Our new home at a glance — Northwestern University’s new campus in Qatar was designed by renowned ‘architect of the desert’ Antoine Predock — At 515,000 square feet, it is the largest and most advanced communication school in the world — The building has the infrastructure of a major TV and news network and a Hollywood production company put together — The University has six state-of-the-art studio spaces, including a fully robotic newsroom designed by architect Ali Wazani — The Events Hall is one of the biggest sound stages in the Middle East — There are 16 cutting-edge video and audio post-production suites — The 2D and 3D animation lab has its own render farm — Two 4K cinemas allow students to screen and project their work — There are soundproof whisper rooms for recording voiceovers or podcasts, and a Foley studio for sound effects and dubbing — The ‘saif tip’ is three stories of stainless steel and LED mesh that form a media facade on the exterior of the building — In the lobby, 400 LED tiles form an 8mx12m digital media wall — There are more than 23 centrally connected screens throughout the building — The country’s first university museum, The Media Majlis, shares its home with NU-Q — The Media Majlis will be a public destination — a unique media and communications museum with a distinctly Middle Eastern orientation — The bright and airy dining room with its generous spaces, can be transformed to host lectures and presentations for up to 100 guests.
“We shape our buildings, and afterwards, our buildings shape us.”

— Winston Churchill

نحن نشكل مبانينا، ثم نشكلنا مبانينا.

— Winston Churchill
A Shared Promise
A Building for Qatar and the World
An Architect’s Vision
A Connected Classroom
A Global Platform

وعد مشترك
بناءً من أجل قطر والعالم
رؤية مهندس معماري
قاعة دراسية متصلة
منصة عالمية
A tree begins with a seed

Through the leadership of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the Qatar Foundation and Northwestern University have created a partnership that is now housed in the most advanced media and communication building in the world. The following pages illustrate how this building, a collaboration between Qatar and a distinguished university, provide a vision of the future expressed in architecture. Present and future students will owe a debt of gratitude to Her Highness Sheikha Moza for providing the vision that made this partnership and this building a reality.

أول الشجرة بذرة

تحت رعاية ظفر ومؤسسة قطر، بفضل العمالة الرائدة لصاحبة السمو الشيخة موزا بنت ناصر، تم إقامة شراكة متميزة في فتح دراسة الإعلام والتواصل في العالم بأسره. وهذا لינים هو ثمرة الشراكة بين قطر ومؤسسة جامعة نورثوسترن. وكشفت الصفحات التالية مقومات هذا الصرح العظيم الذي بُني كنموذج للمستقبل وطموح، وستكون له الدور الثمين في صناعة التكنولوجيا الحديثة. ويبقى الطلاب من اليوم والغد يدينون للحساسة الثاقبة لصاحبة السمو الشيخة موزا لتقديم هذه الشراكة، مما سنبنيه هذا القرن العالم.
A Shared Promise

وعد مشترك
Northwestern University’s heritage is a pioneering one. A 19th-century story of a small group of founders in Evanston, Illinois, USA, with a vision to bring a new kind of education to an underserved community.
The values and design principles of this ambitious new building are drawn from those of the two institutions that created it:

— It is a place that pushes boundaries and is never satisfied with the status quo
— A place where academic freedom is protected and free expression is encouraged
— A place where diversity is celebrated and unity is built
— A place for lifelong learning, discovery, and the advancement of knowledge
— Where there is a meaningful connection between traditional culture and the contemporary age
— And where application of study is as important as the theory behind it

Since 2008, Northwestern University has served its students in Qatar with the same commitment to excellence for which the institution has always been known. As we move into this magnificent new building, the challenge will be to transfer, and strengthen, our sense of community and purpose for Qatar, the Middle East, and beyond.

In this bold symbol of collaboration, culture, and communication, our surroundings may have changed but our mission remains as familiar today as it was two centuries ago: to use education as a tool to amplify underrepresented voices, liberate their ideas, and help them to shape the world with the power of the stories they tell.
At 515,000 square feet, the Northwestern University in Qatar building is three times the size of its previous home, and the largest institution of its kind anywhere in the world.

Cast against the capital’s skyline, the four-story facility was designed by renowned American architect Antoine Predock. Having spent 60 years of his life in New Mexico, Predock is known for buildings that reflect the majesty of the desert and are integrated perfectly within it.

Inspired by the familiar scale and sweep of the arid landscape, Predock designed a dramatic and literally monumental structure that at once acts as a great desert fortress and a sheltered cocoon; its rugged and weathered exterior shielding the technological oasis within.

Much of the building is encased in large amber travertine limestone blocks sourced from the region. Their textured planes are aligned anarchically to create the appearance of a geological formation that seems natural to the surrounding environment.

The building’s repeated arcing forms — both inside and outside — have many cultural readings: the graceful undulations of Arabic calligraphy, the boat-like shape of the dunes, hands clasping in embrace, the tiny sliver of a new moon.

As students, faculty, staff, and visitors approach from Oxygen Park, there is a sense of ceremony and procession as they are guided through soft meandering paths, courtyards, open atria, and fully-planted gardens. Physical and psychological space matter here, with the stone walls giving way to glass exteriors once inside the forecourt, allowing visitors to witness the activities going on inside each of the academic suites that face the courtyard.

And indeed the facade, the gate, and the whole design is the result of a rigorous amount of work by Predock and other architects and engineers to create a building worthy of the skyline and the campus environment.
Before entering the building, you are greeted by a giant three-story media facade made up of stainless steel and LED mesh, and situated like the tip of a curved sail blade. It is here where the building announces its intention as a forum and platform for technological innovation, education, and cultural exchange. A safe and stimulating place where students are encouraged to be curious, creative, and brave in their pursuit of learning and honest expression.
“In Qatar there is a sense of destiny about building a globally significant country and media sector, a willingness to embrace change, openness to talent from almost anywhere, and the wherewithal to make things happen.”

Dean Everette E. Dennis

"يوجد في قطر شعور بحتمية بناء «قطاع إعلامي وبلد قوي مؤثر عالميًا، ورغبة في تبني التغيير والانفتاح على أصحاب المواهب أينما كانوا، والإصرار على تحقيق الإنجاز».

العميد الدكتور ايفيريت إي دينيس"
A Building for Qatar and the World

بناءٌ من أجل قطر والعالم
A Building for Qatar and the World

بناءٌ من أجل قطر والعالم
An Architect’s Vision

رؤية مهندس معماري
I want to mark a place physically, culturally and environmentally. That's why I engage deeply to understand geological time and the experiences of past inhabitants to make it feel like it adheres to the spirit of the site. It is never just 'a cool shape.'

— Antoine Predock, Architect
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"An architect cannot design a soul into a building; the building has to earn it."

— Antoine Predock, Architect

لا يستطيع المهندس المعماري أن يصمم روحًا داخل مبنى؛ ولكن يجب أن يكتسبها المبنى من ذاته.

— أنطوان بريدوك، مهندس معماري
A Connected Classroom

قاعة دراسية متصلة
In contrast to the sturdy protective capsule that encircles the building, once inside the forecourt, the rough-hewn stone gives way to labyrinthine interior layers where all the functions of the media environment converge to be observed, analyzed, and explored.

The materiality here is dominated by glass, the warm Gulf sun reflecting onto the translucent marble and fine wood surfaces inside. The activities of many programmatic spaces – the projection theater, black box theater, events hall, newsroom, auditorium, large production studio, forum, and atrium – are all visible from the courtyard.

The lobby is dominated by a stunning 8m x 12m digital media wall, made up of 400 LED tiles that can project news, information, and opinions live from around the world in a real-time dialogue between practitioners and students. Not only does this digital media wall bring the outside world nearer to students, just as importantly, it will broadcast the students’ own stories to connect and inspire each other.

The experience of walking through the space is energizing; throughout the building, a physical and digital pulse is created by inspirational screens and natural nodes for informal student gatherings. Each journey inside will be different, choreographed to stimulate discussion, discovery, and a sense of joy as students are guided through vaulted atria, up open stairways and onto whimsical bridges and balconies that suggest a sensation of weightlessness.

The nucleus of this connected interior is the newsroom. A state-of-the-art studio without precedent in education and as well-equipped as any major TV network in the world. It is more of a laboratory than a classroom, highly adaptable, and limited only by the imagination of the students who conduct experiments inside it.

Just like the students, the newsroom is poised for transformation. With the capacity to make television and film shows, the innovative space accommodates the breadth and diversity of the media landscape.

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Dynamic, multipurpose fittings allow a learning activity to quickly transition into a show telecast on screens that are centrally connected across the building. A plasma screen projecting a live social media feed can transform into a work surface. A news desk can become a conference table. Students can manipulate the set, lighting, seating configuration and studio panels so that no two shows will ever be the same.

One of the most modern facilities of its kind, the newsroom is attentive to change and fit for the future. Its technological and digital components will be refreshed regularly to integrate new channels and modes of communication—including virtual and augmented reality—in the years ahead.

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Students come from more than 30 different countries and 75 percent of our students are female.
The high-spec newsroom, extensive library, classrooms, administration, faculty, and Dean's suite all occupy the building's upper floors.
A Global Platform

منصة عالمية
Northwestern University is a forward-looking, global institution and the campus in Qatar reflects those same ideals of diversity, inclusion and tolerance.

Its special mandate in Education City is to create a welcoming co-educational environment for women as well as men, and to draw its student body from the regions and cultures across the Middle East, Asia, and the rest of the world.

While mainly focused on undergraduate courses, the new building has allowed for more space to create a Lifelong Learning Center to support the learning journeys of college-bound high school students, graduate students, and executives.

The school focuses on the growth and development of these students, but it invests in a research and thought leadership agenda that seeks to develop the media industries and local institutions in Qatar, the region, and beyond.

After all, the success of Northwestern University in Qatar and its new building is solely dependent on the success of its students.

In a frenetic media environment, where the proliferation and evolution of communication platforms continue at breakneck pace, it is more important than ever for young graduates to be able to communicate with integrity, adaptability and effectiveness in their work.

That is why Northwestern University in Qatar builds strong relationships with industry—to prepare students for life after graduation, and to help create mutually beneficial paths to employment. For students interested in digital and new media, the university has partnered with Qatar Computing Research Institute. For documentary and drama film students, the university has partnered with the Doha Film Institute. And for students pursuing a career in news, the university has partnered with Doha-based Al-Jazeera, a leading world news network.
Every undergraduate student receives a foundational education in the liberal arts before focusing on journalism and strategic communication or media industries and technology. But not all students will end up working in the media; many will go on to be professional communicators in government, non-profits and the private sector, while others continue their studies in graduate school. With a BS from Northwestern, students are equipped with the necessary research, critical analysis and communication skills needed to guarantee their further academic and career success.

In a digitized, globalized world in which anyone can become a communicator, and where information and disinformation are equally present and powerful, the role of media schools and their students has never been more vital. It is our privilege and responsibility to face an uncertain future and make sense of it through the power of good storytelling. In this way, we will help to create a participatory society, built on mutual understanding, respect and, above all, truth.

To our students, the building says ‘Think big, dream and create.’”
— Dean Everette E. Dennis

رسالة المبنى لطلابنا
"الحلم والإبداع، فكرة...".
— مسؤول المبنى في جامعة نورثويسترن
Our new home at a glance

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— At 515,000 square feet, it is the largest and most advanced communication school in the world.
— The building has the infrastructure of a major TV and news network and a Hollywood production company put together.
— The University has six state-of-the-art studio spaces, including a fully robotic newsroom designed by architect Ali Wazani.
— The Events Hall is one of the biggest sound stages in the Middle East.
— There are 16 cutting-edge video and audio post-production suites.
— The 2D and 3D animation lab has its own render farm.
— Two 4K cinemas allow students to screen and project their work.
— There are soundproof whisper rooms for recording voiceovers or podcasts, and a Foley studio for sound effects and dubbing.
— The ‘saif tip’ is three stories of stainless steel and LED mesh that form a media facade on the exterior of the building.
— In the lobby, 400 LED tiles form an 8mx12m digital media wall.
— There are more than 23 centrally connected screens throughout the building.
— The country’s first university museum, The Media Majlis, shares its home with NU-Q.
— The Media Majlis will be a public destination—a unique media and communications museum with a distinctly Middle Eastern orientation.
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