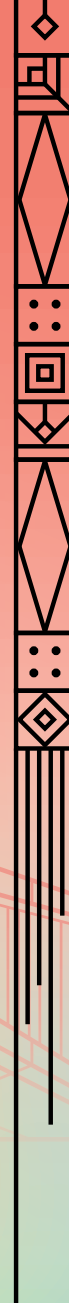


Qatar National Library Annual Report

2022



From humble beginnings to remarkable
milestones: a year of growth,
resilience and inspiring discoveries at
Qatar National Library

Contents

4

Foreword

6

Introduction

9

Vision, Mission
and Values

12

Welcoming the
World

18

Our Impact,
Our Community

28

History and Heritage: Past,
Present and Future

36

Making a Difference
Nationally and Globally

42

At a Glance

45

Acknowledgements



FOREWORD

2022 was a momentous year for us all, as individuals, as an institution and as a nation.

The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ not only brought international focus to the country, but also Qatar National Library (QNL), with visitors and television crews from around the world seeing and documenting the importance placed on knowledge and learning and the professionalism with which it is disseminated.

This unique experience for the Arab world gave the Library the opportunity to showcase Arab heritage and culture while our staff members showed our international visitors the meaning of Middle Eastern hospitality, tolerance and respect.

My great hope is that this mutual understanding and respect will endure, and that Qatar will continue to be a destination for international tourism, with the Library maintaining its important role in the cultural, intellectual and social fabric of the country, acting as a catalyst in a global transformation of the perception of the entire Middle East.

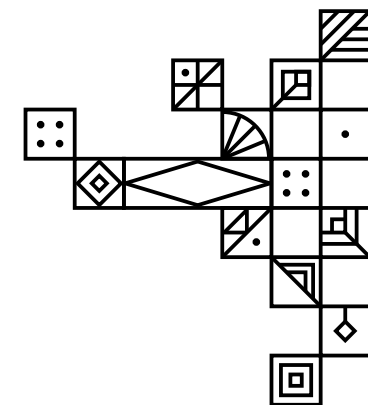
Our vision states that the Library aspires to be an institution that promotes imagination, discovery and the nourishment of the human spirit. I might add to that, the promotion of understanding between cultures and nations, no matter what their creed.

2023 promises to be an interesting one in Qatar when we will see the initial impact that the World Cup has had on the nation, and as Qatar enters into a new relationship with the international community, so shall the Library.

QNL has always been a global community – albeit with a focus on our country and the region – and I hope that this will gather pace to form further meaningful, lasting relationships with international institutions, sharing knowledge and providing access to the rich heritage of the Islamic world.

As we develop new programs and invest in technology to further advance our mission, we can reach an ever-widening audience, as we remain steadfast in our commitment to excellence and our vision of being a preeminent center of learning, research and culture: a truly global library.

Dr. Hamad Al-Kawari
Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library





INTRODUCTION

Qatar National Library has always been conceived as a place for people of all walks of life and from diverse countries – our collections have resources in multiple languages – but 2022 really proved that point as we, and the rest of the country, welcomed the world to Qatar for the FIFA World Cup™.

It was an honor to have been included on the national list of potential tourist attractions, and the various teams at QNL really made sure that visitors were welcomed and had interesting exhibitions to visit. For example, **“Goaaal: How Football Kicked Off in Qatar”** offered an insight into the origins of the game in Qatar, a story few would have known. We were also able to involve local children. The **“Reesha”** exhibition displayed their artwork of the World Cup stadiums, and I am very proud to say that it was the most inclusive exhibition we have ever staged. The descriptions of the paintings were provided in braille along with an audio guide, meaning that an essentially visual exhibition was also accessible to our visually impaired and blind guests.

Through all of this, though, our commitment to the day-to-day work of the Library and our commitment for continued improvement remained undiminished. Our main collection increased by almost 10,000 books and we attracted more than 30,000 new members who can now enjoy the free resources that we offer. Communication with those and our existing members is vital, so we launched a mobile app to offer our services in a new format.

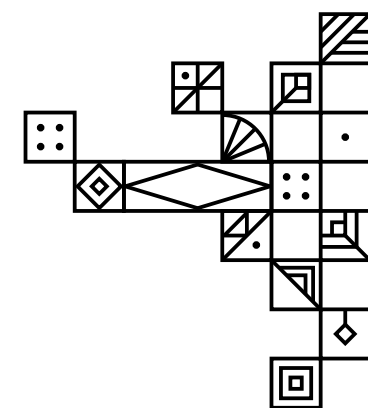
Although the World Cup undoubtedly brought in the most varied number of foreign visitors, we attracted many more in the form of delegates to our physical and online conferences. These included the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, which held its **Interlending and Document Supply Conference** in Qatar for the first time, and a four-day workshop titled **“Countering Trafficking of Cultural Property Including Documentary Heritage”**.

Finally, our 10-year partnership with the British Library to digitize and upload archival documents onto the Qatar Digital Library website came to an end, but such was its success that a fourth phase has been agreed upon. This is wonderful news for academics and enthusiasts of Middle Eastern history, giving them as it does free, online access to archival records on the Gulf from the East India Company. More than 2.4 million digital images have already been uploaded and we expect another 675,000 to be available by the end of 2025.

All of the good work that the Library has done in 2022 could not have been possible without our staff, and I thank them all for their hard work and dedication. It also could not have been possible without the support of Qatar Foundation; their support and guidance has been invaluable.

I don’t know if 2023 can ever match the excitement of 2022’s World Cup, but at Qatar National Library we will strive to ensure it does.

Tan Huism
Executive Director





Vision

To be one of the world's preeminent centers of learning, research and culture; a guardian of the region's heritage; and an institution that promotes imagination, discovery and the nourishment of the human spirit.

Mission

The mission of Qatar National Library is to preserve the nation's and region's heritage and enable the people of Qatar to positively influence society by creating an exceptional environment for learning and discovery.

The Library will achieve its mission by creating and sustaining an intuitive and trusted information environment in a culturally and technologically exceptional setting and by developing innovative programs and services.

Values

Qatar National Library supports the core values of librarianship as a profession to include:

- **Openness and Transparency** with all patrons and organizations we deal with, where privacy and confidentiality are observed.
- **Education and Lifelong Learning**, where we strive to offer services that facilitate equitable learning.
- **Open Access**, where we are committed to ensuring free, open, unrestricted access to our collections and services.
- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Respect and Fairness**, where our patrons are valued regardless of race, color, sex, gender, religion, disability, age, genetic information, socioeconomic status, or national or ethnic origin, and where their opinions, needs and viewpoints are considered in every decision we make.
- **Growth and Innovation**, where we encourage creativity, continuous learning, experimentation and the generation of ideas.
- **Stewardship** of all the resources with which we have been entrusted and are accountable for, ensuring the proper use of state funds and the preservation of the nation's heritage and intellectual output.
- **Intellectual Freedom**, where we are resolute in our commitment to facilitating the free exchange of information and ideas.

For one month, normal life in Qatar was put on hold as the nation welcomed people from across the world to the country for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™.

Cultural institutions and tourist attractions across Qatar developed exhibitions and programs to entertain the influx of visitors and Qatar National Library was no exception, offering fans an insight into the evolution of football in Qatar and a unique art exhibition of the World Cup stadiums.

For the vast majority of fans, this was their first time in the Middle East, and this offered the Library and the rest of Qatar the opportunity to showcase the culture, beauty, generosity and hospitality of the country and of the region, disabusing fans of the often negative perceptions perpetuated in much of the Western media.

Beyond that, though, the day-to-day work of the Library continued as we expanded community initiatives, improved accessibility, provided training courses, supported the research community and, of course, grew the collections of books and online resources available to our members.

Taken in totality, these initiatives are too innumerable to count, but there were some highlights.

Goaaal: How Football Kicked Off in Qatar

With the world's football fans and media on our doorstep, the "Goaaal" exhibition gave QNL the opportunity to open its sporting archives and present the beginnings of football in Qatar, along with its development up to the present day.

With the generous help of collectors in Qatar who loaned items for the exhibition, the Library produced a comprehensive, informative and captivating installation that charted the Qatari passion for the game from its roots in the 1940s, through the development of leagues and trophies and participation in international tournaments, up to the current situation which has seen Qatar emerge as a Middle Eastern hub for international sporting events.



Archival photos showcased the stars of the early game, plus one historic image which featured the legendary Pelé and the renowned Santos team playing a game against Al Ahli Sports Club at Doha Stadium in the memorable year of 1973. Alongside these captivating visuals, there were also video interviews, capturing the insights and experiences shared by some of the icons of Qatari football.

Reesha: We Welcome the World to Qatar 2022™

Inclusivity was a vital component of this World Cup, and Qatar National Library celebrated this with innovative methods to ensure that a primarily visual exhibition was accessible to the visually impaired.

Reesha: We Welcome the World to Qatar, was an exhibit of children's paintings produced in conjunction with the Qatari artist Maryam Al-Mulla.

The aim was to introduce Qatar's efforts in preparing for the World Cup through the stadiums it built and to help children connect and keep pace with contemporary events using the arts, and by consolidating the means of creative and cultural development.

But alongside the artwork and standard description panels, Qatar National Library also produced an audio-descriptive guide, high-contrast raised images and descriptions of the

paintings in braille to enrich the visit for everyone, but particularly for our guests with impaired vision. The audio description was activated by scanning the QR codes with a phone at the respective stages of the exhibition, and the reliefs of the paintings could be explored with fingertips at each station. These features were produced with the help of students and faculty from the MA course in audiovisual translation at Hamad Bin Khalifa University, and members of Qatar's blind community.



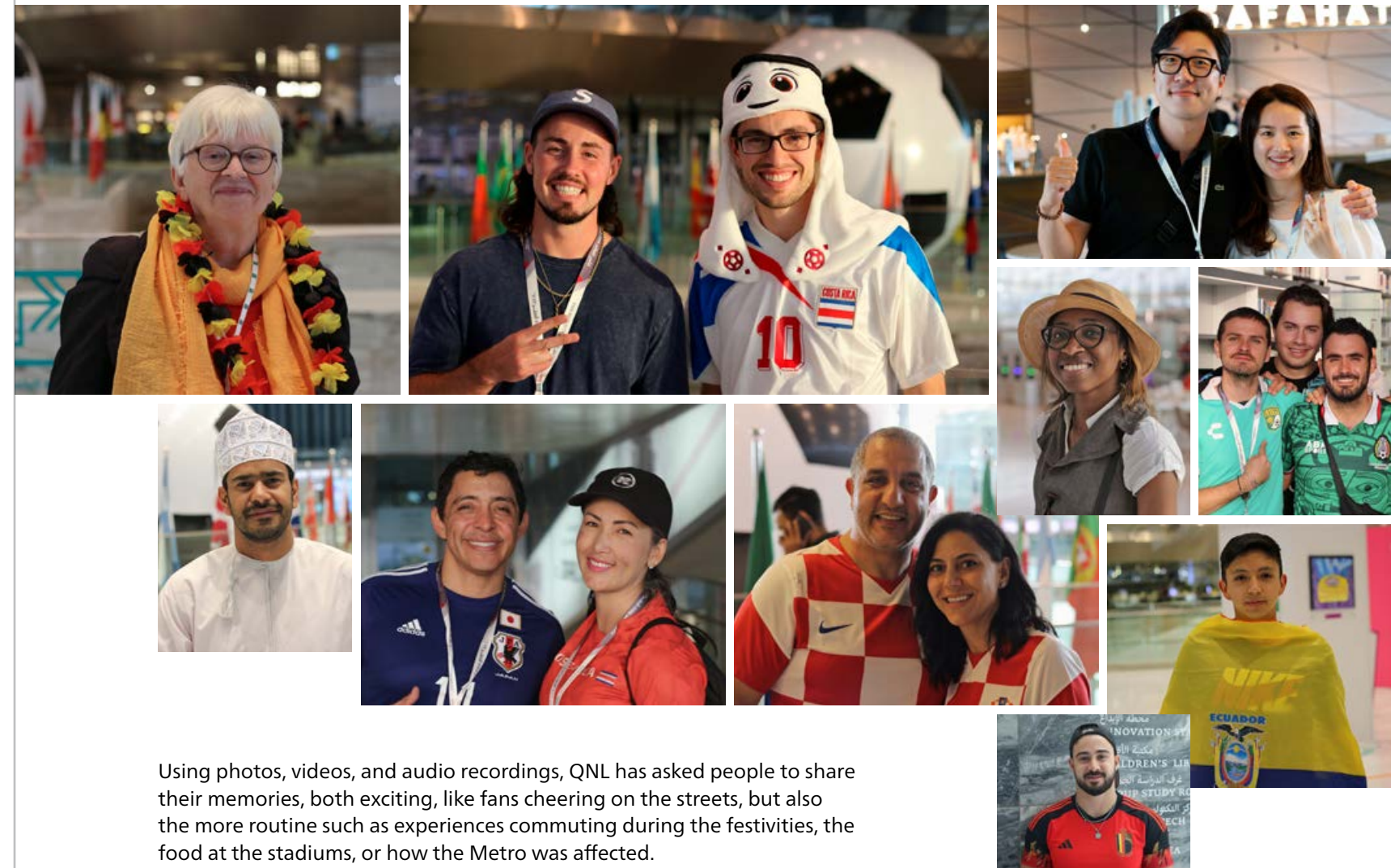
HE Dr. Hamad Al Kawari, Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library (center), with children who helped create the Reesha exhibition.

Today's Memories for Tomorrow's Generation

The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ will undoubtedly have a material legacy on the country, not least through the nationwide infrastructure built to help host the event. These physical aspects of the tournament are there for all to see, but people's memories,

the intangible smells, sounds, tastes and personal experiences of the World Cup are not, although they are powerful and evocative tools in recreating the atmosphere of the 2022 World Cup for future generations.

To this end, and as part of its remit to preserve the heritage of the nation, Qatar National Library announced the development and creation of **World Cup Moments**, a digital archive of people's experiences during the event.



Using photos, videos, and audio recordings, QNL has asked people to share their memories, both exciting, like fans cheering on the streets, but also the more routine such as experiences commuting during the festivities, the food at the stadiums, or how the Metro was affected.

These memories provide a more holistic picture of a global event that for one month saw Qatar's population double as the world came to us and will help future generations experience the magic of a great sporting event.

Libraries are important community spaces, offering people the chance to read, study and relax. At Qatar National Library, we want everyone to be able to access and enjoy the remarkable, free resources at the Library's disposal, so that all who live in Qatar can contribute positively to the country.

Knowledge for All

Books, knowledge and learning should be accessible to all, no matter what their physical and intellectual abilities and Qatar National Library is continually striving to improve its accessibility to all our services, collections, events and programs.



Initiatives in 2022 included **Book Club for the Blind**; participation in **World Autism Day**, and a panel discussion titled **International Days of Sports and Peace: The Importance of Inclusive Sports in Society**.

Significantly, we also officially opened a specially designed sensory room for children aged up to 14 years born with developmental disabilities. The room includes stimuli designed to develop and engage their senses, allowing them to interact with the world around them and build confidence and ability in a safe environment.

The Library also renewed its MOU with MADA - Qatar Assistive Technology Center, and worked with HBKU's Translation Institute to provide braille descriptions and raised, high-contrast images for our "Reesha" exhibition.

In QNL's Assistive Technology Center, specialized staff provided support to more than 20 people with disabilities, offering adjustable workstations, scanning pens with headphones, braille keyboards and portable electronic magnifiers.

A lifeline for the visually impaired

Selwin Saju is a year 12 student at Birla Public School in Doha and is visually impaired. For Selwin, the Library has been a lifeline, as it offers a variety of services that ensures access for all. Foremost among these is Bookshare, an online database library of audiobooks, large-print books, and books written in braille. In addition, the Library has a braille printer, which can scan documents and then print them out in braille, allowing Selwin and other users access to resources that would normally be out of reach.

Selwin said: "I have used Bookshare and the braille printing service at the Library and they have really helped me a lot. Bookshare has allowed me to read different books much easier because, for example, I can listen to audio textbooks, which gives me more independence."

He said the braille printer means that pages of textbooks can be printed specially for him. This provides greater independence for Selwin as he can work at his own pace. Without services like the specialized printer and Bookshare, he would need his mother to read pages out to him. "I would have faced a lot of challenges in reading books and getting knowledge if these services were not there," he said.

Writing and Communication Station

Among the scores of workshops, lectures and classes provided for free at Qatar National Library, our writing classes are consistently popular, offering advice and support in both Arabic and English for creative writing as well as individual assistance for academic essays and theses, job applications and proposals.

For the fourth year running, the Library and its creative writing group took part in the global National Novel Writing Month, known as NaNoWriMo. Over the course of 30 days in November, participants aimed to write 50,000 words – the length of an average novel.

The initiative is a chance for new writers to build up their confidence, and an opportunity for seasoned authors to focus and get support and input from others. Group members can simply write for the pleasure of it, without being concerned about spelling, language skills or grammar. There are no winners and participants are not competing against anyone else; everyone wins and even if they don't hit their daily target, the aim is just to enjoy the challenge.

Within the Library's creative writing group, budding authors have the backing of their peers, bouncing ideas off them, asking for suggestions and receiving moral support.

"I miss it, the building, the books and the people"



Fiona Forsyth with three of her published novels.

Fiona Forsyth is a published author and spent six and a half years in Qatar, during which time she wrote four of her novels, all of which are set in ancient Rome. She recently returned to the UK, but credits Qatar National Library and its Writing Group with offering her the support she needed to keep writing.

"When the Library opened, I thought it was the most beautiful place. I can remember walking in, so excited to be there finally, and turning round on the spot trying to take it all in!

"One Thursday evening, I walked in and members of the Qatar Philharmonic were playing and I realized that there was a program of all sorts of special events. When I discovered that the Library was following NaNoWriMo I came along to a Saturday write-in – and immediately found my Qatar writing people! The writing group's meetings became part of my writing routine, and I was always met with positivity and encouragement.

"My time in Qatar gave me the opportunity to write: the Library was a huge part of the support structure that kept me going, and I miss it, the building, the books and the people."

"QNL Plays a Vital Role"

Studying for his thesis, Mamadou Dosso said that QNL was vital to his academic studies.

"As a PhD student," he said, "I experienced writer's block that prevented me from putting onto paper what was in my mind. The writing process became even more challenging when time constraints imposed by my professors occurred. Once I started using the QNL writing service, I could clearly see an improvement in my writing, the structuring of essays, and the development of critical thinking skills, leading to gaining new knowledge."

At QNL, multiple options are available for students that can be tackled during a meeting, such as creative writing,

writing a proposal, and a dissertation, as well as personalized advice that guides students to work effectively.

The Library facilitates access to essential resources and learning material that are indispensable for a smooth learning process.

Besides all this, QNL writing services provide a space and an excellent environment to facilitate individual or group studies and collaboration. The atmosphere at QNL is perfect for learning without getting disturbed.

"I am always happy when new resources are provided to me that help build upon my existing knowledge. QNL plays a vital role in my study journey," said Mamadou.

New Experiences, New Skills

Volunteers are a great asset for the Library, contributing – as they do – back to society. The Volunteer at the Library program offers valuable work experience to those who are accepted, allowing participants the chance to work in a variety of roles.



It is of particular value to students and young people who are yet to start formal work. By volunteering at QNL, they gain experience of working in a professional environment, building confidence, learning customer service skills and gaining new perspectives on careers and what they wish to do in the future. It also demonstrates to potential employers that they have the foresight and dynamism to begin learning workplace skills

before being employed and gives participants subject matter both for their curriculum vitae and future job interviews.

The program was particularly popular during the FIFA World Cup™, when volunteers had the chance to meet fans from all over the world, answering questions and helping them find their way around the Library's collections.

The Case for Volunteering

Shahad Al-Dhaheeri has been a regular volunteer at QNL, but only decided to volunteer with us on a whim. However, she is glad she did.

Since joining she has worked with the public, teaching them about the technology we use, finding the novels they are looking for, and answering questions that members and visitors may have about the Library's resources.

She said the experience has been of particular help for her English-language proficiency, but she has also improved her communication and customer service skills. The sense of fellowship and shared passion for knowledge has made her feel like an integral part of the QNL community. This transformative experience continues to influence her path.

A Focus on Reading

In 2022, QNL welcomed the Qatar Reads program into the Library, acknowledging the symbiosis of their work with that of the Library and the even greater impact that could be made by incorporating Qatar Reads into QNL.

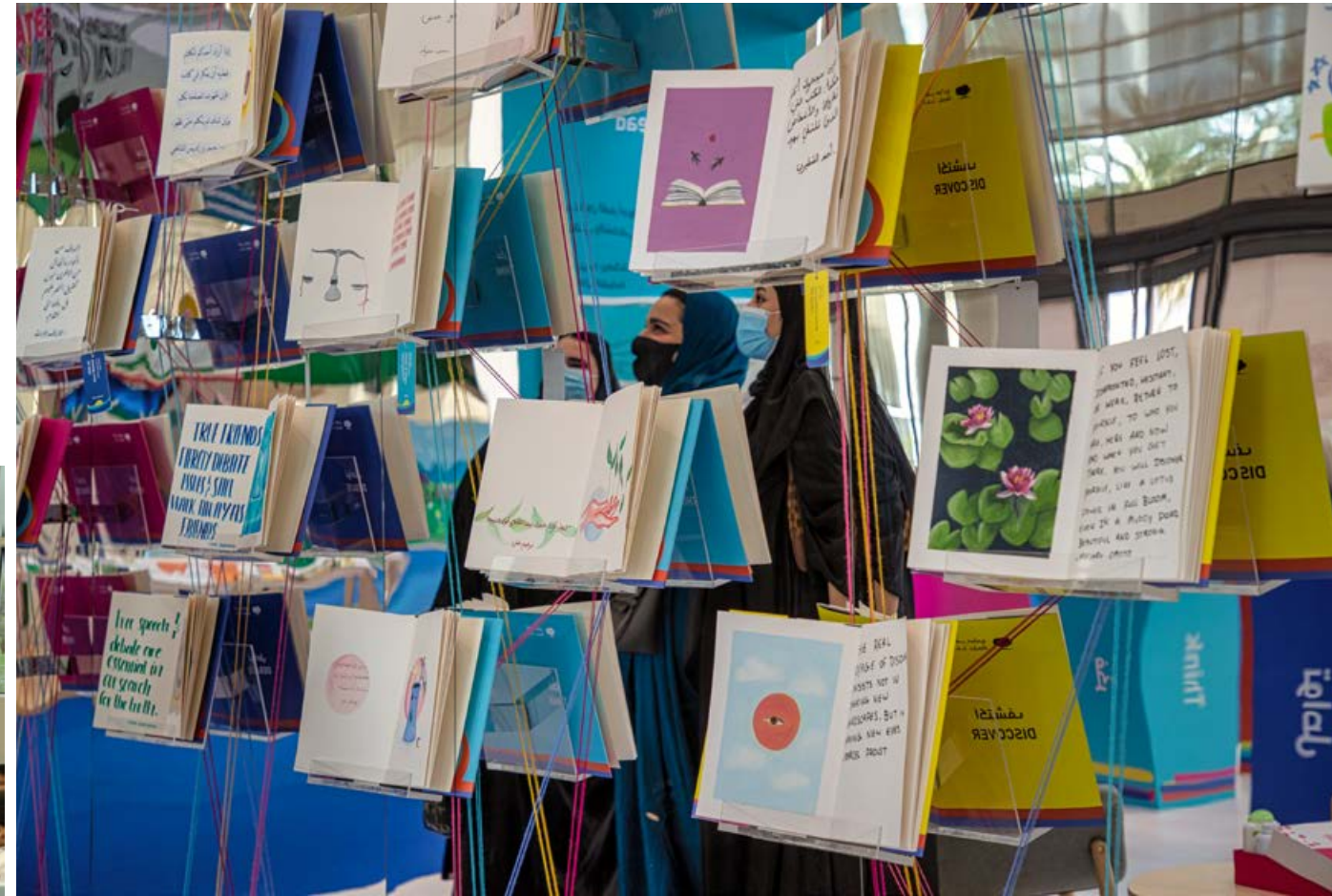
Understanding that it can take up to 1,000 stories before a child learns to read, Qatar Reads developed the **Family Reading Program** and continued to expand the scheme in 2022. Every participating household receives a unique Qatar Reads

mailbox and each month a set of books and activity sheets are delivered. Parents are encouraged to read the books with their children while the activity sheets offer tips for parents and conversation starters to encourage interaction with the stories.

The delivery model is particularly important as it promotes the creation of a library within the home, while the option to receive books in Arabic, English, or even in a bilingual format supports the learning of a second language.



The program has proved particularly popular with local households, with 88% of families being Qatari citizens. This means the program is not only increasing literacy and a love of learning, but also promoting and preserving the Arabic language among children.



A Commitment to Lifelong Learning

Qatar National Library has a wealth of knowledge and a wealth of experts at its disposal; but that means nothing if that knowledge is not shared.



The Library hosts hundreds of events each year.

Our values emphasize our commitment to education and lifelong learning. Using this as a springboard, QNL hosts dozens of lectures, symposiums, workshops and panel discussions each year, all free and accessible to all.

These events offer more than a simple exchange of information. The relaxed and informal environment offers participants the chance to speak to and question subject matter experts directly, while the talks themselves

have a number of knowledge entry points; lectures are well-attended by the general public and by researchers and academics alike.

Examples of events in 2022 include **“Studying Qur’anic Manuscripts: A New Approach”**, **“The Heritage Library’s Archives and Documents Collection: from Creation to Research and Study Prospects”**, the **Libraries Lead Annual Forum for Library Professionals**, and a series of lectures on artificial intelligence.

Shining a Light on Research

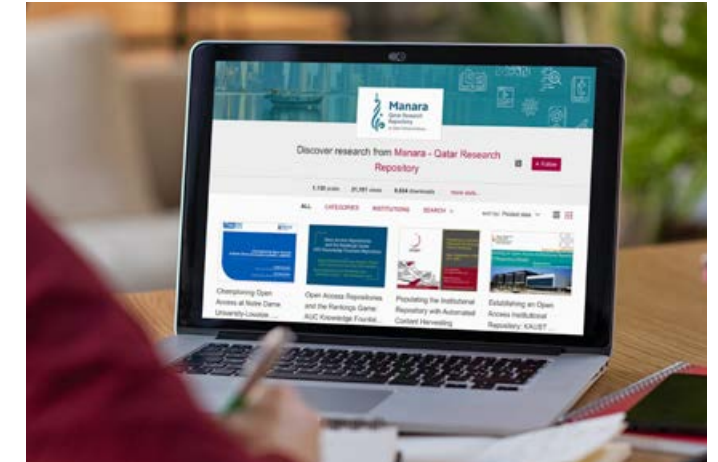
Libraries are synonymous with academia and QNL takes its responsibilities in supporting and improving access to research seriously.

From online resources to research consultations, to the Library’s **Open Access Program**, QNL strives to support academics in Qatar in producing high-quality research while allowing them to access the research of others globally.

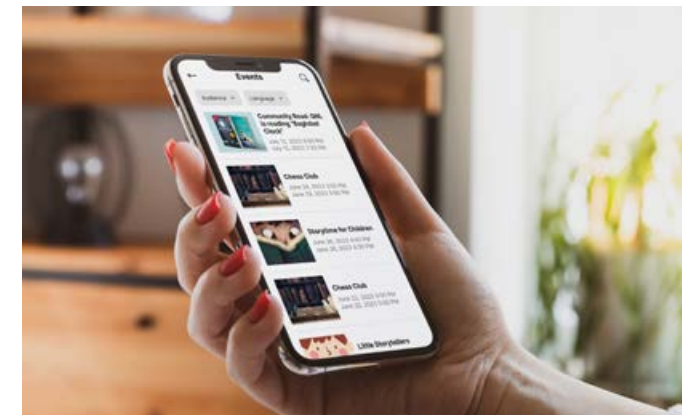
Manara – the Arabic word for ‘lighthouse’ – is the latest program to have been developed. Launched in 2022, Manara is a free, open repository for Qatar-based researchers to upload and share their work, predominantly in the form of research publications or datasets, but also as preprints, journal and conference contributions, figures, books, book chapters, posters, presentations, theses, software code, media files or any other creative works.

The benefits of Manara are that research is preserved digitally by QNL and that the research is citable by others, so long as a digital object identifier is requested.

Importantly, the impact of the research can be amplified by making the outputs open access. Manara also increases transparency and reproducibility as data and computational methods that support the research outputs can also be deposited.



The Library in your Pocket



Qatar National Library offers members access to dozens of different services and resources and access to them all has become much easier with the launch of the new **QNL app**.

Available to download on both Android and iOS devices, the app was launched after thousands of hours of work across many different Library departments. Importantly, it improves communication with our members and the public, providing a single place where they can read or listen to books, manage their accounts, reserve books, view archive material, read newspapers and magazines from around the world and search for resources wherever they may be in the world.

The app can be downloaded here:



App Store



Google Play



History and Heritage: Past, Present and Future

Qatar National Library is deeply committed to preserving the history and heritage of the nation, the Gulf and the wider Islamic world for future generations and offering the present generation the opportunity to both engage with and learn from it.

Our Heritage Library contains manuscripts, maps, photographs, books, historical navigational equipment, and a host of other materials related to Arab history and heritage, including relatively modern items like film posters.

Our collections encompass materials that allow visitors to get a sense of the history of the Arab world, from its deep faith in Islam to the innovation and knowledge of scholars like Ibn Sina, to its folklore and its popular culture.

Our collections continue to grow year on year through acquisitions and donations and we continue to develop and host exhibitions that provide visitors with interesting perspectives of Qatar and the region's cultures.

Baya: An Exploration of Color and Nature

The surrealist painter Baya Mahieddine – one of the Arab world's most acclaimed artists – was the subject of an exhibition exploring her work and legacy.



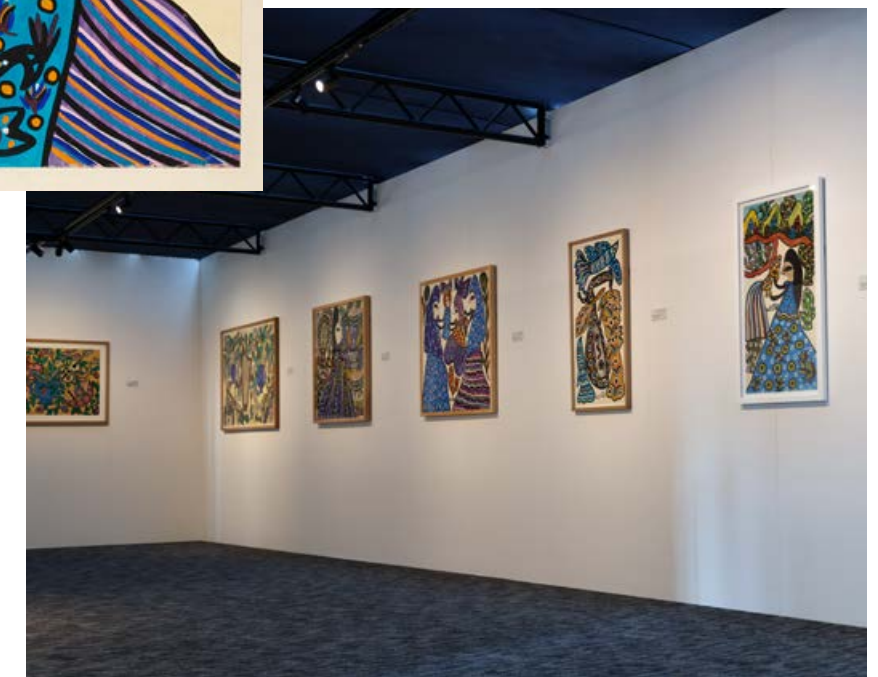
Baya Mahieddine (d. 1998), Two Women and a Baby in Arms, HC.GM.2018.0002

Baya's work was inspired by both her Arab and Berber heritage and culture, and during her life she was feted by leading figures of the Parisian avant garde movement, including Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse and André Breton.

The exhibition served to demonstrate the Library's commitment to facilitating engagement with the region's heritage, thus positioning Qatar as a regional and global center of culture.

While Baya herself did not identify with any artistic genre, she is considered to be one of the most important Algerian artists of her time, with a career spanning nearly six decades and being marked by the post-World War II period, the Algerian War of Independence, and the Algerian Civil War.

Characterized by bright primary colors and often featuring images of birds and women, 18 paintings were displayed in Qatar National Library, which were drawn from the Library's collection, the collection at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, and from private collectors around Qatar.



New to the Heritage Library

The Heritage Library continues to expand its collections. In 2022, the Library acquired around 40 physical items for its collections, including a Chinese Qur’anic manuscript dating from the late 18th to early 19th century. The manuscript features Arabic text and includes a prayer book of verses along with sayings of the Prophet (PBUH).

The collection has also been enhanced by digital images which provide unique insights into the environment of Qatar. The first collection of 3,000 items details old wells and, perhaps most interestingly, buildings in Qatar from the 1950s to the 1970s. With Doha having undergone a huge modernization program over the last decade, these pictures offer a window into the buildings and architectural styles that have since disappeared from view.

Linked to this is a collection of 6,000 digital images from the National Collection of Aerial Photography in Edinburgh. These photos, taken by the UK’s Royal Air Force in the 1940s, 50s and 60s show Qatar as it was 80 years ago, when much of Doha as residents know it today was still desert.



Qur’anic Manuscripts. China, HC.MS.01764

The Library also acquired scientific manuscripts originating from across the Islamic world, dating from the 13th to the 18th centuries CE.

The new additions will be uploaded onto Qatar National Library’s digital platforms.

Qatari Donations

Two Qatari families donated items to the Heritage Library in 2022, for which we are very grateful.

The Al-Jaber family donated a collection of manuscripts, documents and books that belonged to the judges Sheikh Mohammed Al Jaber and his son Sheikh Hassan bin Mohammed Al Jaber, many from 120 years ago.

The documents include personal correspondence and papers related to marriages, deaths and

business contracts and there is a collection of sermons delivered by Sheikh Hassan. Significantly, the donation of books includes two items that belonged to Sheikh Jassim Bin Mohammed Al Thani, the founder of Qatar.

A donation was also received from the Al-Matwe family. Dating from more than a century ago, the collection comprises seven books relating to Islamic jurisprudence.

Qatar Digital Library

A decade ago, Qatar Foundation and Qatar National Library formed a 10-year, three-phase partnership with the British Library to digitize archival documents about Qatar and the Gulf region found in the India Office Records held at the British Library.



Above and top: Qatar Digital Library hosts a plethora of digitized archives.

Over that time, work has been ongoing to digitize and upload these documents to Qatar Digital Library (QDL). In 2022, the initial 10-year partnership was extended to a fourth phase which is scheduled to end in December 2025.

The partnership between us has been outstanding. Since its inception, more than 2.4 million pages of archival documents, maps, photographs, charts and diary entries have been added to QDL, allowing academics from across the globe the chance to examine them online for free. 2022 has been particularly successful, with the website seeing a 20% increase in traffic to 216,500 unique users.

In phase four, we plan to digitize and upload a further 675,000 pages to QDL. Content will include Islamic manuscripts, audio files, maps, charts and archival documents, all available to view online for free no matter where you are in the world.

Collaborations

Qatar National Library continues to support the work of other institutions within Qatar and is grateful for their reciprocal support.

In 2022, the Heritage Library loaned out a total of 40 items to the Museum of Islamic Art, the National Museum of Qatar and the Art Mill Museum at Al Najada Heritage House.

Loan items were diverse, ranging from a 1298 CE mathematics-geometry treatise by Thabit bin Qurrah, a noted Abbasid scholar and translator, to a selection of Iraqi railway posters dating from the 20th century.



Iraqi State Railways, London, McCorquodale & Co. Ltd., between 1936 and 1940. Clockwise: HC.GM.P.2019.0038, HC.GM.P.2019.0093, HC.GM.P.2019.0037, HC.GM.P.2019.0168



Naukeurige, beschryving van Asie [An accurate description of Asia]. Olfert Dapper, HC.FB.04408

QNL is also supporting the Al Madar Exhibition at the inaugural Islamic Arts Biennale in Jeddah with 12 items from the heritage collection, including a 19th century Maghribi astrolabe, probably originating from Morocco, a Qur'anic manuscript from India written in the 1500s CE, and a Safavid brass qibla indicator with sundial dating from the 17th or 18th century CE.



A manuscript by astronomer and mathematician Thabit bin Qurrah (d. 901 CE), HC.MS.00444



Fine Maghribi brass astrolabe Q885.M371816



Making a Difference: Nationally and Globally

As the country’s national library, we have the responsibility to positively influence the world in which we exist, using our expertise and resources to bring about benefits both in Qatar and abroad. As such, the Library has developed programs and partnerships to do this, and uses its influence in organizations of which it is a member to promote the dissemination of knowledge and constructive dialogue across international borders, and the adoption of improved practices.

In an ever-increasingly connected world, Qatar National Library strives to be a catalyst for positive change.

Libraries Lead

Qatar National Library’s first ever annual “**Libraries Lead**” forum held in May focused on how libraries across the world can drive progress for the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 Agenda.

With libraries, institutions and delegates from a number of different countries participating, the forum discussed how equal access to information empowers individuals and collectives to make informed economic, social and environmental decisions and how library programs, services, collaborations, and initiatives can drive progress for the UN’s SDGs.

Topics discussed included, “The role of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions in Supporting Libraries in Implementing SDGs”, the “Planning and Statistics Authority’s Role in Accomplishing the SDGs in Qatar” and “MENA Libraries and SDGs: An Insight into a Challenging Opportunity”.

The “Libraries Lead” forum is in line with the Library’s mission to promote the importance of access to information in support of the UN’s SDGs and to positively influence society by creating an exceptional and sustainable ecosystem for learning and discovery where information is provided in an advanced technological and cultural context, along with new initiatives, programs and services.



HE Dr. Hamad Al Kawari, Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library, welcomed the “Libraries Lead” delegates.



QNL Executive Director Tan Huism (fourth from left), with delegates at the “Libraries Lead” forum.

The United Nation’s SDGs are based upon the principle of fair and equal access to information, a principle that is enshrined in points 3 and 4 of QNL’s set of values.

Physically, our Library building itself has been designed to be accessible to those who are physically disabled, and services have been introduced that promote an inclusive atmosphere. These include a dedicated assistive technology space, access to the Bookshare database, braille books and keyboards, and advocating for Qatar to sign the Marrakesh Treaty, allowing for copyright exceptions to enable the creation of books and other copyrighted works for visually impaired and print-disabled persons.

Qatar National Library also operates the Open Access Program, providing free and instant unrestricted online access to research publications. Open access removes barriers to accessing research and ensures that work reaches the widest possible audience, which not only increases the number of readers and citations, but also improves reproducibility and re-use of content.

The benefits of the QNL Open Access Program include open access agreements with publishers so that Qatar-based researchers are not required to pay publishing fees, hosting events and training sessions, and developing the Library’s digital repository to support a permanent archive of Qatar-based research.

The Fight Against the Trafficking of Documentary Heritage

Central to Qatar National Library's existence is its role in preserving the past for the future, ensuring that manuscripts and other antiquities are kept in the correct environment and are protected from deterioration.

But as a custodian of the region's history, and as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' Preservation and Conservation Center (IFLA PAC) for Arab Countries and the Middle East, the Library also has a duty to highlight the issue of trafficking in stolen materials, and to help build the capacity for libraries vulnerable to this to protect their collections.

To this end, the **Himaya** project was developed in 2020.



The "Countering Trafficking of Cultural Property Including Documentary Heritage" workshop attracted participants from the Middle East, the US and Europe.

Significant Himaya events in 2022 included the joint interdisciplinary workshop "Countering Trafficking of Cultural Property Including Documentary Heritage", which was held in September and featured international and local experts from Qatar Museums; the Art Crime Team from the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); the Carabinieri Unit of Rome for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, Italy; the National Directorate of Customs Intelligence and Investigation in France; and the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property in the United Arab Emirates, among others.

The speakers discussed the laws and mechanisms that prevent the sale of conflict antiquities in the region and

worldwide and shared guidance on identifying and intervening to prevent the trafficking of cultural property.

Then, in December, an online symposium on the theme of the "Illicit Circulation and Laundering of National and Oriental Cultural Goods in the World of Art" was held under the aegis of the HeRMA laboratory from the University of Poitiers, in partnership with Qatar National Library and *L'association Terres d'Orient*.

Involving academics and archaeologists, members of heritage and research institutions, investigators, lawyers, and magistrates, the multidisciplinary symposium discussed the problems and the weaknesses of art markets in the face of traffickers.

Knowledge-Sharing During Covid

For the first time, in September 2022 Qatar National Library hosted the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' **Interlending and Document Supply (ILDS) Conference** with reference to document delivery and resource-sharing (DDRS) during the pandemic and how libraries across the world rose to the challenges posed by closures and lockdowns by embracing innovative solutions.



During the pandemic's lockdowns, the role libraries played was vital in ensuring continuity of access to resources for academics and students, allowing them to continue their work in the digital realm when access to physical resources was an impossibility.

Throughout the two-day conference, which was titled "Sharing to Heal: Resource Sharing Through the Pandemic and Beyond," there was a focus on how the DDRS services quickly redesigned their operations, using technology and new ways of working to share resources with other libraries across the world. This included collaborative projects such as HERMES, which aims to build libraries' capacities to share resources within educational communities to support effective access to knowledge for all.

Prior to the conference, three training sessions were provided for librarians, students, researchers and teachers interested in learning more about resource sharing and its principles. The training sessions came as part of the activities of the HERMES initiative.

A Brighter Future

Andy Appleyard, Head of Operations North at the British Library, was one of the delegates, and delivered a talk entitled – "The British Library – Rethinking Physical Storage".

He said: "Although the British Library and Qatar National Library have worked in close partnership for a number of years, this was the first time I had visited Qatar National Library – or indeed Qatar itself.

"I enjoyed the whole experience especially the lovely building which I found both impressive and awe-inspiring.

"The conference was really well organized and provided not just a timely opportunity for meeting colleagues face-to-face but also to share experiences. The committee worked hard to support libraries around the world throughout the pandemic – this event enabled us to look forward and plan a brighter and more optimistic future."



For Andy Appleyard, it was his first time at Qatar National Library.

One Book, One Doha

One of the most famous books in Arabic literature – *Kalila wa Dimna* – was used in March to launch what is perhaps Qatar’s biggest book club, the “One Book, One Doha” campaign by QNL’s Qatar Reads initiative.

With the goal of increasing national awareness of the value of reading to all members of society, the “One Book, One Doha” campaign encouraged a collective reading of the classic collection of fables to celebrate and learn about Arabic culture and literature.

The campaign was launched with three phases, awareness, reading and participation. The first phase encouraged individuals, organizations and schools to register for the initiative while the second brought the community together in small workshops, book clubs, and discussion groups to share their experiences of the book. The final phase culminated in a four-day festival, creating an immersive experience, and encouraging lapsed or non-readers to begin enjoying books once again. The festival included a book fair, art wall, calligraphy, storytelling, quizzes and crafts, all developed to bring literature to life.

In total, 6,000 people participated in the campaign, among whom 2,000 were students.



Lifelong Learning, Now and Always

Access to knowledge is part of Qatar National Library’s ethos, indeed it is set out in our values that we encourage continuous learning.

The Library offers free, short courses, often vocational in nature, which can be accessed at different times to suit people’s working hours and lifestyles.

Over the course of 2022, the Library provided 94 in-person and online programs in Qatar related to progressive education, reaching a total of 1,847 people, featuring Arabic language and cultural events, insightful lifelong learning lectures, and research support programs, among others.

Across the region, though, there are marginalized groups who have been pushed out of their homelands and are living as refugees, or people who have difficulty accessing education because of the political situation in the region where they live.

However, Qatar National Library is committed to bringing knowledge to everyone.

So, the QNL team partnered with Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser’s Education Above All Foundation to support their Al Fakhoora program for 18 to 25-year-old refugees and other marginalized youth in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey, providing 11 workshops for over 500 students. Topics included Negotiation and Persuasion Skills,

IELTS Prep, How to Use Google Scholar Effectively, Writing a Literature Review, Designing Effective Presentations, and Public Speaking and Debate.

Feedback shared by students indicates that the workshops have increased their confidence in knowing how to find the right resources and how to write in an academic style.



Our Collections

Total items in the Qatari National Collection	11,256
New items in the Qatari National Collection	1,453
Items in the Heritage Library	175,288
Total digitized pages on Qatar Digital Library	2,437,930
New digitized pages added to Qatar Digital Library	215,610

Open Access

Open Access Fund requests accepted and funded	1,059
---	-------

Events

Total events	444
Participants	19,091
Physical events	253
Physical participants	9,339
Online events	191
Online participants	9,752
Programs for people with disabilities	21
Total Library tours	426

Visits

Library visits	568,727
Total number of loans	507,098
Unique visitors to QNL's websites	933,898
Unique users of Qatar Digital Library	207,306
New QNL members	30,181
Total QNL membership since 2017	218,403

"We had a remarkable year! Our collections have grown, our resources are more accessible, our outreach has extended, and our services have been enhanced. Looking ahead, we're excited to build upon these accomplishments and continue to illuminate the way for our community. Our team is thrilled to maintain this momentum and shine even brighter in the years ahead."

Tan Huism
Executive Director

Acknowledgements

Donors to the Heritage Library

The Al-Jaber family
The Al-Matwe family

Sponsors

Qatar Museums
Ministry of Culture
Galleries Lafayette

Community Program Partners

Embassy of the Republic of Yemen
Qatar University
Ministry of Education
Total Energies
5/6 Studio
Qatar National Theater
Behavior Healthcare Center
Qatar Scientific Club
Maktaba
Al Noor Institute for the Blind

Qatar Reads Community Partners

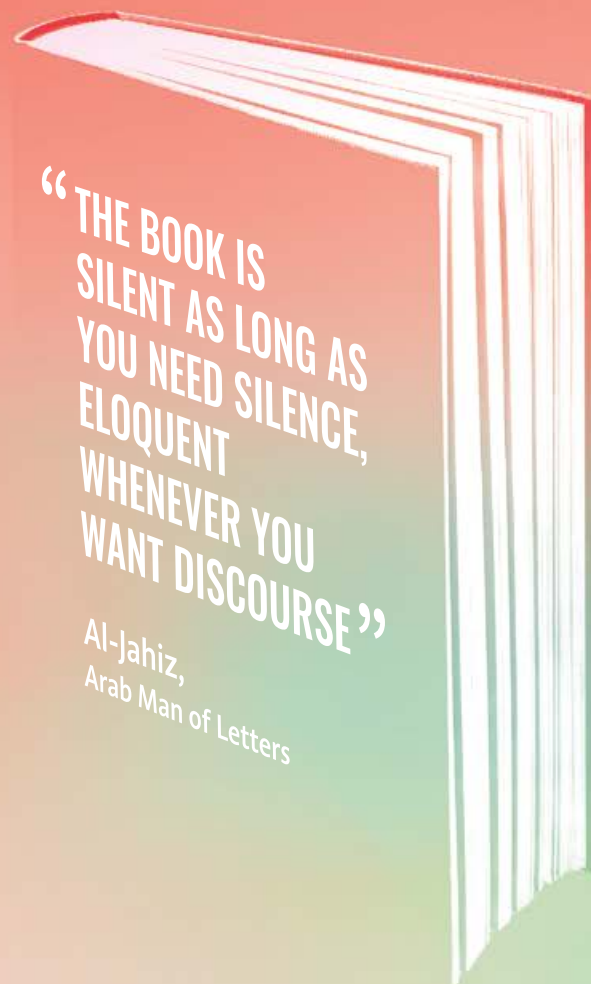
Qatar Leadership Center
Msheireb Properties
Fnac
Doha Festival City
Teach For Qatar
Alif Bookstore

Qatar Reads - One Book One Doha

Dar AlHadaek
Doha Bookworms
InClub Studio
HBKU
Jarir Bookstore
Jassim Magazine
Jothoor AlArabiya
Profiles Café
Khair Jalis
Samarkand
Qatar Academy Sidra
Carluccios

Qatar Reads - Mommy To Be Festival

Khulud Pharmacy
Monoprix
Ten Little Toes
My Nest
Ministry of Culture
Qiyorro
Under the Sea
Pod Babies
A Petite Story
Hamad Hospital
Al Fardan Hospital
Al Ahli Hospital
PediDiet



**“THE BOOK IS
SILENT AS LONG AS
YOU NEED SILENCE,
ELOQUENT
WHENEVER YOU
WANT DISCOURSE”**

Al-Jahiz,
Arab Man of Letters