



PRESIDENT'S NOTE

It is my pleasure to share with you the Annual Report 2014-2015, the first one in my role as QU president. The Annual Report has become a significant reference of institutional memory on plans, goals and accomplishments by our colleges, research centers, administrative units and the institution as a whole, touching on various themes and messages.

This year's report focuses on research – a topic of high importance throughout the organization. It also touches on community outreach, which goes hand in hand with our research efforts and is reflected in the close bond we share with the Qatari society and our position as a key partner in addressing its needs and aspirations.

The priority of place that research holds within our academic landscape cannot be overstated. QU has successfully embedded a vibrant culture of research within its teaching and learning environment; this has led to a number of successes and accomplishments, and a growing reputation for research quality and excellence. Qatar University is becoming one of the fastest-growing institutions for research in the region, showing a compound annual growth rate of 36.45%. The

budget for current active grants and contracts is US\$ 141.5 million of which US\$ 48 million, was awarded in 2015 alone.

This is further reflected in our ambitious research roadmap which was launched in 2014, and which tackles issues of critical importance to the country's social, economic and cultural progress in line with the goals stated in QNV 2030, QNDS 2011-2016 and the National Research Strategy. Added to this are a state-of-the-art research complex and 14 research centers of excellence which address national priority issues such as road safety, gas processing, social and economic survey studies, and marine conservation, to name a few.

During this academic year, we developed a White Paper on research that stands as the guiding principle for organizing, facilitating and significantly strengthening the research culture within the university in relation to its colleges, programs and research centers. It will serve as a foundation and guideline for implementing the organization's roadmap, thus steering QU into a new era of research innovation and collaboration.

Through its research culture, QU is creating an exciting and inspiring environment of discovery and innovation to encourage students' participation in the learning experience and their engagement in finding solutions to everyday challenges. Similarly, it opens up opportunities for faculty collaboration with colleagues at academic institutions at home and abroad. To date, research collaboration activities are in process with over 140 institutions around the world.

Research is a key component of our graduate programs. The organization has developed an impressive portfolio of 31 graduate programs which comprise 23 Masters, 4 PhDs and 4 Diplomas that include 5 additions in this academic year – a PhD in Gulf Studies at the College of Arts & Sciences, two LLM programs in Private Law and Public Law at the College of Law, a Master's program in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment at the College of Education, and an MSc in Marketing at the College of Business & Economics. Many of the graduate programs are first-of-their-kind in Qatar, and are especially designed to respond to market needs and national ambitions towards fostering a knowledge-based economy.

I will take this opportunity to draw attention to the first-ever PhD degrees awarded in the country to one male and one female student during the graduation ceremonies at the end of the academic year. The students, from the College of Engineering in Civil Engineering and Computer Science & Engineering respectively, made us all very proud. This was a milestone for QU and especially the College that has grown by leaps and bounds and which is now positioned as one of the best engineering colleges in the region and the producer of the largest number of graduates to the country's industry sector.

Undergraduate research is also encouraged through the Undergraduate Research Experience Program under Qatar National Research Fund, internal student grants, college-led research fairs, and curiosity-driven learning.

QU research also benefits from the expertise of a number of professorial Chairs at several colleges and centers, boosting graduate student research and faculty collaboration and exchanges.

Community outreach is a significant aspect of QU's ethos. The organization has, over the years, become an integral part of the fabric of Qatari society, and is well-regarded for its legacy as the first national higher education institution in the country and the standard-bearer of Qatari, Arab and Islamic heritage, identity, culture, language and values. It is also the contributor of the largest number of graduates to Qatar's burgeoning labor market; these graduates constitute the candidates of preference for 73% of employers in Qatar, based on our most recent survey.

QU sees itself as a reflection of the country's national spirit as well as its diversity and multi-cultural aspect. In our Strategic Plan 2009-2013, we placed community service alongside research as a key priority area in accordance with the goals outlined in our mission and vision. Like research, it forms part of the learning environment, and enhances the students' academic and extra-curricular life.

Our commitment to the community can be seen in the myriad of initiatives we have implemented over the years and that are a constant in the academic as well as the wider institutional landscape. These include high school programs, consultancy support services, alumni engagement, Qatarization, professional development programs, health and safety campaigns, and student volunteerism and civic responsibility to name a few.

In the ensuing pages, you will find a wealth of information attesting to the hard work and dedication of QU colleges, research centers, and units in their research and community outreach endeavors. It is important to note that in these endeavors, we have had the consistent support of our partners across the spectrum of the public and private sectors, for which we are deeply appreciative.

As we prepare to enter another academic year, we look forward to welcoming new students and faculty, implementing new academic programs, strengthening our research efforts, and further enhancing our relationship with the wider community. We have had many accomplishments and are keeping pace with our goals and objectives – however, there is much to be accomplished as we continue our development efforts and our commitment to contributing to the country's progress.