

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

BETWEEN OUR SHELVES: A SPACE FOR EVERYONE

Between Our Shelves: A Space For Everyone

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Foreword and Introduction

Foreword



It is my privilege to present the Qatar National Library Annual Report 2024—a testament to an extraordinary year defined by purposeful growth, strategic alliances and an unwavering commitment to culture and knowledge.

In 2024, Qatar National Library solidified its standing as a global catalyst for knowledge exchange, innovation, and the promotion of cultural identity. The pages that follow chronicle this progress and showcase milestones that exemplify our strategic vision.

In November, the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information honored the Qatar Digital Library with the "Best Arab Initiative" award. This recognition—concurrent with the tenth anniversary of our partnership with the British Library—underscores the platform's status as the world's largest digital repository of Gulf and Arab historical resources.

The momentum continued in December when QNL was appointed the first Middle East and North Africa Regional Office of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). This designation affirms Qatar's pioneering leadership within the Arab library sector and positions the Library at the heart of regional professional development and advocacy.

Our commitment to cultural diplomacy was equally evident. Throughout the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture, we curated "The Art of Book-making in Morocco", an exhibition epitomizing five centuries of manuscript craftsmanship. In partnership with ICESCO and the National Library of Morocco, we also convened a seminal workshop—Combating Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property—to advance regional capacity in heritage preservation and protection.

Preserving national identity in an era of globalization and rapid digital transformation remains a strategic imperative. In February, we convened the first-ever forum on the teaching of Qatari history, alongside the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Qatar Foundation and the Shura Council. In June, the fifth session of the Cultural Salon—an initiative I had the honor to conceive—examined national identity amid accelerating global change, reinforcing the Salon's role as a premier arena for critical dialogue.

Collaboration lies at the core of our success. During 2024, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the General Authority of Customs to combat the illicit trafficking of heritage materials and held the Libraries Lead Forum at the 27th SLA-AGC Conference. We also hosted the second "Memory of Qatar's Special Collections" seminar and, with the Electronic Knowledge Foundation, the third Annual Forum for Open Research in MENA.

The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza remains a profound moral concern. QNL has stood firmly with the Palestinian people through scholarly programs and public awareness initiatives. Highlights include the Cultural Salon's poetry evening "If They Ask You About Gaza...", a Nakba seminar examining historical and contemporary displacement, and the Reesha Children's Art Exhibition 2024, created with Hamad Bin Khalifa University and the Children's Literature Center to deepen young audiences' understanding of Palestinian heritage.

None of these achievements would be possible without the unwavering dedication of the Library's staff, the steadfast support of our partners and the curiosity of the countless patrons who turn every visit into a new chapter of success. Guided by Qatar National Vision 2030, we remain committed to serving as a beacon of knowledge, a bridge for dialogue and an inclusive home for all seekers of learning.

Knowledge is our enduring mission; humanity is our ultimate purpose.



Dr. Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-KawariMinister of State and President of Qatar National Library



Introduction

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At Qatar National Library, we believe that knowledge is not only power - it is the foundation of progress, inclusion and shared understanding. As we reflect on 2024, we celebrate a year defined by innovation, resilience and a deepened commitment to serving as a catalyst for learning, creativity and cultural preservation.

In a world navigating complex global challenges, we remained steadfast in our mission to provide equitable access to knowledge. The Library welcomed a record 1.19 million visits - nearly a third of Qatar's population - an extraordinary testament to the growing trust our community places in us. Whether through safeguarding Qatar's documentary heritage, advancing digital literacy or leading open-access initiatives across the region, we continue to build a knowledge ecosystem that is inclusive, forward-thinking and deeply rooted in our national identity.

This year also marked transformative milestones that underscore our expanding impact both regionally and globally. We proudly became home to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa. This milestone affirms our leadership in empowering library professionals, advocating for intellectual freedom and shaping the future of knowledge access across borders.

We also celebrated the 10th anniversary of Qatar Digital Library, a landmark partnership with the British Library. Over the past decade, this platform has revolutionized access to Gulf history and Islamic heritage, enabling researchers and the wider public to engage directly with primary sources that were once difficult to reach.

Our commitment to empowering people extended far beyond our collections. Initiatives like Murshidi connected young minds with experienced mentors, fostering a culture of aspiration, confidence and dialogue. Simultaneously, our programs in solidarity with Palestine reaffirmed our dedication to cultural dignity, memory and the preservation of vulnerable narratives.

Preserving the past while preparing for the future remained central to our mission. We deepened the regional impact of the Himaya Project, advanced new research collaborations to conserve Islamic manuscripts, and nurtured the next generation of readers, writers and knowledge creators - especially those from underserved communities.

At the heart of everything we do is a profound belief that libraries are spaces of possibility where imagination is ignited, heritage is honored and communities are empowered. Every service we offer, every manuscript we protect and every child we inspire contributes to the vision of a knowledge-driven society outlined in Qatar National Vision 2030. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated QNL team, our valued partners and everyone who engaged with the Library throughout 2024 - your support, collaboration and trust make our mission possible.

As you explore the pages of this report, I invite you to discover how Qatar National Library continues to be a space for everyone - a sanctuary for stories, a wellspring of learning and a gateway to the future.



Vision, Mission & Values

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.

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:

- 1. Openness and Transparency with all patrons and organizations we deal with, where privacy and confidentiality are observed.
- **2.** Education and Lifelong Learning, where we strive to offer services that facilitate equitable learning.
- **3.** Open Access, where we are committed to 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, 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.

- **5.** Growth and Innovation, where we encourage creativity, continuous learning, experimentation and the generation of ideas.
- **6.** 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.
- 7. Intellectual Freedom, where we are committed to facilitating the free exchange of information and ideas.

Preserving Qatar's Heritage

QATAR'S DOCUMENTARY LEGACY

As a national library, Qatar National Library collects, safeguards and promotes the intellectual and cultural legacy of Qatar and the broader Islamic world. **Our heritage collection helps keep our history alive by preserving the stories, documents and traditions that shape our culture.** Our conservation laboratories are equipped with state-of-the-art technology for the treatment and material analysis of our collection. We also digitize heritage materials not only to preserve them, but also to make them accessible to the public. In addition, we collect contemporary materials with the understanding that they will be valuable to future historians and researchers.

Public access is central to our work, and not just within the walls of the Library. Through partnerships with institutions like Lusail Museum and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, many more people engaged with the documentary heritage of Qatar and the region, while 57 schools and colleges incorporated digitized manuscripts into their curricula in 2024, allowing students to work with primary source materials. Access to our historical resources also saw three doctoral dissertations completed in 2024 that relied exclusively on our digitized collections.

Three PhDs completed in 2024 based solely on QNL's digital collections

In alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030, our work contributes to human development by providing citizens and residents access to their historical and cultural roots. This connection to heritage fosters a sense of belonging and pride, strengthening Qatar's social fabric while supporting the nation's journey toward a knowledge-based economy.

Family Collections

Recognizing the important role that individuals and families play in preserving Qatar's history and traditions, the Library hosted the second edition of its "Memory of Qatar's Special Collections" seminar series in November 2024. The event showcased the collections of Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Mohammed Al-Mana and Sheikh Hamed bin Ahmed Al-Marwani, whose rare books and documents embody Qatar's scientific and cultural renaissance.

By highlighting these family collections, the Library showcased how private libraries serve as essential pillars of Qatar's rich cultural heritage, filling narrative gaps in the history of Qatar and providing valuable historical material that cannot otherwise be accessed.



New Additions to Qatar's Story

This year, we welcomed 97 new heritage items

to resources that document Qatar's history, in addition to historical aerial photography showing the nation's significant landscape evolution from the 1940s to 1980s.

A newly acquired heritage item of particular significance is an Ottoman **newspaper** that illuminates Qatar's regional relationships during a formative period.

This 1871 issue of Al Zawra was issued by the Ottoman Administration in Iraq. This rare document reports on the Turkish campaign's landing at Al Bidda, offering crucial context for understanding Qatar's historical development during this period.

This primary source serves as a crucial complement to our existing heritage collection, allowing researchers to gain a more holistic understanding of Qatar's position within the Ottoman Empire and its evolving regional relationships.



(وعن سنة أشهر (٥٥) عرشــا وكل نحقة منهــا (٥٠) بار. وبضم على فية ؛ الجرائد الني ننقل للخمارج (٢٥) فرشــا اجرة اللبومشــة فالذي ﴾ (وغب في اخذها وشرائها فالراحع مطاعة مركز الولايه)

لسان الباب الممالي ٣٠ كانون اول سنة ٨٧ ﴿ حضرة والى باشا الافتيم الى قوماندان الطمابور المزور وقرأ على ملاء الاشهاد بحضور جم ففير وافهم حكمه العالى لنكل احد واشبع فعواه ويدت الدعوات الخرية من طرف كل احدد بدوام العن

مكنوبي الرابع والحيامس السذان حررتهما والقاه لحضرة امعر المؤونين ادامه رب العالمين هذا وان كان الى الان ماوقع شيُّ بليق بالاشعار لما حقق مجي العساكر الملوكية الى قلك الاطراف ونظرا المعقيقاتي انه قد تصرر في التعليمات المعطاة

هوا ما مقرا لمشايخ بني خالد الذين كانوا بحكون

و مانه لسكل احدثقد الدرنالدرج صورته عنا 📗 وضر ت المحدافع من القامة مقالجة المدافع التي المدوي ومدني فانهم داخلين نحت الطماعه ولازالوا وادشين الاسده المكاملة حسب الاستطاعة واماالعربان

ارسانهما قبل هذا بمدة عشرة اللم لابد أخما فالما سعود وحوثه الذي ذكرت هذه الله لازال ود

لكن لما أنفق اليوم أخراج سماع من هذا حرون أفر في الحال منها وحسمِما أخذ من الحجر أنه البوم عدالة حضرة دولانا (مبر المؤرمي المسمرد هذا المكتوب الخاس وسارعت القدءه قباما بما موجود في الرواضي الواقعه ما بين الفطر والاحسا

الباب العمال بان لابيمون دغاتهم بابهوان فلاجل كنت قد ادرجت في مكتوبي السالف اله يناء من ذات حضرة صاحب الدوله وال باشا الاقسم على طلب قاسم أن الني شبح الفطر وقائمة المها أن وايور آثور بيني في الفطر بعية الطب بور وأن كان قد سبق الطابور الناني من الطلبعة الى من فوروت اسكندر به يرجع معصاحب العزمارف بك الاطراف لاجل دفع سعود وطرده مع هونته من افتدى قوماندان البحرية في البصرة وبموجب الامر لافين إن اصحال العنيل في لوا يفدادوكريلاوالحله العناك ولاجل المحمسال الامن والامان في ذلك ان آثور بهتي في الفطر يعني يتم هناك مقابلا للبده لازالوا ومفون انحار بسانيهم عن سنين وثلاثة المكان ووعدت بانني اذكر مابحصل من النجمة التي هي مفر الفاقمة الم وفوروت اسكسندر يه يعود مستقبل بطريق عقد الساغات ووطونها بالفواطوراتو وبدّ على المعاومات المحجمه المأخوذة بهذا الدقعة بهذة الابام (زوراه) عودة الواليور الذكور ووصوله ن الطابور المذكور يعد أن خرج من وأورى أني البصرة قد فهم بواسطة الثلغرف البسان والملام وحيث أن أبيع للذكور بالاصل اسكندريه وآثور وتحرك من رأس التقرر فأيتوصل ويوجد في ساحل أنجم ومايين القطيف والاحسا

الشرعة كا الدرج بالاعلان الرسمي في العدد ١٧٥ وجيت ان فوروت اسكندرية العماوي ويدله١٦ على قطعة نجد فيل الوهابين لكنها الان قد خالت قدم من المساء وأن البحر أمام الفصية المذكورة في حكمالبر الافقر وصارت محلا لجولار العشا ووالعربان

و بعدان خرجت العساكر النصورة السلطانية الى البرنحركوا المنحمة على رأس معود العهاعة في البر بعني الاجراب الوجودة بمزيد الاعتناء فيدأرة النظام والاصول وركزوا الجهام للمحوالي الرياض وانكافوا الي الازما فددخلوالدأرة الصاعه أُهذَن الله عن الموادة المورخه 17 رمضان سنة 😸 قلمة الحديم (مسلم) وهند ذلك دعى الفائمة ام الكن إرسال العسكر وسوقه علمهم لاجل تأديبهم قطعا ٨٨ المادم أن فسير دونطوراتو المشكين هـو الرق النه والمحيرين من الاهـالي واحضروا الى وظاهة متكل من جهة لرمال وفلاالمأ فان المدولالاجل مستند الى الاحكام الشرعية والقبانونة فقد فرقرار 🌡 المعسكر التحبابوني والبسوهم والذين معهم الحلع اللازمة 🧂 الطاعة الان لبس له الزم ومحبوريه فاشا مارأينا حالا

صورة الثافراقتامة الساميه الواردة بالشرف الى

الى همنكم فيلزم السارعة لذلك

هو منهاوي الشراع فاجارة اجالة ولزام مثل هممذي وقت الغروب أفي يوم من حركة، الى البدعة التي همي امكان تسمى (ظاهران) قد كان نجمب الطف الهيئة من التخلسان فقضي توفيقها لمساتها مقر فاتحمقاسة الفطر وخيم الماسها

المصرر وغومون نخيالفة هذا الحسكم ويتساشرون أنمام القصيبة ورمي الانجر في الجر بمساقة التي أنجد صدرالامر من حضرة وإلى أشا الافتم لمضرة في تخديم لاستدمات للحكومه وبصدعومها و ذرعلي عشسهر مبلا بالتخمسين وحبث أن وابور آثور أقوماندان إشا بأن تبقد المحل المدكور وهو (طاهران) ان المسئلة هم غير مطاعة للشرع الشريف والقانون المحتاج الى سنة اقدام من الله فأنه قدر على القرب الحبه و يحلس فيها مدير وقد بدأ الشبت في الهادة النبف كال لازالت الاجسربه تعطى في ذلك الهم ال الساحل ووضع المسدار السلازم مسن مأموروة تمك الاطرافي الكنبي واقدو في ذلكولازالوزرملون العرضمالات المداقسع القلصية واخرجات من ﴿ القوروت ﴾ وكذلك قطعه ﴿ قراما ﴾ الواقعة مابين السكوبت مع الموسنة و يحصون التلفر فاتالب الصالى محيث الى آثور واخرجوهم الى البر والعساكر معهم والاحسا فانها فيل هذا ايضاكان معمورة لكمتها الهم فدعجزيا هذك ايضا ظلان اقلضي فعهم حكم طبا رأت اهسالي البلدة مجبي الوابورات المزبوره الان خربت وصارت بهدأ مثل قطعه لحاهران وقد النافراد، ألسامية الوارد، الى مقسام الولاية الجليلة ﴿ زَلُوا الْكَافَتِيمِ إِلَى الْاسْكَاءُ وَالْدُوا ٱلْمَارِاتُمْ وَالْمَاوِنِيهِ ﴾ تقرر اعمارها أيضا التي هي جوال عن الانها الذي بين حقيقة المساد. و وأن يوم جاء مخصوصا الي اوارود اخو القائمة أم إلىا كافه الاهالي الوجردة في قطعة الاحسا من

صورت التلغرافنامة الساميه

والزر داخلية شوري الدولة على إصطاعا لجواب لهم من 🌡 وقرأ البو رادي الشرخ الذي إعطى من جانب 🖟 حركة توجب غنيار هذا الشفه اسوق العياري هذه الغياقي

Cultural Exhibition: A Window to the Past

The exhibition From Material to Market: The Art of Book-making in Morocco celebrates the journey of manuscript creation, from crafting raw materials to the finished books being sold in the thriving book markets of Morocco.

Year of Culture, the exhibition focused on the materiality and codex form of manuscripts rather than being tied to a specific city or historical period. By first examining raw materials, visitors were guided through the creation of a manuscript step by step. Manuscripts from our collection were paired with videos and audio from contemporary Morocco, creating a narrative that highlighted the enduring nature of traditional practices.

Visitors were able to marvel at both the intricate leather bindings as well as the beautiful calligraphy found in the Moroccan manuscripts on display. The exhibition ended with a section on the souq as a place where the raw materials and the final product - the book - are bought and sold.

85% of visitors rated the exhibition as "EXCELLENT"

By highlighting traditional crafts that still survive today, like leather tanning and calligraphy, the exhibition links the past to the present and encourages a deeper appreciation for artisanal traditions in an age of mass production.



Heritage Protection and Regional Leadership

The **Himaya Project**, launched in 2020, stands at the forefront of our efforts to help combat the trafficking of documentary heritage. We do so through a series of lectures with INTERPOL and UNIDROIT, as well as our signature annual workshop in September – the Doha Workshop on Combating Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property - which brought together **130** participants from across the Arab world and featured **27** sessions over four days.

Under the Himaya Project, and in collaboration with the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) and the National Library of the Kingdom of Morocco, QNL also organized an international training workshop titled "Combating Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property: Documentation and Preservation."

Held in December 2024 at ICESCO Headquarters in Rabat, the workshop focused on documentation as a fundamental tool for protecting cultural property and combating illicit trafficking. Attendees came from Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia, Libya, Iraq, Oman, KSA, Somalia, Sudan and Jordan.

The workshop concluded with a set of recommendations reflecting the urgent need for collective regional and international action, including the launch of public awareness campaigns about illicit trafficking, raising awareness of the value of cultural heritage, and developing national emergency response plans to protect cultural property during crises.



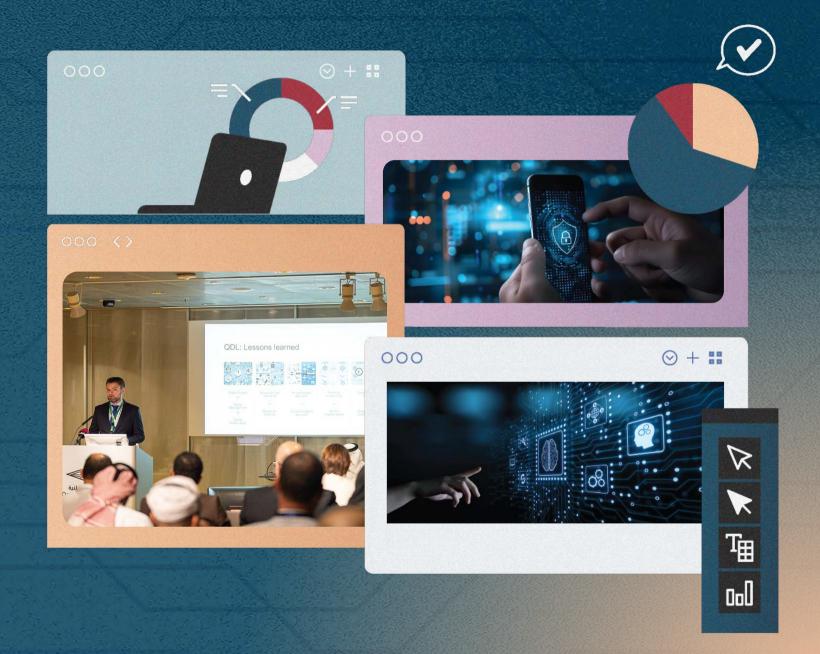
Using Technology to Preserve the Past

The third forum on "Digital Access and Artificial Intelligence Applications" gathered experts from across the region to explore the intersection of technology and heritage preservation.

The participants examined how traditional collecting institutions worldwide face challenges managing vast amounts of historical data and information.

The forum was held at Qatar National Library in September 2024 and brought together **more than 150 specialists** in digital heritage, Al and cultural information management from 18 countries.

A highlight of the two-day forum was the panel discussion on "Ethical Considerations in Al-Assisted Heritage Management," which addressed critical questions about authenticity, interpretation and the balance between technological innovation and traditional curatorial expertise.



Preservation Leadership and Custodianship of Knowledge

Our role as the IFLA Preservation and Conservation Center for Arab countries and the Middle East expanded through initiatives that strengthen our position as **custodians of knowledge across the Middle East and North Africa.** These included preservation and conservation training and capacity-building programs for professionals and institutions from Qatar and the region.

We also have a partnership with Cultural Emergency Response to support the conservation of 360 Qur'anic fragments from Dar al-Makhtutat, Sana'a, discovered during the restoration of the Great Mosque's west wall, and 40 historical documents from the Great Omari Mosque collection in Gaza.



Professionals from the region being trained by the QNL PAC Center.

Scientific Partnerships for Heritage Preservation

A research agreement has been established with the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI) to investigate the degradation affecting Islamic manuscripts written with iron gall ink and containing verdigris pigment.

The project aims to understand the deterioration of verdigris and iron gall inks and to **develop tailored preservation methodologies for historic Islamic manuscripts.** It seeks to refine existing approaches and propose, as well as test, new stabilization treatments to improve their long-term preservation.



Traditional ink-making workshop, inspired by classical Islamic recipes, in collaboration with QEERI.

Most existing preservation protocols have been developed based on research conducted on Western manuscripts, using Western paper and ink/pigment recipes. Therefore, this project addresses the urgent need to **create solutions specifically suited to the materials and composition of Islamic heritage manuscripts.**

The Qatar Research, Development and Innovation Council (QRDI), in collaboration with Qatar National Library, has also launched a call for research proposals under the initiative "Preserving Qatar's Heritage," focusing on two key themes:

1. Degradation of Metallic Iron Gall Inks and Verdigris in Islamic Manuscripts

The degradation of iron gall inks and verdigris pigments in Islamic manuscripts poses a significant challenge in manuscript preservation. These materials were widely used in **Islamic calligraphy** and illumination due to their vibrant colors and durability. However, their chemical properties, coupled with variations in production recipes and the influence of diverse papermaking techniques, contribute to complex preservation issues over time.

2. Building and Populating a Database for Inks and Pigments Used in the Analysis of Early Qur'anic Manuscripts

Creating a comprehensive database of inks and pigments used in early Qur'anic manuscripts is crucial for advancing the understanding of these historic materials. This research emphasizes the use of **non-destructive analytical methods** to collect and catalog material data without compromising the integrity of the manuscripts. The resulting database will serve as a **valuable resource for scholars and historians**, providing deeper insights into the materials employed in these manuscripts.

Research and Academic Excellence

Qatar Digital Library 10th Anniversary

Launched in 2014 in partnership with the British Library (BL), Qatar Digital Library (QDL)— the world's **largest online repository** devoted to Gulf history and Islamic culture—celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2024. QDL was established at the center of QNL's strategy to digitize and make freely available historical records about the region from around the world.

The initiative has enabled researchers to **reexamine regional narratives** through primary sources previously accessible only at the British Library.

The impact of Qatar Digital Library has been significant:

I am deeply grateful and indebted to those librarians and technicians who have made so many fascinating sources readily and freely available. The joys of the magnification that lets you pore over the details of maps, photographs and handwritten documents; what a treasure trove that place is!

There are whole worlds here.

- Professor Sue-Ann Harding of Queen's University Belfast



The exceptional contribution of Qatar Digital Library in facilitating easy access to historical resources related to Qatar and the wider Gulf region has played a pivotal role in breaking down barriers to historical research.

- Professor Mahjoob Zweiri of Qatar University



Research transformation:

Almost 2.5 million digitized pages have generated new scholarly approaches to regional history.



Digital accessibility:

Attracting around 200,000 users and more than 2 million page views annually, QDL has expanded access far beyond what physical archives could accommodate.



Bilingual knowledge:

To ensure accessibility for Middle Eastern scholars, every document is accompanied by commentary in both Arabic and English.



Cultural context:

By consolidating historical documents about the region, QDL enables a more holistic understanding of Gulf history.

Showcasing Qatar's Knowledge: The Global Impact of Local Research

Manara - Qatar Research Repository is an open access repository for Qatar-based researchers to upload and share their research, ensuring that knowledge created within Qatar has an international audience.

This strategic initiative aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030's emphasis on transitioning to a knowledge-based economy by showcasing Qatar's research successes.





Global visibility:

Research from 33 Qatari institutions generated 281,830 views and downloads in 2024 alone, with particular interest in Qatar's contributions to medicine, engineering and computer science.



Preservation of national knowledge:

Manara ensures that Qatar's intellectual output is systematically documented and preserved for future generations.



Strategic focus:

The repository highlights Qatar's unique expertise in areas like desert ecology, Islamic finance, liquefied natural gas technologies and sports medicine.

Empowering Diverse Voices Through Writing

QNL's Writing Support focuses not only on how many services we offer but on whose voices we help amplify. As a community writing hub offering complimentary writing support in one-to-one consultations and group programs, we've prioritized bringing writing support to communities who might otherwise remain unheard.



Writing with Domestic Workers:

In collaboration with the International Organization for Migration Mission in Qatar, we hosted writing workshops at QNL for domestic workers to craft personal narratives, sharing their stories for the first time in writing. These stories were later printed and exhibited at the Katara Art Center.



Academic Achievement:

Students from institutions within Education City and beyond, as well as professional researchers and postgraduates on programs at universities abroad, received specialized support that directly contributed to their success.

I passed my dissertation with a merit. I take this moment to thank you for the support and guidance you gave me. Furthermore, I would like to publish my thesis soon, and I would like to get some advice from you on this.

- Doctoral candidate



Food Delivery Riders' Program:

In collaboration with British
Council Qatar and Talabat, we
provided English language and
communication skills training to
120 delivery workers, enhancing
both their professional capabilities
and personal confidence.



Education Above All Workshops:

Our partnership with Education Above All extended writing support to students from conflict-affected regions, helping them develop academic writing skills essential for educational advancement.

More than 200 consultations were held in 2024 and by collaborating with institutions across Qatar's academic, creative and professional landscape while maintaining our focus on underserved communities, we've created writing pathways that bridge educational, professional, and socioeconomic boundaries.



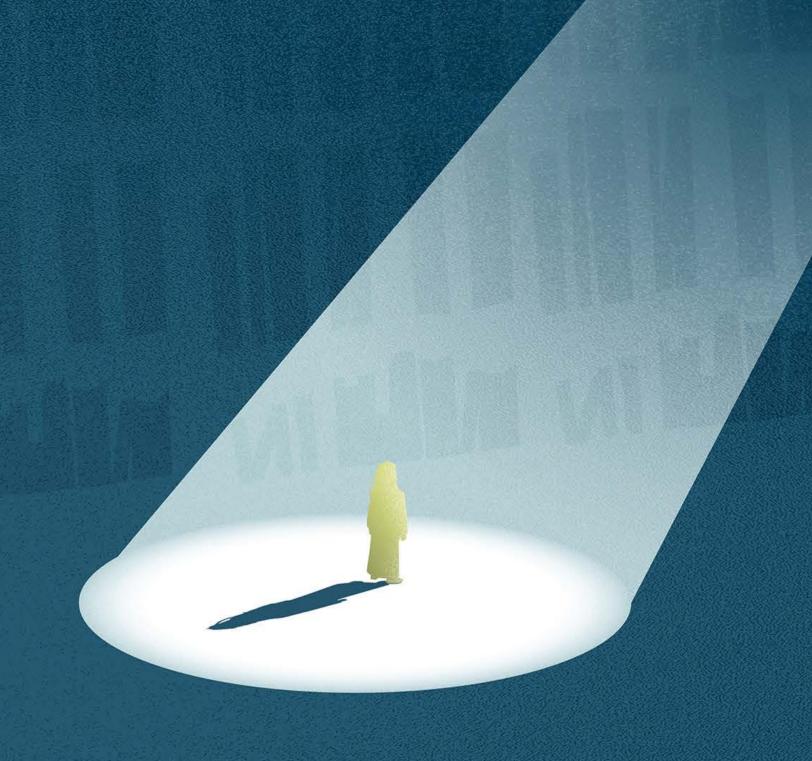
Writing workshop for students from conflict-affected regions.

Books and Authors



QNL's support for writers continued with its inaugural **Books and Authors** event in September. Local writers were invited to submit their work for presentation to the public, while a panel discussion highlighted the journey of local authors and the role of publishers in supporting them.

The event offered support to local writers of all nationalities and provided them with a platform to showcase their works and enhance community engagement.



Guiding Future Leaders: The Murshidi Mentorship Program

The Murshidi mentorship program has evolved from a simple career guidance initiative into a significant force that shapes students' aspirations and connects them with Qatar's knowledge economy.

By creating meaningful relationships between students and distinguished professionals, the program builds bridges between **academic achievement and real-world impact.**

The program's impact extends beyond individual guidance:

• Diverse participation:

200+ students benefited from the program in 2024, including international participants from Kuwait and Lebanon who connected with Qatar-based mentors.

• Executive leadership engagement:

11 executive directors from Qatar's leading institutions shared their career journeys and insights directly with students, demonstrating pathways to leadership positions.

Cross-institutional collaboration:

By bringing together professionals from Education City institutions, government ministries and private sector organizations, the program showcases the interconnected nature of Qatar's knowledge ecosystem.

What distinguishes Murshidi from standard career counseling is its emphasis on relationship-building rather than simply information-sharing.

The program has become particularly valuable for female students exploring fields where women are traditionally underrepresented, with several participants citing their mentoring relationships as crucial in overcoming societal or family concerns about pursuing careers in STEM fields, finance, or leadership positions.



Mentees receiving personalized support, advice and career guidance through dedicated mentorship sessions.

Open Access in MENA

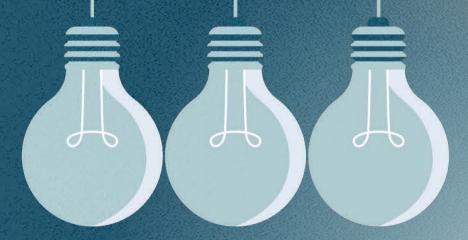
Annual Forum for Open Research in MENA (FORM), which promotes accessible, sustainable and inclusive research and education across the MENA region. Under the theme "Transforming Knowledge into Action", the hybrid forum brought together 1,457 delegates from 89 countries, representing 760 institutions.

FORM was an inspiring event that encouraged important discussions about open research among local stakeholders. It helped connect people in the community, creating a space for collaboration and innovation.

The event highlighted the work of library staff and local partners, **showcasing their projects and achievements.** Many librarians from different institutions across Qatar attended, allowing them to explore the latest developments in areas like open access publishing and modern open repositories.

The overarching message of this year's forum was the need to prioritize communication, collaboration and localization in the Arab region's research communities and research institutions to ensure the successful advancement of open science policies and practices.





Inspiring Scientific Curiosity

Our Science Book Forum transforms complex scientific concepts into compelling narratives that resonate with Qatar's diverse communities. Recognized in 2023 by Qatar Foundation and HundrED as one of Qatar's top educational innovations, **the forum has built an impressive record of impact:**



Extensive reach

More than 35,000 participants since its inception and 2.2 million social media interactions.



Behavioral change:

Following events there have been marked increases in the borrowing of science-based books, with students independently joining science competitions after attending sessions.



Strategic partnerships:

Collaborations with Springer Nature, the Ministry of Education and the LCO Global Sky Network have extended the forum's influence through specialized youth programs like the Al Club and Stellar Club.

Impactful events include a session with Dr. Naif Al-Mutawa (creator of *The 99*), which demonstrated how science-based storytelling can foster creativity and enhance Arab cultural representation, and an Al in Education forum that sparked school-based technology initiatives across Qatar.



Participants in the Science Book Forum hear from Dr. Naif Al-Mutawa, creator of The 99 comic book series.

Community Engagement

Qatar National Library welcomed 1.19 million visits in 2024, nearly a third of Qatar's population. This demonstrates our central role in the nation's cultural and intellectual life. Our public programming brings together diverse communities around shared stories and cultural experiences. Our programs, events and attendance figures signify **Qatar National Library's** commitment to lifelong learning and cultural engagement across all demographic groups.

Building Cultural Bridges Through Shared Reading

Our flagship **One Book, One Doha** campaign unites Qatar's communities around shared literary experiences. The 2024 selection of Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* also gave the campaign an extra dimension of cultural understanding and solidarity with displaced communities.

The campaign created meaningful impact through innovative approaches:



New adaptations:

By transforming the novel into three distinct formats – an abbreviated edition, a graphic novel and a special edition – we made the story accessible to diverse ages, reading levels and learning styles.



Cultural dialogue:

Exhibition spaces became places to engage with the personal stories of 44 Palestinians currently staying in Qatar.

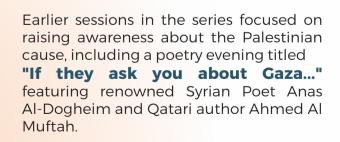


Living literature:

The transformation of a water tank truck, a central element of Kanafani's novel, into a mobile art installation brought literature to the streets of Doha, reaching people who may not enter the Library.

Cultural Salon:A Space for Dialogue

The Cultural Salon series continued in 2024 as an important initiative, creating an open public space for dialogue on pressing cultural and intellectual issues. The fifth installment, "National Identity in a Changing World," brought together His Excellency Mr. Khalid bin Ghanim Al-Maadheed, a member of the Shura Council, and Dr. Ezzeddine Abdelmoula, Manager of Research at Al Jazeera Center for Studies, to explore the multifaceted aspects of national identity in an increasingly interconnected world.







Qatar Reads:Nurturing a Reading Culture

Qatar Reads has changed how families engage with literature, bringing books directly to homes and **fostering lifelong reading habits** that strengthen Qatar's cultural foundation.

In 2024, our initiatives expanded beyond simply delivering books to cultivating a complete literary ecosystem that develops both readers and writers.

These initiatives include:



Family Reading Program:

Delivering 9,934 thematically curated reading packages to 810 children, with monthly selections that reflected Qatar's cultural calendar.



Author Development:

Creating pathways for emerging Qatari writers through workshops, mentorship programs and publishing opportunities.



School Integration:

Growth from 18 to 50 school memberships since 2022, establishing reading routines that bridge home and classroom environments.



Publishing Partnerships:

Collaborating with publishing houses to adapt literature for different ages and reading levels.





Children receiving their monthly reading package in an event held in collaboration with Qatar Rail.

Digital Literacy and Al Engagement

In 2024, the Library supported the community's understanding of new technologies by **hosting informative events** focused on navigating the ethical and practical implications of artificial intelligence. The Libraries Lead Forum 2024, held in collaboration with the Special Libraries Association - Arabian Gulf Chapter, examined **"Unlocking Digital Competence in the Age of Al"** and equipped library professionals with essential digital skills to better serve communities.

Another significant event, "Digital Wellbeing vs. Digital Addiction: Clarifying Technology's Impact," explored our relationship with the digital world and the impact of artificial intelligence on daily life.

Through workshops on using AI tools in research while maintaining academic integrity, and sessions on developing digital literacy skills across all age groups, the Library has created a balanced approach to technological advancement – embracing innovation while ensuring equitable access and ethical usage of these powerful new tools.

Knowledge Access Through Innovation

Digital innovation at Qatar National Library has changed how knowledge reaches people throughout Qatar, with the technology serving as an effective means to **connect diverse communities with information that enriches their lives.**

Key digital initiatives that have extended our reach include:

Mobile access

Our application, downloaded by over

77,000 users

has turned phones and tablets into portable libraries, with users spending an average of 2hrs per session.

Bridging gaps

Digital platforms have helped remove barriers for users with disabilities through screen-reader compatible interfaces and audiobook collections in Arabic and South Asian languages.



Inclusion for All

In 2024, the Library advanced its commitment to accessibility through further initiatives for people with disabilities.

The seminar "Equity for All: Social Inclusion in Qatar," held in June, explored paths to improve access to social activities and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Simultaneous sign language interpretation for the seminar demonstrated our commitment to communication accessibility.

Throughout the year, our **Assistive Technology Center** provided specialized equipment and software, while the Sensory Room created a supportive environment where children and adults with developmental disabilities could learn to engage with the world around them.

These initiatives reflect our belief that accessibility is a foundational principle.





The Assistive Technology Center and the Sensory Room at the Library.

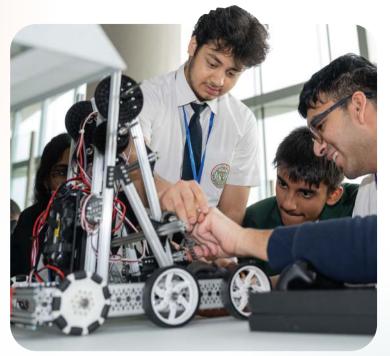
Nurturing Young Readers: From Ramli to Reesha

Our children's and young adults' initiatives focus on developing Qatar's next generation of readers, writers and creative thinkers:

- Ramli unveiled: Ramli, the desert fox, was introduced as the mascot of our Children's Library, encouraging children to read and their families to engage with the Children's Library and to adopt early literacy.
- Inclusive creativity through Reesha: The Reesha Children's Art Exhibition pioneered accessibility in cultural programming by incorporating audio descriptions, high-contrast embossed elements for tactile exploration, and braille descriptions for artworks inspired by the novel *Men in the Sun*.
- Popular programming expansion: Our interactive storytelling sessions consistently reached capacity, with "Toddler Storytime" attracting more than 30 children and caregivers per session, while the weekly "Story Time for Children" series engaged more than 1,400 participants throughout the year.
- STEM integration: Programs like "Future Makers" and the winter and summer camps introduced 400+ children to hands-on scientific concepts, while "Digital Creators" workshops developed technological literacy through age-appropriate coding and digital storytelling tools.

These initiatives work together to nurture well-rounded development, with each program complementing the others to create a comprehensive approach to childhood literacy and creativity in Qatar.







Qatar's Future Authors Program

Children with a passion for writing and storytelling came together at Qatar National Library to learn more about the creative process and create a book of short stories. **The Qalamy [My Pen] program** is a cultural initiative held by QNL's Children's Library.

In collaboration with the country's cultural institutions and local authors, the program aims to develop creative writing skills in Arabic for students in grades 5 and 6.

In all, 25 children from six local schools participated and attended workshops designed to help them learn about generating ideas, crafting a plot and developing characters.

A limited-edition book was created by Qatar National Library containing the children's stories and illustrations, with each participating child and their school receiving a copy.

In addition, Qatar Reads' Stories to Go program offers comic-writing workshops for children under 13, with ten sessions held annually; winning comics are printed, while other entries are published on the Qatar Reads website.



The comic-writing workshop for children.

QNL Internationally: A Global Presence

Leading the Region: QNL as IFLA's MENA Regional Office

In a historic milestone for the Gulf region, Qatar National Library became the first-ever Middle East and North Africa Regional Office for the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), establishing Qatar as a knowledge hub for the MENA region.

The official designation was formalized through a high-profile signing ceremony on 15 December 2024.

QNL now officially plays an **active leadership role** - amplifying the voices of the MENA countries, advocating for equitable access to information, and promoting professional development across diverse library landscapes. Through representation at international forums such as the Heritage Middle East Conference, QNL ensures that MENA libraries are engaged in **global conversations** around sustainability, policy and innovation.

QNL's work through the regional office is rooted in high-impact programs that strengthen libraries across the Arab world. From leading the IFLA Library Map of the World project in Qatar to designing capacity-building platforms like "Librarians for Libraries" workshops – attended by more than 770 participants from 31 countries – QNL empowers professionals with the skills and tools needed for growth.

A shining example is the Emerging Librarians initiative, where students from Sultan Qaboos University in Oman participated in hands-on training that blended heritage, digitization and innovation. **The program gained international recognition** through publication in the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) International Library and Information Group (ILIG).





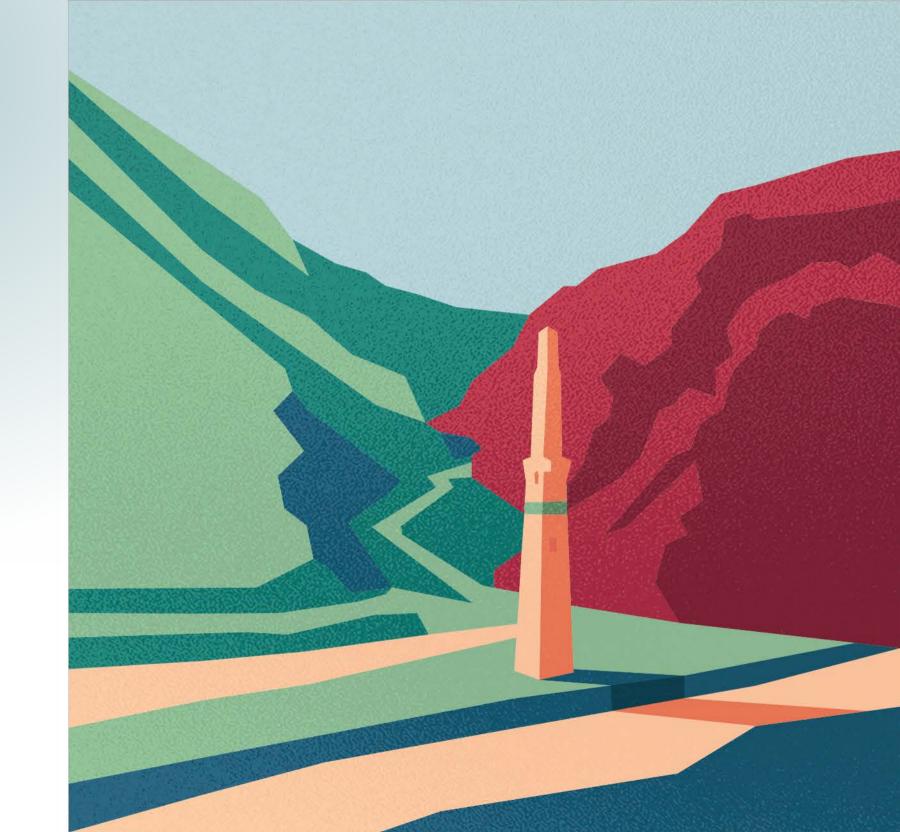


Photos from the official signing ceremony marking QNL's designation as the IFLA MENA Regional Office.

Protecting Cultural Heritage in Afghanistan

As part of its ongoing efforts to raise awareness and promote the protection of cultural heritage, Qatar National Library, in collaboration with Alliance for the Restoration of Cultural Heritage (ARCH), launched a comprehensive online training course titled "Protecting **Cultural Heritage and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property** in Afghanistan." The course is available online via our website and YouTube channel, and includes audio translations in both Pashto and Dari, ensuring accessibility to a broad Afghan audience. It is specifically designed for heritage professionals, museum staff, airport and border police in Afghanistan, equipping them with the tools to recognize and prevent illicit trafficking in cultural property.

In addition to the e-course, **three short educational films** were produced
in English with audio translations into
Pashto and Dari, covering key themes
such as the richness and diversity of
Afghanistan's cultural heritage, the
dangers and consequences of looting
and illicit trafficking, and the importance
of collective action to protect heritage. **These films are available online and are also being broadcast on Afghani television.**



A Global Community of Learning

Lifelong learning, equity, diversity and inclusion are enshrined in QNL's values, and we strive to embody these principles by offering training, courses and diverse resources to people across the Middle East and beyond.

Before the start of the war in Gaza, and in conjunction with Education Above All's Al Fakhoora program, we offered workshops to **hundreds of students across Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Türkiye and Iraq.** These workshops covered a wide range of critical skills, including interview techniques, crafting effective presentations, essay writing strategies, and utilizing language-learning resources to enhance their academic and professional capabilities.

QNL Standswith Palestine

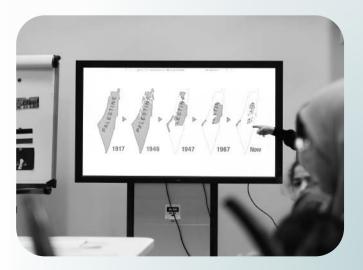
As the world watched with horror at the unfolding human tragedy in Palestine, Qatar National Library continued to reiterate its support for Gaza and Palestine through a series of dedicated events and programs.

To support the cause, we launched the **Keys to Palestine project** - a community digital platform collecting Palestinian content like stories, photos and art to capture the experiences of Palestinians.

Qatar Reads also announced that the featured book for the 2024 One Book, One Doha campaign would be *Men in the Sun* by renowned author Ghassan Kanafani. In this powerful work, Kanafani tells the stories of Palestinian refugees navigating the harrowing decade following the Nakba.

In a commitment to raising awareness, the Children's Library organized special events aimed at educating young people about **the history and story of Palestine**, while a specifically designed activation for teenagers provided an in-depth look at Palestinian cities.





Our Impact: 2024 By the Numbers Behind each statistic lies a human story of discovery, learning and connection. These numbers represent not just quantitative achievements but qualitative transformations in how Qatar's communities engage with knowledge.



Community Engagement

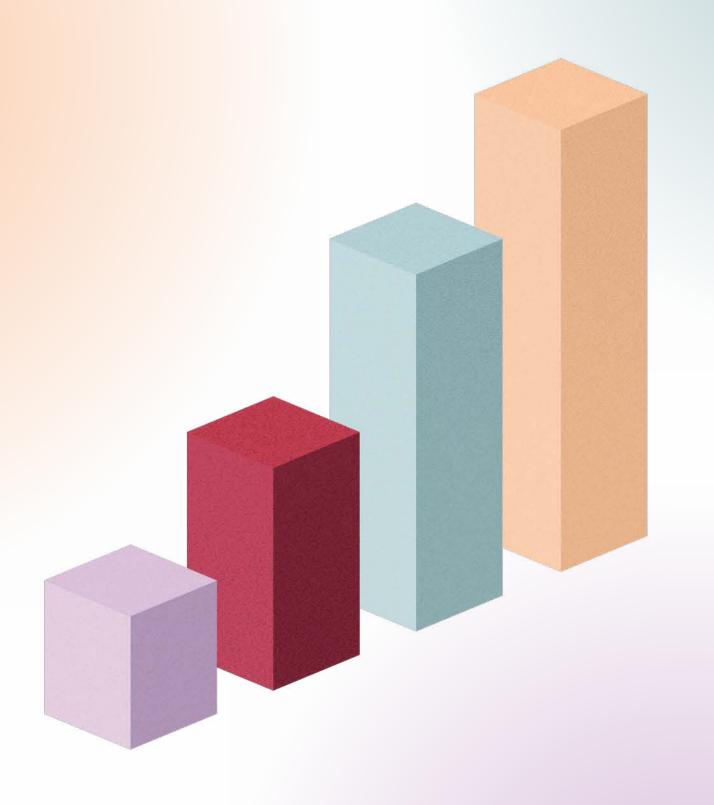
9,934
READING PACKAGES

delivered directly to families' homes, turning living rooms into extensions of the Library

6,300+

ATTENDEES

at the One Book, One Doha festival, creating a shared cultural experience around Palestinian literature



1.19m

PHYSICAL VISITS

equivalent to nearly one-third of Qatar's population – each visit representing a choice to engage with knowledge and culture

92,700+

PARTICIPANTS

actively engaging with library initiatives, from author talks to digital literacy workshops

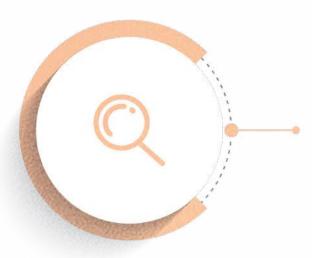
Knowledge Access



965,563

PAGES

of Qatar's cultural heritage digitized, preserving the nation's documentary legacy while expanding access



2,424,565

RESEARCH E-JOURNAL

downloads supporting education and innovation across Qatar's academic and professional communities



403,615

PHYSICAL BOOKS

borrowed and brought into homes and classrooms, each representing a personal journey of learning or imagination

Educational Impact

12,823 STUDENTS

engaged through organized programming that extends learning beyond textbooks

156 _ SCHOOL VISITS

coordinated, bringing library resources directly into formal education settings

200+ MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

formed through the Murshidi program, connecting students with professional role models

200+ WRITING CONSULTATIONS

provided to empower effective communication across diverse communities

Research **Advancement**



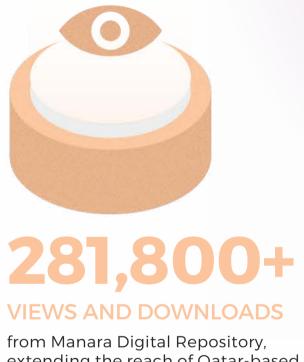
2.8m

DIGITAL RESOURCE DOWNLOADS

reflecting the growing demand for accessible knowledge through Qatar National Library's digital platforms



in Manara showcasing Qatar's contributions to world knowledge



from Manara Digital Repository, extending the reach of Qatar-based research globally



supported, removing barriers to accessing research produced in Qatar