



UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF
H. E. FAWZIA BINT ABDULLA ZAINAL
SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES

**THE 3RD CONFERENCE ON
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
"SUSTAINABILITY & FUTURE STUDIES"**



**His Royal Highness
Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa
The Prime Minister**



**His Majesty
King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa
The King of the Kingdom of Bahrain**



**His Royal Highness
Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa
The Crown Prince,
Deputy Supreme Commander
and First Deputy Prime Minister**

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The Kingdom of Bahrain is at the forefront of Equal Opportunities in several aspects of society when compared to other countries. The 3rd Conference on Equal Opportunities in “Sustainability and Future Studies” jointly organised **under the patronage of Her Excellency Mrs. Fawzia Bint Abdullah Zainal, Speaker of Council of Representatives** by Ahlia University and Brunel University London. The conference is intended to consolidate current successes as well as forging forward with the equal opportunities agenda in Bahrain. UK based experts and Bahraini leading government and private sector organisations will give presentations on key role modelling in gender equality and workshop on the role of oceans climate risk mapping. The second day will offer a presentation on women in Artificial Intelligence and workshops in Systems Thinking and promotion of women empowerment. Finally, we hope that you will find the conference beneficial and that you will be able to take away a number of methods that will help in enhancing your equal opportunities’ effort.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

AHLIA UNIVERSITY

PROF. MANSOOR ALAALI
DR. MUNEEB AL MUBARAK
DR. AHLAM HASSAN
DR. THAIRA AL SHIRAWI
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MR. YOUSIF AL HAWAJ

BRUNEL UNIVERSITY LONDON

DR. MARY RICHARDS
DR. STEPHEN MULLINS
DR. SHIRLEY SHIVANGULULA

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**PROF. ABDULLA Y.
AL HAWAJ**

Founding President &
Chairman of Board of
Trustees,

Ahlia University

**WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING
PRESIDENT & CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

It gives me great pleasure to announce that we are holding the third conference on Equal Opportunities in "Sustainability and Future Studies". We are delighted to have this conference under the patronage of Her Excellency Mrs. Fawzia Bint Abdulla Zainal the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, in recognition of the vital role it plays in the stimulation and development of communities and organizations that tackle and drive some of society's most important social causes: Women empowerment.

This conference, which is organized jointly by Ahlia University and Brunel University London, is inspired by our mission to move forward the frontiers of human knowledge and elevate the social and living standards of the society. It is a demonstration of our core values in action, and our commitment to scholarship across various academic fields and disciplines.

The theme "Sustainability and Future Studies" was carefully selected as it goes to the heart of one of the contemporary most important goals, namely women empowerment and female participation in human capital development. Promoting equal opportunity has far-reaching consequences and effects on all aspects of society, whether economic, social or otherwise.

We are proud of, and encouraged by, the participation of the Supreme Council for Women under the leadership and guidance of H. R. H. Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa. The Kingdom of Bahrain has always been a leader in equality between men and women. We, therefore, wish to reflect on the good practice in Bahrain using some of the latest scholarly methods. The conference includes empirical studies about Sustainability and Future Studies in Bahrain, in addition to a set of workshops cutting-edge methods in the field.

Finally, I offer my thanks to all the contributors of the conference and our distinguished guests, and would like to offer my sincere gratitude to the organizing committee who made this conference a success.



PROF. MARIANN RAND

The Vice Provost (Education)

Brunel University London

**WELCOME MESSAGE FROM
THE VICE PROVOST (EDUCATION)**

I am pleased that this conference is taken place for the third year running. It represents a real opportunity for increased exchange and dialogue between our two universities and countries. The scope of the event is deliberately ambitious and will showcase a range of current and innovative approaches to research.

The interactive dimensions of the Conference will ensure that you are not just passive recipients of ideas and approaches, but that you have a chance to practically engage, interrogate and reflect upon different concepts and alternative disciplinary perspectives. Many of these you may not have encountered before. I hope that you will leave this Conference invigorated and inspired to do something different, or look at your research in a different way.

This is both an exciting and challenging prospect but one that we all, with over a decade of partnership behind us, enter into, in the spirit of mutual respect, scholarship and a desire to learn from each other. I hope that this will open up new collaborations between our universities.

It is a sign of the depth of our collaboration that both universities have worked well together to make this conference part of the annual calendar of events. I would like to thank the organising committee for providing the leadership and vision, all the participants for their open-minded engagement and curiosity to find out more, and the excellent administrative support provided by both institutions.



PROF. MANSOOR ALAALI

President,
Ahlia University

INTRODUCTION FROM AHLIA UNIVERSITY

It gives us great pleasure to have this year conference under the patronage of one of Ahlia University distinguished alumni, namely, HE Fawzia Bint Abdulla Zainal, Speaker of the Council of Representatives.

Ahlia University is continuing to hold the Conference in partnership with Brunel University London. The focus of this third Equal Opportunity conference is Sustainability and Future Studies. This conference is a further evidence of the successful partnership between Ahlia and Brunel which has so far produced over forty PhD's, joint published research and a wide variety of fruitful collaborations. Brunel University puts its full strength behind this conference by sending leading experts and speakers.

This conference further serves Ahlia community engagement strategy which places Ahlia as an agent for change in the Bahraini society. It further supports the supreme council for women efforts and strategy to enabling women and paving the way for equal opportunity across all domains in Bahrain. The role of HRH Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa as a leader for the Supreme Council for Women has enabled Bahraini women to move forward and take their rightful place in society at large and in the workplace.

The conference will serve as a major platform for presenting new developments in the field of sustainability and future studies and for exchanging views and findings and paving the way for future progress in the field. Speakers from Brunel, Ahlia, from around the region and from Bahrain will present highly valuable papers and experiences which will create a forward-thinking environment to resolve certain challenges facing womens' role in sustainable development and future studies.

I take this opportunity to welcome all speakers and participants in the conference. We have invited members from all the equal opportunity committees in the Ministries and leading organisations which will make the discussions more relevant and fruitful.

Finally, I want to thank the speakers, the participants and the organising committee for making this important event a success.



DR. MARY RICHARDS

Programme Director BACs
Global Challenges,

Brunel University London

INTRODUCTION FROM BRUNEL UNIVERSITY LONDON

It is once again a great pleasure to be here in Bahrain with our partner Ahlia University.

The partnership continues to develop and grow and it is a testament to that growth that we are here today to commence the third annual Equal Opportunities conference. This year’s conference will focus on the multiple intersections of equality and sustainable development.

Striking young women motivate a new generation: Malala Yousefzai urges support for the education of all girls and women so that all may reach their potential and contribute to society (SDGs 4, 10, 8). Greta Thunberg urges us to declare a climate emergency so that globally we all take action now to avert the predictions of the recent IPCC report (SDG 13). Bahrain’s Reem Al Mealla, marine biologist and environmental activist adds to the list of young people determined to see change (SDGs 5,13,14). Inspired by these women’s achievements, the event will consider models of practice designed to create more and better opportunities for sustainable development and that enhance equality in Bahraini society without compromising the environment. This will include a practical opportunity to examine a systems thinking approach to developing a social enterprise.

Bahrain is alert to the need to adapt, mitigate and increase the resilience needed to deal with the prospect of sea level rise; the increasing incidence of more extreme weather conditions - sporadic droughts, sand and dust storms; to deal with the challenges to groundwater and fresh water availability; and to the need to diversify energy generation and consumption away from fossil fuels. Bahrain’s 2030 vision highlights the commitment that “economic growth must never come at the expense of the environment and the long-term well-being of our people: no effort will be spared to protect our environment and preserve our cultural heritage” (From Regional Pioneer to Global Contender: The Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain, p10)

As an island kingdom, with a rich cultural heritage and a high Climate Vulnerability Index (Appleton et al, 2003: 53) Bahrain has much to lose should it fail to fully utilise the great potential of every man and woman in the country. As a pioneering country in the region, Bahrain leads the way in terms of equality. There is also a great opportunity for social entrepreneurs to lead when it comes to moving towards sustainable development in the Gulf.

Drawing upon the broad experience and expertise of academics and practitioners from Ahlia and Brunel University London, the conference aims to create a mutually supportive dialogue, that begins to explore the opportunities and challenges of developing a more equitable and sustainable model of the future for all members of Bahraini society.

ABSTRACTS



**H.E. HALA RAMZI
FAYEZ**

Head of women and child
affairs committee,
Shura Council

Kingdom of Bahrain

ROLE OF LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY IN IMPLEMENTING GENDER EQUALITY

Abstract

We all agree that Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large. Legislative Authority has an important role in ensuring that the legal framework is available to enable achieving this 5th SDG.

Profile

Appointed by His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa as a shura member in December 2010. Was a member of Finance and Economic affairs for 4 years as well as Human rights affairs committee and Head of women and child affairs committee in addition to being a member in the services committee.

Held the position as Vice Speaker for the first session of the fifth term.



MS. HANAN AL MADHAKI

Director of Legal Affairs
Department,
Council of Representatives

Kingdom of Bahrain

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: QUALITY EDUCATION AS A GOAL OF SDGS

Abstract

The fourth goal of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is providing education for all. Equal opportunity is at the heart of quality education to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunity". This speech introduces the SDGs and in particular goal No. 4 "Quality Education" and discusses the effort of the Kingdom of Bahrain in achieving equal opportunity in quality education as a goal of the SDGs in higher education and partnering to achieve this goal.

Profile

Hanan Al Madhaki is the Legal Affairs Director at the Council of Representatives. Hanan develops training plans for students and researchers trained outside and within the Council and supervises their training. She also prepares proactive legal studies on the subjects referred to the committees.

Hanan has worked as a Lawyer intern in 2004 and as Chairman of the Cultural Committee at the Council of Representatives in 2006. She has also worked as a Senior Legal Researcher for the Financial, Interim, Temporary and Investigative Committees' Support Unit during 2012-2015. In addition to that, Hanan served as the Head of Legislative, Legal, Foreign Affairs and Human Rights Affairs Committees in 2015-2017.



DR. DUNYA AHMED

Development and Planning
Advisor, Supreme Council
for Women

Kingdom of Bahrain

WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND FUTURE SCIENCE

Abstract

The status of women held a significant place of importance in National Reform Plan towards the advancement of Bahraini men and women alike. Quality of education, was one of the Plan's main pillars, came at a time where Bahrain had attained desired outcomes in terms of high literacy rates. The year 2018 also marks 9 decades since the beginning of formal education for girls; making Bahrain a pioneer in offering formal education for girls in the GCC and in closing gender gap in the field internationally.

These advancements came parallel to an unprecedented role played by Bahraini women in national development particularly with the founding of the Supreme Council for Women. The Council mandated to develop strategies aiming towards the advancement of women, which education and lifelong learning was consequently identified as a key pillar and the largest driver for increasing the participation of women in public life, the achievement of sustainable development goals and breaking through the glass ceiling in various sectors.

Despite the gap in technical and vocational education in schools (girls 8%), the percentage of Bahraini women in STEM is 46%, which is higher than the international average of 38%. Statistics also shows that Bahraini women participation in higher education institutions as a student and academic is high. Although, gaps increases in higher academic ranks, where women are less than 10%. Nevertheless, women contributions in the research enhance the status of academic institutions.

Profile

Dr. Dunya Ahmed Abdulla Ahmed is an assistant professor and lecturer in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Bahrain & Strategic Planning & Development Adviser in Supreme Council for Women. She has been working at the Supreme Council for Women, since 2010, as Director of Women Ombudsman Center, soon she was appointed as Acting General Director for Policies and Development & Director National strategy for the Advancement of Bahraini women in 2011, which is the core function of the organisation. Since 2015 she became Strategic Planning & Development Adviser, and continued to manage General Director for Policies and Development for period (2015-2018).

In addition, she is Scientific Committee Chairperson in the Institute of Inspiration Economy, EU & MENA. She completed her PhD in social work at the University of Warwick.

She is the first and only person hold a PhD in social work in Bahrain, specialized and concentrates mainly on equity and the rights of women and people with disabilities. She is co-founder of Inspiration Economy concept, Journals, projects & institutions globally. She is also Editorial Board of several international scientific journal. In addition of being an active member of several NGOs & Chairperson of Inspiration Economy Society in Bahrain. She has also contributed to the preparation and implementation of a number of national strategies, and preparation and discussion of international reports.



**H.E. DR. SAWSAN M.
KAMAL**

Member of Parliament,
Council of Representatives,

Kingdom of Bahrain

**STEPS ON THE PATH OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY
(MASTERING THE SELF, A PERSONAL JOURNEY)**

Abstract

Women Inspiring Women - A Community of Fabulous Women.

Taking full responsibility of our life's path is the keystone to our empowerment. A closer look on main steps, zooming in on a personal journey of my success story whilst highlighting the challenges towards inspiring newcomers.

Being a self-development expert and psychiatrist, I will focus the light on how to tackle the gaps through various psychological aspects that would be more effective for women in their daily lives.

Profile

Dr. Sawsan launched her career in the medical field in 1995 after graduating from the Arabian Gulf University with distinction. Held a position of a consultant psychiatrist at the ministry of health in Bahrain with 20 years of experience (1997-2017).

She managed to establish a single-person company for consultation and self development in 2017 after an early retirement with a momentum and an intention of spreading preventive psychological measures and a positive life style within a community. Holds a certificate of International Peace Ambassadors from the International Academy of Peace Ambassadors, Jordan/ Amman.

A current member of Bahrain's Council of Representatives following her win of 2018 elections, and also member of health committee at Bahrain's chamber of commerce and industry in addition to a membership at Bahrain's businesswomen society.

An active participant and presenter in various scientific conferences and workshops locally and internationally related to psychology and inner peace.



DR. FATIMA AL SEBAIE

Studies & Research
Directorate, Derasat

Kingdom of Bahrain

WHERE ARE WOMEN IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Abstract

The world is moving toward AI and machine learning to automate work process, thus the AI is changing what jobs we will do and skills IT professionals will need.

This presentation will shed light on the impact of AI trends on the future jobs of women and their representation level in tech jobs. Also, It will demonstrate why we need more women in AI and tech jobs, and how to do it.

Profile

Fatima Alsebaie, Ph.D. is an Analyst in Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat). Her research interests fall into two main areas: firstly, women in the IT field, and secondly, topics related to the future technologies, like Blockchain, artificial intelligent and their economic or social aspects, and also the cybersecurity and IT issues in the GCC countries.

Her analyses in different topics related to her research interests have appeared in a number of news outlets, and she published one of her works on women in the IT field in a peer-reviewed journal. She contributed in reviewing a research paper for the Information Technology & People journal. She had been invited as a speaker in a number of seminars on AI, Blockchain and women and technology, and served in writing and editing chapters of some books related to women in Bahrain.

WORKSHOPS



**DR. SHONA KOREN
PATERSON**

Research Fellow II - Global
Challenges,

Brunel university London

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND EQUITY: THE ROLE OF OCEANS

Abstract

It is estimated that rising sea levels could submerge between 27% and 56% of Bahrain—already the smallest country in the Middle East—by 2100. The loss of that land would devastate the island country’s economy, its water supply, and the natural environment. Climate variability will only exacerbate this reality further and by 2025, it is estimated that shortages of water may affect as many as 30% of Bahrainis. In fact, The World Resources Institute (WRI) expects Bahrain to become one of the world’s seven most “water-stressed” countries by 2040. These water shortages and cascading impacts will acutely affect vulnerable communities as well as reducing food and livelihood security. Understanding where the risks are and which populations could be most impacted is a critical step for any national risk assessment.

This exercise will involve workshop participants identifying and actively mapping components of risk (hazard, exposure, and vulnerability) associated with sea level rise as well as potential risk reduction and adaptation measures that could be implemented across scales.

Profile

Shona’s transdisciplinary research here at Brunel focuses on global flood risk and resilience but her main driver is the generation of defensible research informed by the needs of society and co-created with the intended beneficiaries. Her work is motivated by international frameworks such as the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Shona has extensive experience in the Caribbean, the Americas, and the UK where her research has focussed on numerous interlinked areas including coastal resource management, climate adaptation and adaptive capacity in urbanising coastal areas, governance and social justice, and the society-policy-practice nexus. She has spent her working career building partnerships and knowledge exchange networks with local communities and stakeholders to achieve mutually beneficial social and ecological goals.



DR. CLAIRE DONOVAN

Reader - Science Policy &
Research Governance,

Brunel University London

SYSTEMS THINKING FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

Abstract

Contemporary global challenges are complex, multi-dimensional 'wicked problems' and defy quick-fixes. How best to address intricate, interconnected and often seemingly intractable challenges of the present and future? This interactive workshop is a taster session of a design challenge adapted from the design process applied by the award-winning company SHIFT Design. The purpose of this workshop is to introduce participants to some initial techniques used to start the processes of developing holistic, user-centred, sustainable design solutions/options to a specific sustainability challenge.

Through a succession of 3 group challenges, by the end of the session, participants will have devised a possible solution that helps to reduce single use plastic consumption on campus. In and out of the 'classroom', workshop participants will;

- Be introduced to the Actor Action Outcome strategy to define their theory of change and map what may happen as a result of their intervention,
- Apply several immersive stakeholder engagement techniques to identify opportunities for innovation or behaviour change,
- Use games and other tools to unlock their creativity and generate ideas,
- Implement the Easy, Attractive, Social, and Timely method to select the most promising concepts.

Profile

Dr. Claire Donovan has been a Reader at Brunel University London since 2010, and joined Brunel Business School in 2019. She previously held research and teaching posts at the Research School of Social Sciences, The Australian National University; Nuffield College, Oxford University; and The Open University. She has published widely on research evaluation and research policy, and has interests in the governance of social science, and gender and higher education careers. Dr. Donovan helped to design Brunel's BASc in Global Challenges, drawing on her background in Philosophy and Social and Political Thought. She currently teaches Healthcare Policy on Brunel's MBA, and Business Research Methods for PhD candidates. Dr. Donovan is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, and has been a Visiting Fellow at The Australian National University, Cambridge University, Harvard University, the London School of Economics, the National University of Singapore, Oxford University, and the University of Sussex.



DR. MARY RICHARDS

Programme Director BACs
Global Challenges,

Brunel University London

SYSTEMS THINKING FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

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Profile

I am a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce and the former Vice Dean (Education) for the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences of Brunel University London (August 2014 - July 2017) It was during my time as Vice Dean (Education) that I led on the development of the Bachelor of Arts and Sciences (BASc) degree programme in Global Challenges, working with colleagues from across the institution. Indeed, I stepped down from my role as Vice Dean in order to take up the role of Programme Director of this new, but complex, provision. The degree includes strand pathways on planetary health, social cohesion, security, and global innovation: providing an opportunity for students to study in a more holistic manner through engagement with a range of natural and social sciences, as well as humanities disciplines. I am also known for my work on Marina Abramović.



DR. ANJI BENHAMED

Director for AC for
Entrepreneurship /
Director of MBA Programme,

Ahlia University

PROMOTING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND GENDER EQUALITY

Abstract

Gender equality is considered as a civic and economic imperative. As such, bridging the gender gap has to go beyond gender disaggregation and includes more of genuine empowerment measures and gender equity strategies towards more sustainable and inclusive societies. In this context, a growing body of evidence shows the importance of gender equality for economic growth and the significant contribution women entrepreneurs make for the development of the venture capital industry. Moreover, greater economic empowerment of women and greater gender equality frequently lead to fostering the wellbeing of the societies. However, the importance of women as contributors to the economic growth and development, as well as the growing trend towards closing the gender gaps in the economic spheres highlight the importance of recognizing the obstacles and challenges facing greater gender equality and developing effective strategies to address those challenges and compensate for existing disadvantages that prevent equal opportunities from being offered equitably for both genders.

This workshop will illustrate strategies for Enhancing Women's Economic Empowerment through Entrepreneurship and gender equality. The workshop provides a comprehensive overview and analysis based on the global and regional evidences which support the assumption that promoting women's empowerment by improving entrepreneurship and gender equality could contribute to economic growth, job creation and prosperity. Attendees will identify issues and challenges related to gender equality and participate in group exercises to help them understand the relationship between Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurship.

Profile

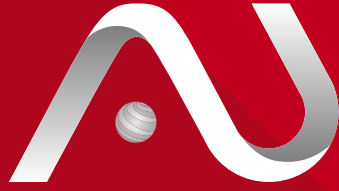
Dr. Anji Benhamed holds a PhD from University of Paris 13, Sorbonne, Paris City, in the area of Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship with the highest level of distinction that could be awarded for a PhD in that First category University in France, and currently a Director of MBA program, Director of Entrepreneurship Center and assistant professor at Ahlia University Bahrain.

She has been appointed as an external validator and conducted various QA reviews as part of Bahrain Quality Assurance (BQA) for National Qualification Framework validation. Dr. Anji is a certified expert, coach-trainer, and mentor in entrepreneurship and SMEs strategies. She has published various research in the area of Entrepreneurship, Strategic management, Marketing and Game-Based-Learning in Higher Education. Appointed as reviewer and editorial board member for several international journals. As an expert in entrepreneurship education, training, and mentoring, enabled Ahlia University to establish its entrepreneurship center, which reinforced the university local, regional and international exposure in the field of entrepreneurship.





Artist's impression of the new Ahlia University campus at Al Madina Al Shamaliya.



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PATRONAGE



IN COLLABORATION WITH



MEDIA PARTNER



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CONFERENCE ORGANISERS



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www.ahlia.edu.bh

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