

## Application Period for MBRF Literacy Challenge Ends



The application period for the second edition of Literacy Challenge award, an initiative of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation (MBRF) has ended. A total of 55 applications were received, 37 from individuals, 18 from organizations. An adjudicating panel of seven academics will now review and evaluate the applications. The winners will be awarded on Arab Literacy Day on January 8, 2020.

MBRF CEO His Excellency Jamal bin Huwairib said: “The Literacy Challenge is another milestone in which the UAE can take pride. It reflects the wise leadership’s dedication to effect substantive change for the people of the Arab region. Each year the Challenge demonstrates the desire of millions of individuals to learn, read, and begin the knowledge journey.”

“In its first edition, the Challenge received outstanding submissions that inspired many to take action and be part of the effort to build a better future for the Arab World,” he added. “The current edition has attracted even more submissions, reflecting the Arab

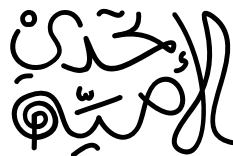
region’s aspirations for change and the people’s determination to embrace knowledge as a means to improve their lives.” He stressed that the Challenge not only promotes reading and writing, it also strives to eradicate technological illiteracy, given how technology has become a driving force for all communities.

According to His Excellency: “Providing equal education opportunities for Arab children and youth of both genders empowers them to effect change in their region. This was an underlying motivation of the Challenge, following the directives from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai. It is a goal that can only be achieved if governments, organizations, and individuals work together to promote educational programs.”

The Challenge’s first edition in 2018 saw the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) win the award in the international organization category for its outstanding literacy projects. Egypt’s Ministry of Education won in the government category for helping to modernize the country’s pre-university education ecosystem.

The individuals category was won by Sudan’s Dr. Shefa Hassan, Director of the UNESCO Chair and Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) at the University of Science and Technology in Sudan. She won for her role in creating a comprehensive scientific and technological literacy project targeting women in Sudan that benefitted 2,420 women across three Sudanese states: Red Sea, South Darfur, and West Kordofan.

The Challenge seeks to make up for individuals’ lack of access to conventional education opportunities in order to tackle the region’s illiteracy problem, which has had a very negative impact. It also aims to narrow the gender gap in education.



# Writing Program Concludes Short Story and Translation Workshops

The Dubai International Program for Writing (DIPW), an initiative of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation (MBRF), has concluded its third series of translation and short story workshops in Dubai.

Trainer Kamel Yousef conducted the translation workshop for nine participants. The session highlighted the role of translation as a distinguished knowledge discipline, with participants unpacking the challenges translators face and receiving an introduction into the methods for translating specialist material.

The short story workshop attracted 11 participants and was conducted by Eslam Abo Shikir. Held over the course of four months, attendees got immersed in such topics as drama in art and literature, the difference between a short story and a novel, and character conception and development.

The DIPW's mission is to train and empower generations of Arab talent in all forms of writing and literature.

According to His Excellency Jamal bin Huwaireb, MBRF CEO: "Developing the skillsets and talents of young Arabs is one of the Foundation's most important goals. Through the DIWP we have so far trained more than 100 Arab writers and novelists in all fields," He added: "We are proud of the results as most of the works produced by participants are now available in libraries. Some have even topped bestseller lists and won prestigious awards, such as the Sheikh Zayed Book Award, the Al Owais Award for Creativity, and the Emirates Novel Award."

Noting the DIPW's recurring popularity, His Excellency said "many factors have contributed to

the program's success. Firstly, we enlisted highly qualified trainers to conduct comprehensive, intensive programs. Furthermore, the Program helps participants to print and publish their works and showcase them either in the Dubai Digital Library or at exhibitions and libraries around the world."

At the conclusion of the training, His Excellency honoured participants in the short story workshop and their trainer.



**Above:** Jamal bin Huwaireb honors participants