

Northwestern
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ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023



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MESSAGE FROM DEAN KRAIDY

In many ways, the theme of Northwestern Qatar's academic year was renewal and reconnection. As we returned to pre-pandemic operations, we renewed our commitment to Northwestern's values, to our mission of excellence, to educating students, to producing meaningful knowledge, and to operating at the highest level of professional practice.

We also vowed to reconnect in crucial ways: enhancing all aspects of the student experience, from academics and research to student life and health and well-being; revamping faculty and staff professional development; supporting research and teaching initiatives; and enhancing our exchange programs with the Northwestern Evanston campus.

This Annual Report shows that we made substantial progress toward those goals, and we're ready for what's next.

Marwan M. Kraidy
Dean and CEO, Northwestern Qatar



Highlights, 2022–2023

This was a year of growth and advancement. The university welcomed the largest and most selective class in its history—and bid farewell to an accomplished Class of 2023, including the university’s first Rhodes Scholar. Leaders in a range of fields engaged in conversations about pressing issues at the Dean’s Global Forum. A major grant supported the university’s efforts to expand the field of Arab Information and Media Studies (AIMS).

25+ nationalities represented in the Class of 2026

\$350,000

grant from the Carnegie Corporation

250,000 alums in Northwestern’s global network

HIGHLIGHTS

A Diverse, Dynamic Incoming Class

The largest and most selective incoming class in the university's history attended Northwestern Qatar's 15th convocation ceremony. More than 120 students representing more than 25 nationalities listened to addresses by Dean Kraidy; Caroline Faraj, vice president and editor-in-chief of CNN Arabic Services; and Khadija Ahmad, president of the Northwestern Qatar Student Government (NUQSG). Faraj's message to the students: "Today is a foundation for lifelong learning."

Our First Rhodes Scholar

William Gitta Lugolobi '23 became the first student from Northwestern Qatar to be selected for a Rhodes Scholarship, one of the most prestigious academic scholarship programs in the world. Gitta Lugolobi plans to investigate computational propaganda in Uganda, his home country. At Northwestern Qatar, he co-founded the Data Science Club and worked as a software engineer intern at the Qatar Computing Research Institute.

A Transformative Grant

A \$350,000 grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York will allow Northwestern Qatar to expand the field of Arab Information and AIMS over the next two years. The grant will also support a collaboration between AIMS and the Security in Context network, a global initiative promoting critical research and policy analysis on peace and conflict. Said Dean Kraidy: "Our project will catalyze a qualitative leap in regional knowledge production on Arab media and connect regional research to global networks."

Inspiring Conversations

Leaders from academe, the media, the arts, and public affairs joined Dean Kraidy in conversation at the Dean's Global Forum. Gita Manaktala, editorial director of the MIT Press, discussed the future of academic publishing. Prathama Banerjee, professor at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in Delhi, explored politics and the Global South. Ayman Mohyeldin, journalist and host of MSNBC's weekly primetime show *Ayman*, addressed identity and global reporting.

A Memorable Graduation

Northwestern Qatar's Class of 2023—comprising more than 110 students representing more than 32 cultures and countries—celebrated their achievements at the university's graduation ceremony. They were addressed by Dean Kraidy; Aesha Hussein, Class of 2023 student speaker; and Hassan Al Thawadi, secretary general of the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. "Find your passion and let it drive you towards your goals and dreams," said Al Thawadi. "Let it take you to places you did not think were possible."

Top right: Ayman Mohyeldin, journalist and host of MSNBC's weekly primetime show *Ayman*, speaking at the Dean's Global Forum.

Bottom: Aesha Hussein, Class of 2023 student speaker, addresses her peers at the university's graduation ceremony.





Academics

This was a year of broadening the university's reach and deepening its commitment to outstanding scholarship. New academic leaders and new faculty joined the community. Faculty published new books and articles and shared their work on and off campus. Collaborations with regional and global partners were strengthened.

8 new faculty hires

4 new academic leadership appointments

ACADEMICS



“Each of our new professors comes with a distinguished educational background and scholarship. Working with our current faculty, they will enhance the academic environment and contribute to Northwestern Qatar’s global impact.”

Marwan M. Kraidy
Dean and CEO, Northwestern Qatar

New Leadership Appointments

Four new academic leaders were appointed to advance the university’s academic mission: Zachary Wright, associate dean for faculty affairs; Maria Lombard, assistant dean for academic affairs; Venus Jin, director of the Communication Program; and Gregory Ferrell Lowe, director of the Executive Education Program. “I am confident their expertise and leadership will help take our academic programs to new heights,” said Dean Kraidy.

New Faculty Hires

Eight new professors were hired, enhancing the university’s academic profile. The professors include researchers and scholars in media industries, gender studies, cultural politics, and performance studies, as well as the school’s first Qatari professor. Leila Tayeb and Heather Jaber have joint appointments in the Communication Program and the Liberal Arts Program. Fatima El-Issawi, Claudia Kozman, and Marda Dunsky join the Journalism and Strategic Communication Program. Haya Al-Noaimi, Yasmeen Mekawy, and Jana Fedtke join the Liberal Arts Program.

Collaborations in Education City

Collaborations with institutions in Education City expanded the university’s academic reach. In conjunction with VCUarts Qatar and the Doha Film Institute, a new joint minor program in film and design was established. This year’s Doha Seminar explored connections between Islamic thought, philosophy, and practice in the region. The course was co-taught by Zachary Wright from Northwestern Qatar and Patrick Laude, professor of religious studies at Georgetown University in Qatar.

One Book

As part of the university’s One Book program, Pakistani American writer Usman T. Malik joined a community discussion about his novel *Midnight Doorways: Fables from Pakistan*. The novel, which won the Crawford Award, features a series of seven illustrations and horror stories drawn from fables, histories, and life in present-day Pakistan.

Leadership in Communication

Dean Kraidy was elected as the 2023–2024 Chair of the Fellows at the International Communication Association (ICA), one of the most prestigious international associations for communication scholars and researchers. Elected every year by more than 250 fellows from around the world, the Chair of the Fellows acts as a representative of the fellows and spearheads initiatives across the wider ICA and global communication scholarly communities.

Six of the university’s eight new faculty hires (l to r): Haya Al-Noaimi, Fatima El-Issawi, Leila Tayeb, Claudia Kozman, Yasmeen Mekawy, Heather Jaber.

ACADEMICS



Pulitzer Center Screening

At a special event hosted through a partnership with the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, filmmakers and Pulitzer Center reporting fellows Phil Cox and Rafa Renas recounted their experience producing *The 'Spider-Man' of Sudan: the real-life superhero of the protest movement*. After a screening of the film, Cox and Renas described the process of filming the documentary in the midst of political turmoil.

Hiwar Speaker Series

Leaders in a range of fields addressed pressing issues in the Hiwar Speaker Series. Abeer Buhelaiqa, founder of the Qatar Women Engineers Association; Ghada Salama, a chemical engineering professor at Texas A&M University at Qatar; and Northwestern Qatar professor Anto Mohsin talked about women in science and engineering. Ramona S. Diaz, a Peabody- and Emmy-award-winning Asian American filmmaker, screened and talked about her film *A Thousand Cuts*, which examines the tensions between the government and the press in the Philippines.

Executive Education Masterclasses

Two new masterclasses in the Executive Education Program offered media and communication professionals an inclusive, immersive learning experience that combines academic modules and industry expertise. The classes focused on strategic communication with stakeholders and social media strategy, tools, and analytics.

Africana Studies Lecture

A lecture by Zekeria Ahmed Salem, associate professor of political science at Northwestern University, examined the outsized global influence of Mauritanian Islamic scholars, religious texts, and institutions of learning. Salem's lecture, "Mauritanian Scholars on the World Stage: From 'Desert Archive' to Global Islamic Authority," was hosted by the Africana Studies Committee at Northwestern Qatar.

Top: Filmmakers and Pulitzer Center reporting fellows Phil Cox and Rafa Renas discussing their film *The 'Spider-Man' of Sudan: the real-life superhero of the protest movement*.



Research

This was a year of exploration and impact. Faculty received major grants to pursue research designed to address substantive issues in the region and beyond. The Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South at Northwestern Qatar (#IAS_NUQ) expanded its presence, supporting research about the region.

5 books published
by faculty

16 #IAS_NUQ Global
Undergraduate Fellows

25 grants awarded
to faculty

RESEARCH

Qatar Research Grants

Faculty and researchers were awarded grants from major foundations in Qatar: the Qatar National Research Fund and the Qatar Foundation's (QF) Education City Innovation in Teaching Grant program. Together, the projects will investigate a range of significant regional issues. Some are designed to include student assistants; others entail collaboration with regional partners.

Qatar Research Grants in Action

Developing a Case Study Model for Teaching Religious Pluralism in the Arab and Islamic World / Ibrahim Abusharif and a cross-campus research team

Documenting the History of the First Generation of Palestinians in Qatar / Khaled AL-Hroub

The Future of Digital Citizenship in Qatar: a Socio-Technical Approach / Eddy Borges-Rey and an interdisciplinary research team

Global Hope, National Promise, Local Life: Encountering Western Liberalism in Education City in Qatar / Hasan Mahmud

Introducing Critical Security Studies: A Project on Time and Violence / Sami Hermez, Clovis Bergère, and an interdisciplinary research team

Surviving Pandemics in History, a virtual reality experience / Spencer Striker

Faculty Scholarship

Faculty continued to produce important scholarship and research. They published five books, seven book chapters, and more than two dozen journal articles. Nineteen were awarded grants; 56 gave talks at conferences or academic gatherings.

National Endowment for the Humanities Grant

Professor Spencer Striker received a Digital Projects for the Public Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The grant supports the development of "The People Who Created 'America's City' (New York 1770-1800)," an interactive learning experience for middle and high school students. Professor Striker will lead a team of historians, advisors, secondary school partners, and museums to design materials that help students understand the complex problems and choices faced by New Yorkers during the Revolutionary War.



“Our researchers are boosting Qatar’s strategy to be a thriving knowledge society while also advancing the future of research and collaborative engagements in academia to new heights.”

Marwan M. Kraidy
Dean and CEO, Northwestern Qatar

The university’s annual Media and Research Awards recognized original work by current students.

RESEARCH



“Bringing leading scholars shaping the conversation on and in the Global South, [the #IAS_NUQ] conference will expand our understanding of the notion and help us reflect on its continued relevance for research, knowledge, and storytelling not only in the region but globally.”

Clovis Bergère
Assistant Director for Research

Assistant Professor Haya Al-Noaimi speaking at “What is the Global South?”, one of two conferences hosted by the Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South at Northwestern Qatar (#IAS_NUQ).

#IAS_NUQ Conferences

At two conferences hosted by the Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South at Northwestern Qatar (#IAS_NUQ), leading scholars considered the meaning and function of “Global South” and the impact of digital culture on the region. “What is the Global South? Histories, Epistemologies, and Solidarities” examined “what the notion of ‘Global South’ does, what it enables, and what it forecloses,” said Dean Kraidy. “Southern Digitalities” explored the impact of digital tools, experiences, and articulations in the Global South.

#IAS_NUQ Global Undergraduate Fellows

Through its Global Undergraduate Fellowship program, #IAS_NUQ supported the work of 16 promising student researchers. This year’s fellows plan to study topics including consumption and identity in Qatar; the music industry in Zambia; gender, feminism, and mobility in Pakistan; legacies of countercultures in Nepal, and freedom of expression in Kazakhstan.

#IAS_NUQ Global Postdoctoral Scholars

Three new #IAS_NUQ Global Postdoctoral Scholars began their residencies on campus, conducting research on the Global South. Mariam Karim examined Arabic mass media in the context of media imperialism and colonialism. Harsha Man Maharjan explored the social, political, technological, and economic implications of smart cards in Nepal. Chafic Tony Najem studied prisoners’ illicit media practices and the use of smuggled digital media technologies in carceral spaces, with a focus on Lebanon.

#IAS_NUQ Book Talks

All My Friends Live in My Computer: Trauma, Tactical Media, and Meaning
Samira Rajabi

Aso Ebi: Dress, Fashion, Visual Culture, and Urban Cosmopolitanism in West Africa
Okechukwu Nwafor

Chinese Soft Power
Maria Repnikova

Cosmopolitan Radicalism: The Visual Politics of Beirut’s Global Sixties
Zeina Maasri

Cultural Netizenship: Social Media, Popular Culture, and Performance in Nigeria
James Yékú

Electric News in Colonial Algeria
Arthur Asseraf

Recording History: Jews, Muslims, and Music across Twentieth-Century North Africa
Christopher Silver

Renegade Rhymes: Rap Music, Narrative, and Knowledge in Taiwan
Meredith Schweig



Student Life

This was a year of engagement and experience. The university's vibrant student life programming encompassed a broad and diverse range of interests and pursuits. Coming from around the world, students got involved, joined together, and made a difference.

10 student projects received Media and Research Awards

6 films premiered by student-run Studio 20Q

45+ students completed summer internships

STUDENT LIFE

Experiential Learning

Dozens of students participated in two experiential learning programs. In the Service Learning Experience, students traveled to Laos to help community members in rural Luang Prabang build a school for children. In the Global Media Experience, students traveled to the United Arab Emirates, where they explored media sites and met with experts from industry leaders, including Asharq News, CNN Arabic, and Ogilvy.

Media and Research Awards

Ten student projects—including a report on Arabic fluency among Qatari youth, an investigation of racism and technology, and a documentary about the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan—were recognized at the university’s annual Media and Research Awards. Winners were chosen from more than 140 submissions—a record high—and evaluated by a panel of judges from organizations such as Al Jazeera, Katara Studios, Qatar Media City, and Ogilvy.

Studio 20Q Premiere

Six films produced by Northwestern Qatar students and graduates were shown at the Studio 20Q Premiere, an annual red-carpet event drawing students, faculty, and industry professionals from across Education City and Doha. The films were funded by Studio 20Q, the university’s student-run film club.

Summer Internships

More than 45 students completed summer internships, including 17 journalism students who took an internship as part of the university’s Journalism Residency program. Students developed communication campaigns at Qatar-based nonprofit Education Above All Foundation, produced documentaries at Al Jazeera English, and contributed to podcasts and created advertising campaigns for Casa del Podcast in Tarragona, Spain.

“My internship has been an incredible experience. I’ve been part of a dynamic team of journalists who provided invaluable guidance and helped me navigate the industry’s challenges.”

Safae Daoudi '24, Al Jazeera English

Top: Students in the Service Learning Experience in Laos, where they helped community members build a school for children.

Bottom: Six student-made films made their debut at Studio 20Q Premiere, an annual red-carpet event hosted by Studio 20Q.



STUDENT LIFE

New Issue of *Wisteria*

The latest issue of *Wisteria*, an online literary journal produced by students, was launched at a community open mic. The theme of the issue was “Who Are You?” In their work—including poetry, fiction, art, photography, cartoons, literary translations, and essays—students explored identity and what it means to be human in a digital world.

Purple Fest

This year’s Purple Fest showcased students’ Wildcat Spirit. The annual community celebration featured a talent show, cultural food, and e-games, as well as activities sponsored by student clubs. The event was organized by the Northwestern Qatar Student Government, NUQSG.

Kwibuka29

Kwibuka29, a community event commemorating the more than 1 million Tutsi who lost their lives during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, drew students and faculty members. Hosted by the African Students Association, the event featured a screening, speeches by students, and talks by Igor Marara, His Excellency the Ambassador of Rwanda to Qatar, and Tom Ndahiro, a Rwandan researcher who specializes in genocide ideology and genocide denial.

Last Lecture

This year’s Last Lecture, a highlight of the university’s end-of-year ceremonies, was delivered by Scott Curtis, associate professor in the Communication Program. In his lecture “Everything I Know, I Learned from the Movies,” Curtis drew life lessons from films he taught in a class that students had taken in their first year at the university. Curtis told students to hold on to their memories and believe in themselves as they continue to grow after graduation.



“Don’t be like Charles Foster Kane in *Citizen Kane*! Don’t fixate on the past. Keep moving forward. Be like Wadjda in *Wadjda*! Belief in yourself is fundamental for change.”

Scott Curtis, Associate Professor,
Communication





On Campus

This was a year of recognition and exploration. The university was recognized for its leadership in sustainability and cultural programming. Exhibits and events drew visitors from around the region to explore complex topics.

4,900+ visitors to
The Media Majlis

478 artifacts and installations at
The Media Majlis

LEED Operations and Maintenance
Platinum certification

ON CAMPUS

New Operations Leadership

Two new leaders “will be instrumental in ensuring operational support for Northwestern Qatar’s upward trajectory,” according to Dean Kraidy. James Shaw, associate dean for administration and chief operations officer, will help develop and implement institutional strategies and professional practices that support excellence. David Donaghue, director of business and finance, will oversee a range of tasks, including budget planning, internal policy compliance, and maintenance of auditing standards.

Recognition for The Media Majlis

The Media Majlis at Northwestern Qatar expanded its influence in the region and beyond. In November 2022, it became the first museum in the Middle East to be accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. In May 2023, Jack Thomas Taylor, associate curator and interim director of The Media Majlis, was selected as a member of the board of the International Council of Museums’ branch in Qatar, ICOM Qatar.

LEED Platinum Certification

Northwestern Qatar’s building in Education City was awarded LEED Operations and Maintenance (O+M) Platinum certification, a globally recognized symbol of sustainability. “This achievement is a testament to our commitment to environmental stewardship,” said Ray Corcoran, the university’s director of facilities.

Hosting the Doha Debates

The Doha Debates, a flagship series produced by the Qatar Foundation and Endeavor’s Film 45, was filmed at Northwestern Qatar. In front of a live studio audience, host Mo Amer and a panel of celebrities and experts sought common ground on important global issues.

Is it a beautiful game?

An interactive exhibition at The Media Majlis, *Is it a beautiful game?*, explored the social and political effects of football and its interrelationship with the media. The exhibition was supplemented by several public programs, including discussions on environmental sustainability in sports, the growth of e-sports, and inequality and discrimination in sports, as well as a special screening of *The Workers Cup*, a film about the lives of migrant workers who built Qatar’s World Cup infrastructure.

All About Musalsalat

Two leading scholars discussed the business of serialized Arab television dramas at an event hosted by The Media Majlis. Shahd Alshammari, assistant professor at Gulf University for Science and Technology, and Firat Oruc, associate professor at Georgetown University in Qatar, explored the cultural and economic significance of the dramas in front of a crowd of students and faculty.

Is it a beautiful game?, an interactive exhibition at The Media Majlis, drew crowds from across the region.





2022 FIFA World Cup

This was a year of competition at the highest level. As Qatar hosted the World Cup, the university community engaged with a broad range of interconnected issues: football, culture, economics, politics, journalism, and more. And Northwestern Qatar students and alumni helped to produce and cover the event.

WORLD CUP

Sports Journalism Conference

Journalists, filmmakers, writers, and radio hosts from South America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia attended a conference keyed to the World Cup. “Sports Journalism & The 2022 World Cup: Views from the South” explored the interrelationship between football, journalism, and sports in the Global South.

Students and Alumni at the World Cup

Many of the university’s students and alumni were integral to the production and coverage of the tournament. Shaden Wahdan ’17, a producer at Alkass Sports Channels, covered games and activities around the country. Annastazia Ng’ambi ’24 completed a broadcasting internship at FIFA Legacy. Lieutenant Majed Al Naimi ’20, a public relations officer in Qatar’s Ministry of Interior, helped to develop a public safety communications strategy.

Faculty World Cup Research

Faculty engaged in research projects examining the social and cultural effects of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in the region. Professors Craig LaMay, Susan Dun, and S. Venus Jin are leading projects that examine the relationship between politics and sports media piracy in the region, Qatar’s use of virtual reality technology to promote its tournament, and media coverage of Qatar in the years since it was named host of the World Cup.

More Than a Cup

Scholars on Northwestern’s campuses in Qatar and Evanston participated in a special event about the social and cultural effects of football on the Arab world. Hosted by the Office of the Provost at Northwestern University, “More Than a Cup: Outside the Touchlines of the 2022 FIFA World Cup” featured panel discussions, podcasts, and film screenings.

#IAS_NUQ Panel

The Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South sponsored Sports in the Global South, a panel discussion featuring scholars from around the world. Panelists examined the relationship between sports, cultures, and communities in the Global South.



“Football in the region has been a locus of anti-colonialism and revolution, democratic aspirations and military dictatorship, and political dissent.”

Craig LaMay, Professor in Residence,
Journalism and Strategic Communication Program

Assistant professor Claudia Kozman speaks at “Sports Journalism & The 2022 World Cup: Views from the South.”

**“We have the tools and the power to tell stories.
Take those tools and challenge and question
what you’re being told. Go out there and tell
stories, write, film, create, investigate.”**

Aesha Hussein '23
Student Speaker, 2023 Graduation



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