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DOHA FILM INSTITUTE

Press Release

Northwestern University in Qatar and Doha Film Institute deepen ties with institutional partnership; announce plans for collaborative research on media industry in the Middle East

- *First project under new strategic alliance builds on successful collaboration on the 'Entertainment Media Use in the Middle East' 2014 survey*
- *Regional study to cover media production and distribution with intent to make findings easily accessible and useful to professionals in academy and industry alike*

Doha, Qatar; April 1, 2015: Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) and the Doha Film Institute forged a new institutional partnership agreement that will begin with a collaborative study on the media industry in the Middle East.

The study is the first initiative under a newly-agreed alliance that will foster joint research projects, event collaboration, workshops, film screenings and master classes, internship and training opportunities as well as panel and conference programs. The study aims to produce both new information and insights made readily available to industry professionals, academics and a general readership in late 2015. Collaboration on the study design will begin in April and likely address the relative scarcity of publicly available data on subjects such as ownership structures, emerging production and distribution models, and the role of government subsidy and legal constraints.

Everette E. Dennis, dean and CEO of NU-Q, remarked: "Media and communication in the Middle East is an area that is ripe for insightful, in-depth study. NU-Q has been building a body of research that takes a keen look at media and entertainment consumption in the region. This new collaboration with the Doha Film Institute is an opportunity to look at the other side of the equation: the organisations and businesses that produce content."

Fatma Al Remaihi, CEO of the Doha Film Institute, said: "By drawing on the combined strengths of the Doha Film Institute and NU-Q, we expect the results of the joint media study to make a valuable contribution to understanding content creation, production and distribution in the Middle East. This is an organic extension of our earlier joint survey, which helped compile reliable and useful data about media consumption and cultural attitudes in the region. Providing access to a credible bank of knowledge is part of our mandate and through our strategic alliance with NU-Q, we are deepening industry-academia links for the benefit of the community."

NU-Q and the Doha Film Institute have had many years of successful collaborative projects, including community engagement initiatives for young people during the Ajyal Youth Film Festival and joint educational initiatives. In 2014, NU-Q and the Doha Film Institute conducted the survey project "Entertainment Media Use in the Middle East," that involved 6,000 face-to-face interviews in six nations. Most recently, the two organisations presented a special session of NU-Q's Qatar Media Industries Forum (QMIF) panel discussion during Qumra, the Doha Film Institute's new industry event dedicated to



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the development of emerging filmmakers. The QMIF panel, which included some of region's leading figures in exhibition, distribution and production, discussed the topic 'Meeting the demand for regional content.'

The upcoming study will follow the same collaborative model as the 'Entertainment Media Use in the Middle East.' NU-Q will lead the collaborative process by reviewing existing literature and available information, gathering input and specific areas of interest from Doha Film Institute, its own faculty, and other experts, and then collaborating with the Institute on determining the scope and specific areas of inquiry.

Results of the collaborative study will be released and made publicly available in late 2015 on a dedicated website and in print form.

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About Doha Film Institute:

Doha Film Institute is an independent, not-for-profit cultural organisation. It supports the growth of the local film community through cultivating film appreciation, enhancing industry knowledge and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. The Institute's platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films; skills-sharing and mentorship programmes; film screenings; the Ajyal Youth Film Festival; and Qumra. With culture, community, learning and entertainment at its foundation, the Institute is committed to supporting Qatar's 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge-based economy.

Doha Film Institute

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About Northwestern University in Qatar:

Northwestern University in Qatar, founded in 2008, offers undergraduate degrees in journalism and communication. Ranked in the top 25 universities worldwide by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and #12 in the United States by US News and World Report, Northwestern is one of the best universities in Qatar. High-quality, well-delivered information is a basic expectation in college, but an excellent university also anticipates the need for students to develop their individual strengths, promoting confidence as well as skills and knowledge. The curriculum and courses available to NU-Q students provide a flexible framework, helping them develop a range of skills as they work toward their highest potentials.

NU-Q's partnership with Qatar Foundation in Education City illustrates Qatar's commitment to offering students high caliber education as well as an internationally renowned degree, which is identical to that at our home campus in Evanston, Illinois, USA.

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