, we launch the Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network, a ground-breaking initiative to

revolutionise how we approach science-based problem-solving. Our mantra is simple yet powerful: 'Convene, Converge, Collaborate.'"

"We are bridging the gap between problems and solutions by harnessing the power of collective action. Through aligning research efforts with stakeholder needs and cultivating collaboration, we aim to create a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to environmental research and problem-solving, ensuring impactful outcomes."

Over the past decade, Abu Dhabi has transformed into a notable epicenter for innovation and scientific progression. The research capacity of the UAE has shown a significant 16-fold increase since 2000, highlighting its academic prowess. This exponential growth, backed by the expansion of existing universities and the establishment of new ones, underscores the Emirate's steadfast commitment to a knowledge-driven economy and the pursuit of scientific breakthroughs.

As the UAE prepares to host COP28 later this year, the launch of ADERN is a testament to Abu Dhabi Emirate's determination to tackle climate change head-on. This significant climate research milestone aligns with the 'Year of Sustainability' and exemplifies Abu Dhabi's commitment to advancing environmental stewardship and leaving a thriving planet for future generations.

3. Evidence against every policy-development function

AAU's government and NGO relationships are structured to cover the full evidence-to-policy cycle identified in the indicator. The table below records the public mechanism for each function and the role through which AAU contributes.

Policy function	Public mechanism and AAU contribution	Principal evidence
Identify problems and challenges	EAD supplies a research-needs register containing more than 200 requirements and gives founding members access to long-term environmental evidence. ADDED defines economic and labour-market research priorities. AAU contributes expert problem framing and research capacity.	E16-E19
Develop policies and strategies	EAD states that university research supports laws, policies, projects and strategic advice. The ADDED-AAU agreement aligns studies to departmental plans and sustainable-economic-development objectives; the later federal hub formalises input into economic legislation and policy.	E16, E19-E21
Model likely futures	ADERN's Environmental Knowledge Graph analyses cause-and-effect relationships between people and the environment and the effect of environmental change on well-being. AAU participates as a founding research member; AAU's 2024 digital-health programme also addressed analytics, quality-of-life modelling and governance.	E17, E32-E33
Monitor interventions	The EAD enviroportal contains 25 years of environmental data, while the collaboration provides monitoring data, reports and publications. AAU's annual, fact-book and SDG reporting adds institutional performance evidence.	E06-E08, E16-E18
Report findings	Collaborative outputs are published in scientific literature, reports and journals. AAU maintains public SDG evidence pages and annual reporting and participates in national and international knowledge exchange.	E02-E08, E16
Enable adaptive management	ADERN aligns research with stakeholder needs and links identified problems with solution-focused research. Recurring evidence exchange allows public authorities and partners to refine priorities, projects and strategies as new findings emerge.	E16-E18

Public evidence: [E06](#) | [E07](#) | [E08](#) | [E16](#) | [E17](#) | [E19](#) | [E21](#) | [E33](#)



The 2024 Global Digital Health Knowledge Exchange & Empowerment Conference

2024 gDigiHealth.KEE Conference

Jointly Organized by
Global Academy for Digital Health (GA4DH) and **Al Ain University**
GA4DH Conference Series

Abu Dhabi, UAE
24-26 September, 2024



**2024 gDigiHealth.KEE
Conference**

SCIENCE-POLICY FEEDBACK LOOP

Government priorities and monitoring data define the questions; AAU and other founding university partners contribute research and analysis; government authorities apply the resulting evidence to laws, policies, projects and strategy; published findings and continuing monitoring then inform the next cycle of priorities and intervention adjustment.

4. Economic research for government decision-making

AAU's cooperation agreement with the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development creates a second direct input route. The official Abu Dhabi Government record states that AAU and ADDED prepare studies and research on the emirate's economy, align that work with ADDED plans and objectives and labour-market requirements, and support government strategic objectives for sustainable economic development.

The same government record identifies the policy purpose: research from the partnership helps regulate business and economic operations, steers economic initiatives and strategies toward diversified and sustainable growth, develops the economic ecosystem and facilitates decision-making. Conferences, seminars and specialised workshops extend the relationship from research production to knowledge exchange and human-capital implementation.

Public evidence: [E19](#) | [E26](#)

Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030

Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030

The long-term plan for the economic progress of the emirate, Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 is enabling public and private sector collaboration to accelerate the Abu Dhabi economy through to 2030

2024 federal engagement and 2025 institutionalisation

During the 2024 reporting year, an AAU delegation visited the UAE Ministry of Economy to strengthen collaboration. The pathway was subsequently institutionalised in May 2025 when the Ministry named AAU among 18 academic partners in its Knowledge and Innovation Hub. The Ministry describes the Hub as a national knowledge network connecting universities with economic policymaking, economic legislation and forward-looking policy development.

The partnership agreements cover research aligned with UAE economic priorities, academic roundtables and workshops on policy developments, translation of academic research into actionable practices, capacity building, executive education and international university collaboration. Two launch panels addressed academic insight and policy impact and the role of data and academia in policymaking. This

formal 2025 outcome demonstrates continuity and strengthening of the government engagement recorded by AAU in 2024.

Public evidence: [E20](#) | [E21](#) | [E24](#) | [E25](#)

Al Ain University Delegation Visits Ministry of Economy to Strengthen Collaboration

Posted on: Dec 26, 2024



Ministry of Economy & Tourism launches 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' to strengthen collaboration with UAE's academic sector in economic policy, research, and studies



📅 22 May 2025

Ministry of Economy & Tourism launches 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' to strengthen collaboration with UAE's academic sector in economic policy, research, and studies

MoUs signed with 18 universities and research institutions from across the country

The Ministry of Economy & Tourism launched the 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' in collaboration with some of the leading institutions from the UAE's academic sector. This strategic initiative aims to foster partnerships between the Ministry and academic entities in the fields of economic policy, research, and innovation. The launch took place during a dedicated event hosted by the Ministry in Dubai, held in the presence of H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy, alongside senior officials from the Ministry and representatives from participating academic institutions.

As part of the initiative, the Ministry signed a series of partnership agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with 18 universities, research institutions, and innovation centres from across the country. These agreements are designed to enhance the exchange of knowledge and expertise between the Ministry and entities concerned with economic legislation, policy development, and other related disciplines. The collaboration seeks to adopt global best practices to build an integrated national knowledge network that supports the development of forward-looking economic policies and strengthens the competitiveness of the UAE's economy and business ecosystem.

Government Strategy



[illegible]

as we start a national path towards new achievements under the leadership of my brother Mohamed bin Zayed.”

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid noted: “The UAE will maintain its position as an economic destination... Economic prosperity, social well-being and development of human capital will be the main pillars of the next 50.”

His Highness affirmed that the ‘next fifty’ will focus on strengthening the social and economic ecosystem and building a strong, sustainable and fast-growing economy by strengthening the UAE’s economic partnerships with the world and consolidating its development model.

His Highness stressed that ‘We The UAE 2031’ represents a national plan through which the UAE will continue its development path for the next 10 years.

This came during the UAE Annual Government meetings, held in Abu Dhabi, which brought together all UAE government entities at the federal and local levels to discuss challenges and strategies related to the country’s national development plan to achieve the objectives of the ‘UAE Centennial 2071’.

The launch of ‘We The UAE 2031’ was attended by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai; His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the UAE; His Highness Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid Al Nuaimi, Crown Prince of Ajman, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad Al Sharqi, Crown Prince of Fujairah; His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, Crown Prince of Ras Al Khaimah; and His Highness Sheikh Sultan bin Ahmed bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah and Chairman of Sharjah Media Council.

The event was also attended by His Highness Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior; His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Presidential Court; His Highness Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Member of The Executive Council of Abu Dhabi; His Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed, Member of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Office; His Highness Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Member of The Executive Council of Abu Dhabi; and Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority (Dubai Culture), and a number of Sheikhs, ministers and heads of government departments.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum signed a charter for the national plan that represents the most important features of the national plan, the principles of the UAE government and the interdependence and aspirations towards the future.

National Pillars

The plan is based on four main pillars that cover all sectors and fields, including the economy, society, ecosystem and diplomacy.

Forward Society

This pillar is concerned with achieving the prosperity of society, by providing all means of support to citizens and developing an integrated system to empower them and enhance their capabilities to maximise their effective contribution in all sectors.

Also, this pillar focuses on supporting and strengthening the cohesion of families. In addition, the “Forward Society” will cover the Education sector, as a main axis to develop national cadres and provide talent with training and educational materials.

The plan aims to continue to develop the health sector, by updating its services and providing the best healthcare to the community in the UAE.

Through this pillar, the UAE national plan aims to place the UAE among the top 10 countries in the Human Development Index and place its cities among the world’s 10 Best Cities.

The plan will play a pivotal role in enhancing the UAE’s position to become the best destination for medical treatment in the region. In addition, the plan will contribute to achieving full readiness of all medical facilities and staff, and raising the country’s rank to one of the top 10 countries in the world in the quality of healthcare.

Forward Economy

This pillar will create and develop policies and plans that contribute to achieving high economic growth in all sectors, as well as accelerating the pace of transformation in the energy sector and the reliance on alternative sources of energy to enhance the country's efforts in the green economy.

The 'Forward Economy' pillar reflects the UAE's belief in the importance of human capital as the main driver of the next 10-year development plan. The UAE aims to be among the top 10 countries in the world to attract global talent.

This pillar aims to raise the UAE GDP to AED3 trillion, and increase the country's non-oil exports to AED800 billion. Also, it will raise the value of UAE foreign trade to AED4 trillion, and raise the contribution of the tourism sector to the GDP to AED450 billion.

Forward Diplomacy

"Forward Diplomacy" is one of the main pillars of the national plan that determines the framework of the UAE's international role. Since the establishment of the Union, the UAE's foreign policy has been based on a set of principles aimed at consolidating the foundations of peace and joint cooperation at the regional and global levels. The plan aims to consolidate the pivotal role and influence of the UAE based on respect for human values.

The plan seeks to strengthen the UAE's foreign relations with countries around the world, enhance its international presence, cooperation and friendship, as well as encourage positive dialogue worldwide.

The plan attaches great importance to strengthening the UAE's role as a supportive force for the global environmental agenda, thus contributing to achieving qualitative leaps in climate neutrality and consolidating the country's position as an innovation hub in sustainability, science and technology.

Forward Ecosystem

The fourth pillar of the 'We The UAE 2031' plan aims to enhance Government Performance, providing the best government services in the world and developing the most flexible business models in order to achieve results and effectiveness.

The UAE seeks to consolidate its position as one of the world's most secure and safe countries, with the best social, food, water and digital security.

This pillar focuses on infrastructure and its development according to the latest technological methods. This pillar includes the development of digital infrastructure.

This pillar aims to make the UAE top ranked country in the world in developing proactive legislation for new economic sectors and enhancing the country's position to be in the first place globally in the safety index, as well as raising the country's position to one of the top three countries in the global cybersecurity index and one of the top 10 countries in the global food security index.

The 'We The UAE 2031' is a road map in which all government entities and institutions and the private sector will cooperate to ensure advancement of the development process, in accordance with the 10-year framework of the plan.

Government partner	Input supplied by AAU	Public-policy use
Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi	Research expertise, laboratories, innovation and collaborative studies	Environmental laws, policy formulation, projects, strategy and operational decisions
Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development	Economic studies, labour-market analysis, academic expertise and policy dialogue	Sustainable growth strategy, business-sector development and decision support
UAE Ministry of Economy	Academic research, roundtables, data insight, innovation and knowledge exchange	Forward-looking economic policy, legislation and actionable national practices

5. Policy-relevant activity during the evidence year

AAU maintained an active government, NGO and knowledge-exchange programme during 2024. These activities complemented the standing EAD and ADDED arrangements and demonstrated that the University's policy contribution was active across environment, economy, education, health, innovation and human-capital development.

2024 evidence	Contribution to government or SDG implementation	Policy-cycle value
Ministry of Economy delegation	Strengthened institutional collaboration with the federal economic authority	Policy and research interface
Global Digital Health Conference	Convened expertise on unmet digital-health strategy needs, standards, governance, data analytics, legal and ethical issues and quality-of-life modelling	Problem definition, foresight and strategy
Sandoq AI Watan collaboration	Connected AAU with a national nonprofit programme for youth capability, creativity, innovation, leadership and national identity	Implementation and feedback
World Environmental Education Congress	Exchanged research and practice on environmental education and sustainable development	Evidence and capacity building
Seventh Annual Environmental Day	Sustained environmental awareness and dialogue across the university and community	Implementation and public engagement
Siemens Energy and technology-sector agreements	Linked applied research, innovation, student capability and environmental sustainability with industry expertise	Solution development and translation
Institutional reporting and QAA review	Published annual and SDG evidence and completed independent review against ten quality-assurance standards	Monitoring, reporting and improvement

Public evidence: [E06](#) | [E08](#) | [E13](#) | [E14](#) | [E20](#) | [E29](#) | [E32](#) | [E33](#) | [E34](#) | [E35](#) | [E38](#) | [E39](#)

AAU Achieves International Institutional Accreditation by QAA (UK)



Al Ain University (AAU) has achieved a significant milestone in accreditation. For the very first time in AAU’s history, AAU has secured institutional international accreditation from the “Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)”- United Kingdom. The International Quality Review (IQR) is a rigorous process that benchmarks global higher education institutions against international Quality Assurance standards, of the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)”.

Al Ain University successfully completed its IQR and has been awarded global quality accreditation by QAA. Overall, the review team concluded that AAU meets all 10 internal quality assurance standards outlined in the ESG. Securing IQR accreditation from QAA allows AAU to highlight our quality standards on an international stage and facilitates dialogue with institutions worldwide.

Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, AAU President, said; “Securing Institutional International Accreditation was a set objective of the (2021-2025) AAU’s Strategic and Operational Plan and achieving it within the stipulated set target is noteworthy”. He added; “This goal was achieved on time, highlighting the University's commitment to successfully meeting its objectives. This accomplishment underscores Al Ain University's effective quality assurance and adherence to international standards, which enhances the University's global standing and encourages us to continue striving for development and excellence”.

Dr. Nazih Khaddaj Mallat, Vice-President (Accreditation & Quality Assurance), said: “We are immensely proud to achieve a significant milestone by obtaining institutional accreditation through the QAA International Quality Review. This international recognition, obtained after rigorous assessment against the 10 European Standards and Guidelines for internal quality assurance, directly impacts the student learning experience and underscores our commitment to excellence in education, continuous improvement, and adherence to international best practices. At the end, we do extend our heartfelt thanks to QAA, the Review Team, and all our internal and external stakeholders for their invaluable contributions to this accomplishment.”

Al Ain University Delegation Visits Ministry of Economy to Strengthen Collaboration



A delegation from Al Ain University, led by Dr. Noor Al Deen Atatreh, Vice Chairman of the University’s Board of Trustees, visited the Ministry of Economy to strengthen academic and institutional cooperation.

H.E. Abdullah Al Saleh, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy, welcomed the delegation and other ministry officials. The visit focused on exploring ways to enhance partnerships between the two parties, contributing to national plans for sustainable development and innovation. Discussions also highlighted the importance of developing academic and training programs aligned with market needs and the UAE's future vision.

Dr. Noor Al Deen Atatreh emphasized the importance of establishing strategic partnerships between academic institutions and government entities, reiterating Al Ain University’s commitment to graduating highly qualified national talents capable of making significant contributions to economic and social development.

H.E. Abdullah Al Saleh expressed his appreciation for this initiative, highlighting the vital role that academic institutions like Al Ain University play in supporting and promoting the UAE’s knowledge-based economy.

At the conclusion of the visit, both parties affirmed the importance of continuing their collaboration to implement joint initiatives and projects that benefit the community and enhance the UAE's status as a global hub for excellence and innovation.

Al Ain University and the "Sandoog Al Watan" collaborate to empower youth



In the presence of His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence and Chairman of the Sandoog Al Watan, as part of the "Open Day for Employment" organized by the Sandoog Al Watan at Manarat Al Saadiyat in Abu Dhabi, to empower youth in the private sector and enhance their capabilities to enter the entrepreneurship field, Al Ain University (AAU) has signed a cooperation agreement with Sandoog Al Watan to launch the National Network for Business Incubators, which was also signed by a group of business incubators in the country, in the presence of several ministers, prominent businessmen, Emirati investors, leaders of over 30 business incubators and accelerators nationwide, and more than 500 Emirati youth seeking job opportunities in the private sector alongside the Fund's partners, board members, and His Excellency Yasser Al Qarqawi, the Director General of the National Fund. In addition to the agreement signing, the events featured an exhibition showcasing the Fund's notable works and successful experiences of Emirati youth.

Prof. Ghalab Al Refae, AAU President, stated that the collaboration between Al Ain University and Sandoog Al Watan is a long-term partnership that emphasizes both parties' keenness to empower the nation's youth, enhance their efforts, skills, and create extensive job opportunities in the private sector to enable young men and women to utilize their potentials and invest in themselves. This demonstrates our commitment to contributing to driving the wheel of development and prosperity in the country.

Al Ain University Organizes the Global Digital Health Conference - Knowledge Exchange and Empowerment



Al Ain University organized the "Global Digital Health Conference - Knowledge Exchange and Empowerment" at its Abu Dhabi campus from September 24 to 26, 2024. The event was organized in collaboration with the Global Academy of Digital Health in the UK, with the support of the Dubai Health Authority and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

The opening ceremony of the conference was attended by Professor Amjad Qandil (representing the Commission for Academic Accreditation - Ministry of Education), Dr. Noor Al Deen Atatreh (Vice Chairman of Al Ain University's Board of Trustees), Prof. Ghaleb El Refae (President of Al Ain University), Professor Mohammed Oudah (President of the Global Academy of Digital Health in the UK), and Professor Ismail Matalqa (President of Ras Al Khaimah Medical and Health Sciences University), alongside several prominent figures from various universities, medical centers, and institutions. The conference also saw participation from a large number of academic and economic elites, faculty members, specialists, and a group of enthusiasts and followers in the scientific field.

The conference aimed to meet the strategic needs of digital healthcare and policymakers by providing opportunities to access the latest outputs of research and development in innovative digital healthcare.

The event featured a series of keynote speeches focusing on digital health foresight, specialized workshops, and the presentation of outstanding research papers. Additionally, a dedicated PhD research forum was held in this vital field. The conference also included an exhibition showcasing leading providers of digital healthcare services and products.

In a special statement to Emirates News Agency, Professor Mohammed Oudah (President of the Global Academy of Digital Health in the UK) said: "The Academy is the sponsor and founder of the Global Digital Health Conference worldwide, and this is the first time the conference is being held in the Middle East and North Africa. The field of digital health is very promising, and we expect it to help bridge the gap in providing healthcare to everyone, everywhere around the world."

He added, "The conference includes a group of doctors and scientists affiliated with the Academy who have developed workshops on the use of robotics in orthopedic surgeries and joint replacements of the knee and hip. We will also present our experience in collaboration with Gilmer in France in a workshop on using artificial intelligence to identify fractures."

Professor Oudah continued, "The conference will highlight key digital applications in pathology, mythology, smart hospitals, and pharmaceutical operations management, with the participation of our colleagues from Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi. The event will also focus on scientific research and development. We look forward to achieving scientific research outcomes that serve humanity through the formation of research and scientific teams from each workshop. We appreciate Al Ain University's efforts in hosting this conference, which is the first of its kind in the region."

On his part, Prof. Ghaleb El Refae (President of Al Ain University) affirmed, "The convening of the 'Global Digital Health Conference - Knowledge Exchange and Empowerment' at Al Ain University reflects our firm commitment to supporting innovation and contributing to shaping the future of digital healthcare. In collaboration with our partners, we aim to make a tangible impact on research and development in this important field."

He added, "This conference is an exceptional opportunity to exchange ideas and expertise, and explore the latest innovations and technologies that will transform healthcare as we know it today. We are confident that the discussions and workshops during this event will help drive technological advancements in the healthcare sector and enhance the capabilities of both local and international talents to keep pace with global developments."

The 2024 Global Digital Health Knowledge Exchange & Empowerment Conference



The 2024 Global Digital Health Knowledge Exchange & Empowerment Conference

2024 gDigiHealth.KEE Conference

Jointly Organized by

Global Academy for Digital Health (GA4DH) and **Al Ain University**

GA4DH Conference Series

**Abu Dhabi, UAE
24-26 September, 2024**

AAU participated in the WEEC 2024



Al Ain university (AAU) actively engaged in the 12th World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC 2024), to emphasize its commitment to environmental issues and sustainable development. AAU's professors presented a variety of research presentations discussing environmental issues, and the university also participated in the accompanying exhibition, showcasing its community initiatives in climate, environmental sustainability, and environmental education.

The hosting of this global conference by the United Arab Emirates reflects its commitment to environmental sustainability. Al Ain University, aligned with this vision, is dedicated to applying the highest standards of environmental sustainability through education, scientific research, community activities, and university infrastructure. The university is committed to providing high-quality education, organizing conferences, workshops, and launching initiatives that serve the youth and contribute to enhancing sustainable entrepreneurship for the future.

Al Ain University takes pride in its ranking as the 5th in the United Arab Emirates in the 2024 QS World Sustainability Ranking. Additionally, the university has achieved advanced positions in Sustainable Development Goals, ranking 6th globally in Goal 4 (Quality Education), 33rd globally in Goal 5 (Gender Equality), and 88th globally in Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The university is also a member of the Universities Climate Network, a network of 33 local universities collaborating in education, research, and community service in environmental protection and climate change mitigation.

Al Ain university offers a diverse range of programs and specializations that align with its educational outcomes and sustainable development goals. Al Ain University actively seeks to strengthen its relationships and establish collaborative agreements with external institutions interested in environmental issues, including the Abu Dhabi Environment Agency and the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority.

Al Ain University made a notable contribution to COP 28, with its professors delivering oral presentations and research papers addressing environmental, climate, sustainability, and artificial intelligence issues. The university's students also participated in the Climate Ambassadors program, innovation competitions, and entrepreneurship challenges.

The university prioritizes the promotion of scientific research and encourages professors to conduct innovative research that serves the environment, addresses climate challenges, and generates creative solutions.

AAU organizes the 7th Annual Environmental Day 2024



The College of Business at Al Ain University recently held its Seventh Annual Environmental Day under the theme "Climate Change and its Impact on Economic Development in the 21st Century". The event was organized jointly by Dr. Mosab I. Tabash, Dr. Shorouq Eletter, and Dr. Tahira Yasmin. The University's president, Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, presided over the event, which was attended by deans, faculty from other colleges, staff, and students. The event's primary objective was to raise awareness about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG4, SDG7, and SDG13. Different views from experts, academicians, students, and researchers enriched the day. The event began with a welcome speech by Dr. Zafar Husain, Dean of the College of Business. He discussed the College's role in promoting sustainability, ethics, and corporate social responsibility in Business.

During the Environmental Day event at Al Ain University, the speakers shared their insights about environmental sustainability and climate change. Aisha Al Mazroui, Project Manager of the Sustainable Campus Initiative from the Environmental Agency- Abu Dhabi (EAD), talked about the different initiatives EAD took and encouraged students to participate in their activities to help create a clean and green environment. Dr. Tahira Yasmin from Al Ain University discussed the "Degrowth Strategy" for Combating Climate Change Challenges globally and in the UAE, highlighting the cost of climate change to economic development.

For the first time on Environmental Day, a student-to-student panel discussion took place where students discussed the relationship between climate change and economic development. They concluded that climate change poses multifaceted challenges to economic growth, such as disrupting agricultural productivity, leading to food shortages and price volatility.

All University colleges participated in the event by setting up booths reflecting their commitment to protecting the environment. Additionally, a plantation drive for Ghaf trees was conducted on the university premises, sponsored by Barari Natural Resources, with the participation of the AAU President, faculty members, and students.

Al Ain University is part of the Sustainable Campus initiative supervised by the Abu Dhabi Environmental Agency and has ranked high in UI Green Metric World University Ranking, Sustainability Ranking, and Impact Ranking. The University is increasingly focusing on addressing urgent environmental issues.

Al Ain University and Siemens Energy collaborate to Foster Research and Innovation in the Energy Sector



Al Ain University (AAU) and Siemens Energy LLC have signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a collaborative partnership to advance innovation, knowledge exchange, and joint research in the energy sector. The MoU was signed by Prof. Ghaleb El Refae (President- Al Ain University), and Dr. Fahad Al Yafei (Chief Technology Officer, Technology and Innovation Center Abu Dhabi, Siemens Energy.). The signing ceremony was attended by Dr. Noor Al Deen Atatreh (Board of Trustees Deputy Chairman- Al Ain University), Mr. Khalid Bin Hadi (UAE Managing Director- Siemens Energy), and staff members from both organizations.

The partnership between Al Ain University and Siemens Energy focuses on collaborative research and pilot projects, with AAU students addressing real-world challenges and providing consulting solutions. At the same time, Siemens Energy experts contribute their knowledge to enhance the academic environment. This collaboration also aims to create new job opportunities for AAU graduates and develop a skilled talent pipeline for Siemens Energy. It involves sharing resources, pursuing joint funding for energy transition research, and working on projects in de-carbonization, energy storage, and blockchain applications.

“This collaboration marks a major advance in aligning academia with industry needs. By partnering with Siemens Energy, we offer our students exceptional opportunities to tackle real-world challenges, drive innovation, and prepare for leadership roles in the energy sector. Together, we are advancing research and developing sustainable solutions for a better future.” said Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, President of Al Ain University.

“Partnership is key to accelerating de-carbonization. Enabling knowledge transfer and fostering innovation in the energy sector is crucial to empowering future generations in the fight against climate change. We’re proud to launch this collaboration with Al Ain University and work with academia to develop and commercialize new technologies that will make a meaningful contribution to reaching net

zero,” said Dr. Fahad Al Yafei, Chief Technology Officer, Technology and Innovation Center Abu Dhabi, Siemens Energy.

Al Ain University Strengthens Partnerships with Leading Engineering and Technology Companies



In line with its strategy to form partnerships with the industrial sector to support the educational journey, Al Ain University in its Abu Dhabi campus has signed cooperation agreements with major companies in the fields of engineering and technology, namely Federal Electronics and MVP, a software and gaming applications company.

On behalf of Al Ain University, the agreements were signed by Dr. Qutaiba Thibyan, Dean of the College of Engineering. Federal Electronics was represented by Engineer Mansour Adel, General Manager of Human Resources and Business Development, and MVP was represented by Engineer Ali Al Hammadi, the company's CEO.

The Memoranda of Understanding were signed in the presence of Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, President of the University, and the College of Engineering administration during the Global Digital Health Conference – Knowledge Exchange and Empowerment 2024, which took place at the university from September 24-26, 2024. These agreements aim to provide practical training opportunities for engineering students across various disciplines, as well as to coordinate joint workshops on entrepreneurship within all engineering fields, in line with labor market demands. The agreements also seek to enhance students' knowledge and skills in engineering, technology, and environmental sustainability, enabling them to apply their academic studies in real-world work environments through lectures and specialized workshops.

2024 EVIDENCE-YEAR POSITION

The 2024 record shows a live institutional system: standing government research agreements remained the core policy-input mechanism, while federal engagement, policy-facing conferences, national nonprofit collaboration, applied research partnerships and public reporting sustained the University's contribution throughout the reporting year.

6. SDGs embedded in AAU's institutional architecture

AAU's external policy work is supported by an internal strategy that embeds sustainable development, research, stakeholder partnership and measurable improvement. The 2021-2025 Strategic and Operational Plan links the University's academic, research and community-engagement goals to the SDGs. Strategic Goal 6 commits AAU to contributing to a sustainable society and the local community by addressing educational, cultural, social and economic interests and identifies SDGs 4, 16 and 17.

The associated objectives require collaborative partnerships with schools, businesses, corporations, government agencies, community organisations, community-development organisations, religious institutions and civic organisations; participation in elementary and secondary education delivery systems; membership in local, regional and international associations; and collaboration with academic institutions in teaching, research, consultancy and training. Strategic Goal 4 separately links research activity, support, dissemination and collaboration to the SDGs.

Public evidence: [E02](#) | [E04](#) | [E05](#) | [E10](#)

STRATEGIC & OPERATIONAL PLANS



STRATEGIC & OPERATIONAL PLANS

(2021-2025)

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	(2021-2025) Strategic Goals	Objectives / Initiatives
1. Academic Programs	Strengthen AAU's commitment to deliver quality undergraduate and graduate programs that are characterized by rigorous disciplinary depth and breadth, with a high level of direct interaction between faculty and students (SDG 4 & 9).	1.1. Promote curricular reform and innovation in all areas of the academic programs. 1.2. Offer a variety of well-supported quality programs that are consistent with the University's educational mission. 1.3. Secure needed laboratories, classrooms, and workspaces that are needed for faculty, staff, and students. 1.4. Support all library functions. 1.5. Promote and support the efficient and effective use of technology in the academic and administrative process to enhance curricular needs.
2. Faculty Staff	Continue to recruit and retain a dedicated and culturally diverse faculty whose teaching is informed by research and embodies learning experiences that enable students to improve academically and personally (SDG 4, 5, 8, 10, & 16).	2.1. Support and enhance the professional stature of the faculty body. 2.2. Implement and strengthen existing policies for improved communication between faculty and administration, thus involving faculty input into the decision-making process, and an enhanced sense of shared responsibility for the University management. 2.3. Recruit AAU Graduates, graduated with distinction.
3. Students	Improve the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates within the student body, while increasing the number of well prepared and academically able students who wish to enter a sustainable environment that facilitates the development of competent, and creative professionals (SDG 4, 5, & 10).	3.1. Develop an effective enrollment management program that is linked to the academic programs' needs. 3.2. Improve the AAU reputation in local high schools, and other educational institutions. 3.3. Review and coordinate all enrollment-related works, programs, services, and activities. 3.4. Enhance the current academic advising process.
4. Scientific Research	Foster research and support faculty members to secure the time, financial support, and collaborations to maximize their success in research, scholarship, and other sustainable activities (SDG 4).	4.1. Articulating at the unit level different research activities and plans to achieve research goals. 4.2. Fostering outreach to the community and region and maintaining an online directory of faculty to assist them in their research. 4.3. Recognizing and rewarding the faculty and staff's efforts in research to enhance productivity. 4.4. Linking the faculty research interests to the SDGs.
5. Learning Resources	Secure and strengthen the University's information technology and media services to support both the academic and administrative functions of the University and the deployment of new and innovative teaching and research technologies as they become available (SDG 4 & 9).	5.1. Providing an adequate and predictable mechanism for funding informational and institutional technologies, so that AAU can satisfy the technology needs of its students, staff, and faculty, now and in the future. 5.2. Strengthening the maintenance and upgrading of the University's information technology infrastructure, facilities, and hardware. 5.3. Strengthening the information technology services and the instructional technology services and support systems that are offered at the University. 5.4. Promoting and supporting the efficient and effective use of academic and administrative technologies that satisfy the faculty and curricular needs.
6. Community Engagement	Contribute for a sustainable society and the local community, by addressing their educational, cultural, social, and economic interests (SDG 4, 16, & 17).	6.1. Supporting collaborative partnerships with schools, businesses, corporations, government agencies, community organizations, community development organizations, religious institutions, and civic organizations to provide, develop, and implement community-building efforts. 6.2. Participating in elementary and secondary education delivery systems to improve teaching and learning at all levels. 6.3. Promoting internal and external activities that help outreach AAU. 6.4. Seeking membership in local, regional, and international associations. 6.5. Collaborating with other academic institutions in the areas of teaching, research, consultancy, and training programs.

Evidence exhibit 2. AAU Strategic Plan: community engagement, government and civil-society partnerships, research collaboration and explicit SDG alignment. Source E05.

Partnerships for the Goals



17. Partnerships for the Goals

In its efforts to work toward achieving SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals, Al Ain University has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Educators Without Borders International (EWB). Prof. El Refae indicated that Al Ain University recognizes the importance of partnerships with local and international organizations in the implementation of the UAE 2030 strategic plan agenda toward a more sustainable future. He stressed that AAU is committed to its contribution to the mission of providing education locally and globally, especially to communities in disadvantaged conditions.

This strategic collaboration aims to exchange expertise in teacher preparation training, consultancy and research between the two parties, and manifests joint efforts to serve humanitarian and charitable work. Within the terms of this MoU, AAU provides training support from educational experts from the College of Education to teachers in disadvantaged communities internationally through EWB. This collaboration also serves as a catalyst for future research and relevant events that serve the realization of the UAE's ambitious vision for national and global sustainable development.

Environmental sustainability research centre

Center for Environmental Sustainability and Sustainable Development (CESSD)

The Center for Environmental Sustainability and Sustainable Development (CESSD) at Al Ain University is dedicated to advancing research in environmental sustainability. Its mission is to provide innovative solutions for climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation. CESSD focuses on research areas like climate change mitigation, renewable energy, water management, biodiversity, waste, and urban development. Actively involved in postgraduate programs, CESSD offers specialized courses, research opportunities, and access to cutting-edge facilities. The center aims to produce skilled professionals capable of driving positive change and contributing to sustainable development in diverse sectors.

Mission:

The Center for Environmental Sustainability and Sustainable Development (CESSD) at Al Ain University is dedicated to advancing research and knowledge in the field of environmental sustainability. Our mission is to promote innovative and sustainable solutions that address the challenges posed by climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation. Through cutting-edge research, we strive to contribute to a greener and more sustainable future for our local community and beyond.

Research Areas:

CESSD focuses on a wide range of research areas related to environmental sustainability, including but not limited to:

- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies
- Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
- Sustainable Water Management and Conservation
- Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Restoration
- Waste Management and Circular Economy
- Sustainable Urban Development

Contributions to Postgraduate Programs:

The Center for Environmental Sustainability and Sustainable Development actively contributes to postgraduate programs through its dedicated faculty members and researchers. Our experienced team provides specialized courses and seminars on environmental sustainability, allowing students to deepen their understanding of the subject and acquire practical skills to address real-world environmental challenges.

In addition to academic courses, CESSD offers postgraduate students unique research opportunities and access to state-of-the-art facilities. Through thesis supervision, collaborative projects, and internships, students are encouraged to explore cutting-edge research topics and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in environmental sustainability. By integrating research into the postgraduate curriculum, CESSD aims to produce highly skilled professionals who can drive positive change and contribute to sustainable development in various sectors, including government, private industries, and non-governmental organizations.

7. Governance, implementation and review

The University's strategy is implemented through defined institutional governance and evidence systems. The Board of Trustees exercises strategic oversight; the President and senior management coordinate university-wide implementation; colleges, research structures and specialist units deliver research and partnership activity; and accreditation and quality-assurance processes connect plans with performance evidence and continuing improvement.

AAU's 2023-2024 Annual Report and subsequent Fact Book consolidate performance, activity and institutional data. Public SDG pages and indicator documents organise evidence by Goal and make the University's contributions available for external review. The 2024 QAA International Quality Review independently concluded that AAU met all ten internal quality-assurance standards assessed, providing external confirmation of the University's monitoring and continuous-improvement framework.

Environmental governance is further operationalised through AAU's sustainable investment framework and 2024 ISO certifications in environmental management, occupational health and safety management and facilities management. Together these mechanisms connect external policy partnerships with internal implementation, measurement and institutional accountability.

Public evidence: [E05](#) | [E06](#) | [E08](#) | [E09](#) | [E11](#) | [E12](#) | [E13](#) | [E14](#)

Environmental sustainable policies for Investment, Procurement and Funding/Donations

INVESTMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Al Ain University is dedicated to integrating sustainability into all aspects of our operations, including our investment practices. As a non-profit educational institution, we recognize the importance of responsible investing and the role it plays in creating a sustainable future. This Sustainable Investment Policy outlines our commitment to aligning our investments with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations.

At Al Ain University, we believe that our investment decisions should reflect our institutional values and contribute to the well-being of society and the planet. This policy serves as a guiding framework to ensure that our investments support sustainable development, promote ethical practices, and generate positive impact in the communities we serve.

Objectives

Environmental Objectives

- Minimize investments in companies involved in activities that harm the environment, such as those contributing to climate change, pollution, or habitat destruction.
- Promote investments in environmentally sustainable sectors, such as renewable energy, clean technology, and resource conservation.
- Support companies that demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship, sustainable practices, and the preservation of natural resources.

Social Objectives

- Avoid investments in companies associated with human rights abuses, labor exploitation, or unethical practices.
- Prioritize investments that promote social well-being, including education, healthcare, community development, and social justice initiatives.
- Support companies that foster diversity, inclusivity, fair labor practices, and respect for human rights within their operations and supply chains.

Governance Objectives.

- Promote transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct in our investments.
- Support companies with strong governance practices, including independent oversight, responsible executive compensation, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.
- Encourage companies to adopt and maintain ethical business practices, including anti-corruption measures and responsible corporate behavior.

Theyab bin Tahnoon bin Mohammad presides over the Al Ain University Board of Trustees meeting



Sheikh Theyab bin Tahnoon bin Mohammad Al Nahyan chaired the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Al Ain University for the academic year 2023-2024 at the university's campus in Abu Dhabi, in the presence of the board members. The council discussed various topics related to the educational, academic, and administrative aspects of Al Ain University and approved several decisions aimed at achieving the university's aspirations and goals.

The council also reviewed the latest developments in the university's construction projects, including buildings, facilities, and services provided by the university. Additionally, the council was briefed on the university's significant academic achievements in global rankings and international accreditations. Al Ain University recently advanced to rank 552 globally, according to the QS World University Rankings 2025, and is among the top 100 universities worldwide according to the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024.

The council also reviewed the latest academic developments, study plans, scientific courses offered by the university, and the programs and specializations available in various colleges. They discussed the strategic policies adopted by Al Ain University to develop and enhance the expertise of academic and administrative staff through scientific research and specialized training courses.

Furthermore, Sheikh Theyab bin Tahnoon bin Mohammad Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Board, emphasized the importance of keeping pace with developments in education, integrating artificial intelligence into courses, and enhancing students' skills by combining theoretical and practical learning. The council also discussed various initiatives, including the university's participation in local and international events, community and cultural initiatives, and hosting scientific conferences.

Al Ain University has obtained ISO certification in (Environmental Management, Health & Safety Management, and Facility Management)



Al Ain University (AAU) has obtained the international ISO certification in Environmental Management, Health and Safety Management, and Facility Management, awarded by the British Standards Institute (BSI). This certification reflects the university's compliance with comprehensive quality standards and its commitment to environmental sustainability, health and safety, and efficient facility management, also its continuous improvement in administrative performance.

Prof. Ghaleb Al Refae (AAU President) stated that obtaining ISO certification is one of the university's most significant achievements. It underscores the university's commitment to achieving the highest quality standards in all academic and administrative services provided by its various colleges and departments, ensuring quality and continuous performance development.

Dr. Nazih Khaddaj Mallat (VP, of Accreditation & Quality Assurance) emphasized the university's dedication to ensuring the comfort and well-being of the university community and enhancing its relationships with strategic partners. He affirmed the university's commitment to providing high-quality education within a diverse environment.

It is worth mentioning that Al Ain University is committed in updating and developing its administrative and academic systems and procedures to keep pace with the latest global developments achieve the highest quality standards and keep improving occupational health and safety performance by providing the framework and creating safer working conditions ahead.

AAU Achieves International Institutional Accreditation by QAA (UK)

 Posted on: May 29, 2024



Governance layer	Function in SDG-policy contribution	Documented output
Board and senior leadership	Approve strategic priorities, partnerships and institutional direction	Strategic plan, Board decisions and agreements
Research and academic units	Translate public-policy questions into interdisciplinary research and expertise	Studies, projects, conferences and publications
Quality assurance	Monitor plans, evidence, stakeholder input and improvement	Annual reporting, fact books and QAA review
Sustainability governance	Embed environmental and social principles in operations and resources	Investment policy, ISO systems and SDG reporting

Governance layer	Function in SDG-policy contribution	Documented output
External partners	Define needs, share data, test solutions and apply evidence	MoUs, research registers, policy dialogue and interventions

8. Alignment with the UAE's 2030 and 2031 priorities

AAU aligns its strategy and partnerships with the UAE's national and emirate-level development frameworks. The National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 calls for an innovative, high-quality system focused on research and studies, student skills, effective research outputs, the knowledge economy and continuous engagement with labour-market needs. Its four axes—quality, alignment, efficiency and innovation—are reflected in AAU's strategic planning, QAA-accredited quality system, government research agreements and employer-facing partnerships.

We the UAE 2031 requires institutions across the country to cooperate within a unified national ecosystem. Its Forward Society pillar develops human capabilities and education; Forward Economy advances sustainable growth, energy transition and human capital; Forward Diplomacy strengthens international cooperation and the global environmental agenda; and Forward Ecosystem develops agile government, proactive legislation, security and digital infrastructure. AAU's public-policy research, environmental collaboration, education partnerships and knowledge exchange directly reinforce these priorities.

At emirate level, Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 is a long-term plan for economic progress based on public-private collaboration. The AAU-ADDED research agreement operationalises this alignment by connecting university studies and labour-market analysis with government plans, sustainable diversification and decision-making. The EAD partnership similarly connects academic research with Abu Dhabi's environmental and sustainability targets.

Public evidence: [E05](#) | [E16](#) | [E19](#) | [E22](#) | [E23](#) | [E24](#) | [E25](#) | [E26](#)

National Strategy for Higher Education 2030

 28/09/2017

The Ministry of Education (MOE) lunches the National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 in the context of the annual meetings of the Government of the UAE. His Excellency Hussain Al Hammadi, Minister of Education, affirmed that education is a priority for the leadership. He referred to the stages education has gone through over the past years, announcing that the State is working on the model desired to be the world's top educational model depending on the Higher Education Strategy 2030.

He added that the strategy is based on developing an innovative educational system, sharpening student skills as the cornerstone of the educational process, engaging the private sector in the process of development, subject to continuous updates, focusing on research and studies and developing creative academic programs that enhance the country's competitiveness globally.

National Strategy for Higher Education 2030

National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 seeks to provide future generations with the necessary technical and practical skills to drive the economy in both public and private sectors. It also aims to prepare a generation of Emirati professionals to sustain growth in vital sectors such as knowledge, economy, entrepreneurship and the overall development of the UAE's labour market.

In September 2017, Ministry of Education launched the [National Strategy for Higher Education 2030](#). The strategy sets out to build and achieve the highest scientific and professional education standards to serve the UAE's future generations.

The strategy seeks to provide future generations with the necessary technical and practical skills to drive the economy in both public and private sectors. It also aims to prepare a generation of Emirati professionals to sustain growth in vital sectors such as knowledge, economy, entrepreneurship and the overall development of the UAE's labour market.

The UAE Government set four main pillars to achieve this strategy: quality, efficiency, innovation and harmonisation. The Strategy also identified 33 key initiatives to support the implementation phase. These include:

- The National Quality Framework initiative aims to develop assessment-based standards capable of taking into account the different local needs while applying an effective quality control system.
- The Transparent Classification of Outputs initiative seeks to establish clear classification mechanisms that apply to all institutions and to publish quality reports to ensure transparency.
- The Expanded Professional Experience initiative will provide a variety of career training programmes to students such as on-campus work, job shadowing, joint ventures and vocational trainings.
- The Investment in Knowledge initiative aims to increase the number of Ph.D. students by increasing support for postgraduate funding and creating incentives to pursue higher education by ensuring attractive job opportunities.
- The Competitive Research Funding initiative will create a platform to provide funding for research in vital sectors and stimulate the collaboration between higher education institutions and the private sector.

Government Strategy



The launch of 'We The UAE 2031'



Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030

Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030

The long-term plan for the economic progress of the emirate, Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 is enabling public and private sector collaboration to accelerate the Abu Dhabi economy through to 2030

Government framework	Relevant priority	AAU alignment in practice
National Strategy for Higher Education 2030	Quality, alignment, efficiency, innovation, research and labour-market relevance	Strategic goals, QAA quality assurance, research partnerships, employer and education-sector engagement
We the UAE 2031	Human capability, knowledge economy, sustainability, global partnership and agile government	Policy research, SDG education, environmental science, international and NGO partnerships
Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030	Diversification, knowledge, competitiveness and public-private collaboration	ADDED economic research and labour-market agreement; applied industry partnerships
UN 2030 Agenda	Integrated action across all SDGs and stronger implementation partnerships	Public SDG framework, research, teaching, operations, outreach and evidence reporting

9. Agreements that strengthen the policy partnership system

AAU uses memoranda of understanding and cooperation agreements to establish the governance, scope and continuity of its contribution. These are not isolated ceremonial links: the principal agreements assign research, data, training, dialogue, publication or implementation functions to the partners.

Partner and level	Agreement purpose	SDG-policy contribution
Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi Government	Close scientific knowledge gaps, accelerate collaborative research and provide access to government research priorities and monitoring data	Environmental laws, policy, strategy, projects, modelling and adaptive decisions
Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development Government	Prepare economic studies aligned with government plans, labour-market needs and sustainable-development objectives	Economic initiatives, strategy and decision support
UAE Ministry of Economy Federal government	Economic policy research, innovation, legislation, roundtables, data insight and actionable knowledge	Forward-looking national economic policy and capacity
Sandooq Al Watan National nonprofit	Youth capability, national identity, creativity, innovation, values and service	Human-capital and social-policy implementation
Educators Without Borders International NGO	Volunteer expertise, teacher and administrator development, educational research and knowledge exchange	Improved education access and capacity in underserved settings
Global Academy for Digital Health International knowledge partner	Policy-facing conference on digital-health strategy, standards, governance, analytics and ethics	Health-policy evidence, foresight and implementation capacity
Siemens Energy and technology partners Industry	Applied research, innovation, practical training and sustainability expertise	Translation of national energy, technology and skills priorities

Public evidence: [E15](#) | [E19](#) | [E21](#) | [E29](#) | [E31](#) | [E32](#) | [E33](#) | [E38](#) | [E39](#)

An MOU between Al Ain University and the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi

Posted on: Mar 13, 2023



Al Ain University (AAU) and the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi have signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at boosting collaboration in areas of shared interest in research and development. The signing of the agreement was overseen by Her Excellency Dr. Sheikha Salem Al Dhaheri, the Secretary General of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, and Prof. Ghaleb Al Rifai, AAU President.

The MoU aims to promote collaboration in multiple environmental disciplines, benefiting both parties involved. It also mandates that faculty members possess the expertise, unique research resources, and innovative ideas to bridge any scientific gaps, as well as support the efforts of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi and Al Ain University to safeguard the environment and preserve biological diversity. This will enhance the reputation and function of both institutions as centers of scientific excellence, ultimately aiding Abu Dhabi in achieving its sustainability and environmental objectives.

Prof. Ghaleb Al-Refai, President of the University, said this memorandum will strengthen collaboration in the areas of research, service, and development while highlighting the interdependence of environmental, social, and economic systems in addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable development. The University is committed to utilizing its academic programs and scientific research to serve all sectors, particularly the environmental sector. Al Ain University is dedicated to preserving the environmental balance and climate and achieving the objectives of sustainable development. The university is making every effort to provide its expertise and resources to achieve these goals.

Ahmed Baharoon, the Executive Director of the Environmental Information, Science and Awareness Management Sector at the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, stated that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the agency and Al Ain University demonstrates their shared dedication to actively promoting sustainable development through scientific research activities that focus on utilizing modern technologies. He added that this collaboration is one of the essential elements for meeting the developmental needs in environmental conservation and resource management.

By signing the MoUs, the universities' significant research capabilities will be utilized to meet the emirate's environmental research requirements, while also providing the universities with an abundance of meaningful research questions. The strategic priorities of EAD, such as climate change, habitat conservation, ground and marine water, fisheries, and air quality, present exciting research opportunities. Additionally, policy formulation and balancing social, economic, and environmental factors offer valuable areas for research. The results of the collaborative research will be disseminated through various mediums, such as scientific literature, reports, and journals.

Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development and Al Ain University collaborate on economic research

[Home](#) / [Media Centre](#) / [News](#) / Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development and Al Ain University collaborate on economic research

| Jun 10, 2021 ©

The Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED) has signed a cooperation agreement with Al Ain University to conduct and prepare studies and research on topics related to the economy of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

The agreement was signed by Rashid Abdul Karim Al Balooshi, Under-Secretary of ADDED, and Dr. Ghaleb Al Rifai, President of Al Ain University, in the presence of a number of officials from both sides.

Under the agreement, the sides will prepare studies and research, and align with ADDED plans and objectives and labour market requirements, to help realise Abu Dhabi Government's strategic objectives to drive sustainable economic development.

Ministry of Economy & Tourism launches 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' to strengthen collaboration with UAE's academic sector in economic policy, research, and studies



📅 22 May 2025

Ministry of Economy & Tourism launches 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' to strengthen collaboration with UAE's academic sector in economic policy, research, and studies

MoUs signed with 18 universities and research institutions from across the country

The Ministry of Economy & Tourism launched the 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' in collaboration with some of the leading institutions from the UAE's academic sector. This strategic initiative aims to foster partnerships between the Ministry and academic entities in the fields of economic policy, research, and innovation. The launch took place during a dedicated event hosted by the Ministry in Dubai, held in the presence of H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy, alongside senior officials from the Ministry and representatives from participating academic institutions.

As part of the initiative, the Ministry signed a series of partnership agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with 18 universities, research institutions, and innovation centres from across the country. These agreements are designed to enhance the exchange of knowledge and expertise between the Ministry and entities concerned with economic legislation, policy development, and other related disciplines. The collaboration seeks to adopt global best practices to build an integrated national knowledge network that supports the development of forward-looking economic policies and strengthens the competitiveness of the UAE's economy and business ecosystem.

Al Ain University and the "Sandoog Al Watan" collaborate to empower youth

📅 Posted on: Jan 23, 2024



Al Ain University signs a memorandum of understanding with the "Educators Without Borders International" organization.

13, 2022December Published on:



Al Ain University Organizes the Global Digital Health Conference - Knowledge Exchange and Empowerment

Posted on: Sep 27, 2024



Al Ain University and Siemens Energy collaborate to Foster Research and Innovation in the Energy Sector

Posted on: Sep 18, 2024



Al Ain University Strengthens Partnerships with Leading Engineering and Technology Companies

Posted on: Sep 24, 2024



PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE

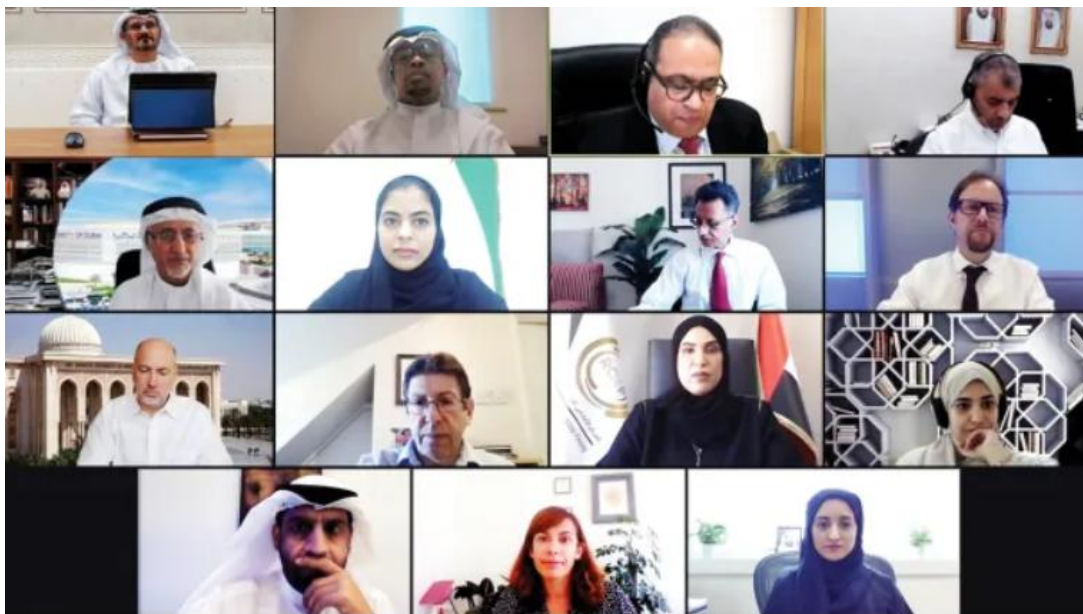
AAU combines government direction, academic independence, civil-society reach and industry implementation capacity. This multi-sector structure enables policy questions to be identified jointly, researched rigorously, translated into action and revisited through evidence and stakeholder feedback.

10. Success partners in the education sector

AAU contributes to the national education ecosystem through government, UNESCO, NGO and inter-university collaboration. AAU participated in the national higher-education dialogue on sustainable growth and the SDGs. The related national workshop, organised by the Regional Center for Educational Planning with the UAE Ministry of Education, UNESCO, the UAE National Commission and UNESCO regional offices, brought universities together to align institutional strategies, research and community programmes with the national education roadmap and the 2030 SDGs.

The Ministry's National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 places research, innovative academic programmes, private-sector engagement, labour-market relevance and transparent quality reporting at the centre of national development. AAU's strategic and operational plan adopts the same partnership logic by requiring collaboration with schools, government, community organisations and other academic institutions.

Public evidence: [E05](#) | [E22](#) | [E23](#) | [E27](#) | [E28](#)



Evidence exhibit 3. National higher-education SDG workshop linking universities, the UAE education authorities and UNESCO. Sources E27-E28.

11. Government, NGO and global research collaboration

AAU's collaboration with Educators Without Borders International extends the University's education expertise to communities facing poverty, conflict and natural disasters. The agreement mobilises university lecturers and experts as volunteer trainers, supports teachers, administrators, students and parents, facilitates research and scientific publication, and provides lessons, lectures and workshops. It contributes to global well-being while returning experience in inclusive education, capacity development and programme delivery to AAU's wider partnership system.

During 2024, AAU also collaborated with Sandoq Al Watan to empower youth. The national nonprofit's university and school programmes develop national identity, responsibility, critical thinking, initiative, leadership, innovation and community service. These partnerships connect policy aims with learners and communities, giving the University implementation experience and stakeholder feedback beyond formal government forums.

AAU's Sustainability Research Centre and policy-facing research collaborations provide a further bridge between local priorities and global knowledge. The University's 2024 participation in the World Environmental Education Congress and its Global Digital Health Conference connected UAE challenges with international research on environmental education, digital-health strategy, standards, governance, modelling and ethical implementation. In 2025, the College of Business added a formal relationship with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, extending comparative policy research and sustainability expertise.

Public evidence: [E10](#) | [E29](#) | [E30](#) | [E31](#) | [E32](#) | [E33](#) | [E34](#) | [E40](#)



Evidence exhibit 4. AAU and Educators Without Borders International formalised cooperation on education, training, research and community capacity. Source E31.

12. Research, modelling and practical application

AAU's policy contribution is strengthened by applied research that addresses government and community challenges. The ASPIRE-funded FlyServ project received AED 1 million to develop an artificial-intelligence, drone and Wi-Fi/Li-Fi system designed to help enforce public-health measures, identify violations and support public authorities. The project demonstrates AAU's ability to translate research into a proposed intervention with operational government relevance.

The 2024 Global Digital Health Conference provided a parallel policy-knowledge platform. Its programme addressed unmet needs of digital-health strategy and policymakers, quality-of-life and data modelling, interoperability and standards, governance and change management, and legal, social and ethical questions. It therefore contributed the multidisciplinary analysis required to compare technology pathways and support responsible implementation.

Within ADERN, modelling and evidence are embedded at system level. The Environmental Knowledge Graph analyses cause-and-effect relationships between humans and the environment and the implications of environmental change for human well-being. EAD's enviroportal and research directory combine long-run data, researchers, facilities, projects and events so that stakeholders can make science-based decisions. AAU's founding membership gives the University a defined institutional role within this research-to-policy infrastructure.

Public evidence: [E16](#) | [E17](#) | [E18](#) | [E32](#) | [E33](#) | [E36](#) | [E37](#)

Evidence resource	Decision value	SDGs supported
Environmental research-needs register	Directs academic capacity toward government-defined knowledge gaps	6, 13, 14, 15, 17
Environmental Knowledge Graph	Models causal relationships and changed-environment effects on well-being	3, 11, 13, 15
Twenty-five years of enviroportal data	Supports baselines, trend monitoring and reassessment	6, 11, 13, 14, 15
Economic and labour-market studies	Supports sustainable diversification, skills alignment and government decisions	4, 8, 9, 10, 17
Digital-health policy exchange	Examines strategy, standards, analytics, governance and ethical implementation	3, 9, 10, 16, 17
FlyServ applied research	Develops a technology intervention for public-health monitoring and response	3, 9, 11, 17

13. Evidence, reporting and continuous adjustment

AAU's model connects partner evidence with institutional review. Government partners supply monitoring data and priority questions; research teams analyse them and publish findings; AAU records institutional activity and performance through annual reports, fact books and SDG evidence; and quality-assurance governance uses evidence and stakeholder input for improvement. This creates both an external science-policy feedback loop and an internal management loop.

The EAD partnership is particularly suited to adaptive management because it combines a live research-needs register, long-run environmental datasets, expert networks, project and facility directories and published outputs. As environmental conditions and policy needs change, government and university partners can update questions, redirect research effort and refine laws, projects or strategies. The ADDED and Ministry of Economy relationships provide the corresponding mechanism for economic policy and human-capital needs.

AAU's public SDG framework also supports transparent reporting across policy relationships, cross-sector dialogue, SDG data publication and education. Indicators 17.2.3, 17.2.4 and 17.2.5 document AAU's related cross-sector SDG dialogue, collaboration and reporting functions, reinforcing the institution-wide character of the policy-development system.

Public evidence: [E02](#) | [E03](#) | [E06](#) | [E07](#) | [E08](#) | [E13](#) | [E16](#) | [E17](#) | [E19](#) | [E21](#) | [E41](#) | [E42](#) | [E43](#)

Cycle	Input	Review mechanism	Result
Government	Policy questions, registers, plans and datasets	Joint research, reports, workshops and policy dialogue	Evidence-based laws, strategy and interventions
University	Strategic targets, partner activity and performance data	Annual reporting, fact book, SDG evidence and quality assurance	Accountability and continuous improvement
Community / NGO	Participant needs, delivery experience and stakeholder feedback	Programmes, training, service projects and consultation	More responsive and inclusive implementation
International	Comparative knowledge, standards and research networks	Conferences, publications and institutional partnerships	Shared learning and scalable solutions

14. Institutional conclusion

YES — DIRECT INVOLVEMENT AND INPUT ARE ESTABLISHED

Al Ain University has direct, organised involvement in government SDG policy development through formal research agreements and policy networks. Its founding membership in EAD's ADERN system provides a complete science-policy mechanism spanning government-defined problems, collaborative research, causal modelling, monitoring data, reporting, policy formulation and continuous adaptation. The AAU-ADDED agreement and the Ministry of Economy pathway extend this contribution to sustainable economic policy and labour-market strategy.

AAU's internal strategy, policies and governance are aligned with this external role. The Strategic and Operational Plan explicitly links research and community engagement with SDGs 4, 16 and 17 and requires partnership with government, schools, civil society, business and other universities. Annual reporting, public SDG evidence, quality assurance and sustainability-management systems provide institutional monitoring and accountability.

These arrangements advance the UAE's National Strategy for Higher Education 2030, We the UAE 2031 and Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030. They also create a strong partnership architecture for global well-being: government bodies define and apply public priorities, AAU contributes research and education, NGOs connect programmes with communities, industry supports implementation, and national and international education partners expand knowledge exchange.

Required topic	Evidence established in this report
Strategy, policy and governance aligned to SDGs	Explicit strategic-plan alignment; partnership objectives; sustainability policies; annual and SDG reporting; QAA and ISO systems
Government and NGO research for global well-being	EAD/ADERN, ADDED, Ministry of Economy, Educators Without Borders, Sandooq Al Watan and international research dialogue
Government 2030/2031 vision alignment	National Higher Education Strategy 2030, Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 and We the UAE 2031 mapped to AAU delivery
Agreements strengthening strategic partnerships	Formal government, nonprofit, academic and industry agreements assigning research, data, training and implementation functions
Success partners in education	Ministry of Education, UNESCO, education-planning bodies, universities, schools, EWBI and youth-development partners
Full policy-development cycle	Problem identification, policy and strategy, modelling, monitoring, reporting and adaptive management evidenced through named mechanisms

Public evidence: [E03](#) | [E05](#) | [E16](#) | [E17](#) | [E19](#) | [E21](#) | [E22](#) | [E24](#) | [E27](#) | [E31](#) | [E44](#)

Evidence register | Institutional governance

All evidence IDs used in the report resolve to public sources. AAU sources are supplemented by UAE government, regulator, UNESCO, QAA and United Nations evidence.

ID	Public source and direct link
E01	THE Sustainability Impact Ratings Methodology 2026
E02	AAU SDG 17 institutional hub
E03	AAU public evidence document for Indicator 17.2.1
E04	AAU: Partnerships for the Goals
E05	AAU Strategic and Operational Plans 2021-2025, 2024-2025 edition
E06	AAU Annual Report 2023-2024
E07	AAU Annual Report 2024-2025
E08	AAU Fact Book 2024-2025
E09	AAU environmental and sustainable investment policy
E10	AAU Sustainability Research Centre
E11	AAU Board of Trustees meeting, 2024
E12	AAU ISO certification in environmental, health and facilities management, 2024

Evidence register | Government policy pathways

ID	Public source and direct link
E13	QAA International Quality Review of Al Ain University, February 2024
E14	AAU achieves QAA international institutional accreditation, 2024
E15	AAU and Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi memorandum of understanding
E16	Abu Dhabi Media Office: EAD partners with eight UAE universities
E17	Emirates News Agency: official launch of ADERN
E18	Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi: Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network
E19	Abu Dhabi Government: ADDED and AAU collaborate on economic research
E20	AAU delegation visits the Ministry of Economy, 2024
E21	UAE Ministry of Economy: Knowledge and Innovation Hub with AAU, 2025
E22	UAE Ministry of Education: National Strategy for Higher Education 2030
E23	UAE Government: National Strategy for Higher Education 2030

Evidence register | National vision and education partners

ID	Public source and direct link
E24	UAE Cabinet: We the UAE 2031
E25	Dubai Media Office: launch and four pillars of We the UAE 2031
E26	Abu Dhabi Media Office: Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030
E27	UNESCO: UAE universities' role in achieving the 2030 SDGs
E28	AAU participation in Sustainable Growth in Higher Education
E29	AAU and Sandoog Al Watan collaborate to empower youth, 2024
E30	Sandoog Al Watan launches National Identity Clubs, 2024
E31	AAU and Educators Without Borders International memorandum
E32	AAU Global Digital Health Conference, 2024
E33	Global Digital Health Conference programme, 24-26 September 2024
E34	AAU participates in the World Environmental Education Congress 2024

Evidence register | Research, implementation and reporting

ID	Public source and direct link
E35	AAU seventh Annual Environmental Day 2024
E36	AAU research project awarded AED 1 million by ASPIRE
E37	Abu Dhabi Government: ASPIRE grant for AAU's FlyServ research
E38	AAU and Siemens Energy research and innovation partnership, 2024
E39	AAU engineering and technology sector partnerships, 2024
E40	AAU and Sustainable Development Policy Institute memorandum, 2025
E41	AAU public SDG 17.2.3 evidence document
E42	AAU public SDG 17.2.4 evidence document
E43	AAU public SDG 17.2.5 evidence document
E44	United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 17