

**Moving Mountains –
Entrepreneurship Through Higher Education**

Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, March 17th -19th

Al Hossen Ballroom, Golden Tulip Hotel

**Organized by
The Ministry of Higher Education
in Partnership with
The Research Council, Sultanate of Oman
and
The Central University of Finance and Economics, China**

Day 1: Saturday March 17th

08.30: Registration, meet and greet.

09.00: Welcome Addresses

- HE Dr Khalil Al Khonji, Chair, Oman Chamber of Commerce
- HE Dr Hilal Al Hinai, Secretary General of The Research Council
- Professor Wang Guangqian, President of The Central University of Finance Economics
- HE Dr Darwish, Undersecretary, Ministry of Health
- The Entrepreneurial perspective, Ms. Sharifa Al Barami, Founder and CEO, AlJazeera Technical Solutions and Entrepreneurship Coach.

09.45: Session 1 - Entrepreneurship and Higher Education: Obstacles and Opportunities

Chair: HE Dr. Abdullah M Al Sarmi, Undersecretary, MoHE

- 1) Issues and International overview – Professor Thomas Andersson, TRC
- 2) The Omani situation –
HE Dr Darwish, Undersecretary, Ministry of Health
Ms. Malak Al-Shaibani, Founder of Creative Links and Managing Director of Talent2

Panel discussion

M24 competition Introduction: Prof Lauri Repokari

M24 competition Launch: HE Abdullah M Al Sarmi, PhD

This session introduces key issues and provides an overview of the international and Omani situations, examining opportunities and advantages of entrepreneurship through today's higher education.

- Patterns of entrepreneurship: What determines whether we have entrepreneurship; what is critical for entrepreneurs to succeed, and what are the barriers hindering entrepreneurship.
- Importance of entrepreneurship for economic growth and prosperity of nations, calling on some comparative data and statistics.
- How higher education institutions can promote entrepreneurship for creating more jobs and reducing unemployment.
- How higher education institutions around the world promote or interact with entrepreneurship.
- Relationship between higher education institutions and entrepreneurship organizations.

11.00: Break for tea and networking

11.15: Session 2 –How Entrepreneurship in Higher Education Works

Chair: Dr Abood Al Sawafi, President, Sohar University

- 1) Promoting Entrepreneurship: The Role of Educators – Dr Mathew Manimala
- 2) Infusing curricula – Professor Li Junsheng
- 3) Imbuing the Entrepreneurial Spirit – Professor Yennah Mulia

Panel discussion

As entrepreneurship in higher education is a relatively new concept, this session will focus on showing international models of how entrepreneurship can be integrated in higher education institutions, and the necessary requirements. Panelists will also demonstrate best practices of enhancing the effectiveness of higher education with respect to entrepreneurship.

- What is required for higher education to be effective in promoting entrepreneurship for the mutual benefit of entrepreneurs and academic institutions?
- The entrepreneurship agenda: alternative approaches for higher education to adopt, and their relevance to different types of institutions and areas of education.
- International models of how entrepreneurship can be integrated in higher education.
- Examples of leading entrepreneurship schools and colleges, and their contributions to the economy and to society.
- Ways of enhancing the effectiveness of higher education with regard to entrepreneurship.
- The broader contributions of higher education institutions to entrepreneurship.

12.45: Lunch and Networking

13.45: Session 3 – Entrepreneurism Policy frameworks for HEIs

Chair: Professor Thomas Andersson

- 1) Regulations and practices influencing entrepreneurship in Oman – Dr. Zaki, Muscati, The Research Council
- 2) Oman and industry – - Mr. Azzan Qasim Al.Busaidi, Director of Planning and Follow up, PA-IPED
- 3) Oman and academia - Dr Abood Al Sawafi, President, Sohar University

Panel discussion

As it is important to understand the current policies in Oman in regards to entrepreneurship. This session will focus on reviewing the current policies and frameworks in Oman and examine the international policy experiences in higher education institutions overseas.

- Understanding entrepreneurship policies and their impact on higher education institutions.
- Reviewing relevant current frameworks and policies in Oman.
- Examining international policy experiences in higher education and entrepreneurship.
- Critical reform issues – how they might be implemented.
- The role of university autonomy, specialization and stakeholder engagement, for linking higher education and entrepreneurship.

15.15: Fruits and/or tea and take to your table.

15.30: Session 4 - Breakout Discussions

Chair: Dr Talal Al Balushi

Moderators:

- **Sharifa Al Barami:** High Impact areas such as eco-tourism, green cities, health & wellness, social entrepreneurship.
- **Dr Abdullah Al-Zakwani:** How to motivate stakeholders (teachers/faculty, administration, business, community),
- **On Student Affairs:** The role of student communities

In this session participants organize themselves around each table for brainstorming. Brief introductory presentations by selected lead speakers challenge participants to think through opportunities and obstacles with respect to higher education and entrepreneurship. Concurrent discussions at each table are followed by rapporteur presentations and discussion among all groups. The objective is to formulate options and suggest priorities for new initiatives to strengthen entrepreneurship education in Oman.

17.30: End of Day 1

18.30: Reception prior to dinner and networking

19.00: Formal Dinner, The Grand Hyatt, Muscat, Presided over by HE Dr. Abdullah , the Undersecretary

Day 2: Sunday March 18th

08.00: Meet and greet, coffee and networking

08.30: Session 5 – High Level Stakeholder Engagement

Short presentations/report back from Session 5 breakout

Chair: HE Dr Ali Al Bemani Vice Chancellor, SQU

Supporting comments by invitees

- Dr Amer Al Rawas, CEO Omantel and OmanMobile
- P Mohammed Ali, Chair: Galfar, OMC, CCE
- Ahmed Al Wahaibi, CEO, Oman Oil

To build Oman's vision in integrating and promoting entrepreneurship through higher education, it is essential for stakeholders to be active partners and demanding customers. After presentations from Day 1, such stakeholders will be invited to express their views on practical ways forward to support entrepreneurship through higher education, and how to harness progress in this area to tackle unemployment issues.

- Presentations by rapporteurs with a focus on the breakout sessions from Day 1.
- The views and visions of high-level officials and stakeholders on ways to encourage entrepreneurship through higher education in Oman, and how they can play a positive role in implementing the ideas.
- Their vision for tackling the high unemployment rate especially among youth.
- Creating high quality, sustainable job opportunities especially for Omani youth.

10.00: Fruits and/or tea and take to your table.

10.15: Session 6 – Inspiration for Action

Chair: Professor Mathew Manimala

- 1) Student speaker – Nickson Otieno, President of WSCSD
- 2) Women in leadership – Celia Hertz, Founder/Director, Umbilical Design
- 3) Omani success – Dr Izzildine, Bahwan CyberTech

Panel discussion

In order to motivate students/audience to take positive actions in their lives, it is important to hear from role models about their experiences on how they made it to be successful entrepreneurs: the opportunities, the risks, and the barriers they had to overcome.

- Examples of entrepreneurial initiatives by student communities around the world in areas of high societal relevance.
- Showcasing real-world examples of individuals who have become successful entrepreneurs
- Highlighting challenges faced by these entrepreneurs and how they have overcome them.
- Opportunities and threats to students in regard to entrepreneurship in different areas.

11.45 – 13.00: Lunch and Networking

13.00: Session 7 – Towards the New Entrepreneurial Landscape in Oman - Obstacles and Opportunities

Moderator: Professor Thomas Andersson, TRC

- Hashim Mushiemi Al Hassani, Deputy General Manager- Intilaaqah SME Marketing and Business Development
- Abdullah Al Jufaili, General Manager, Sharakah.
- Fahad Al Harthi, Sanad Program
- Shabib Al Mamaari, Executive Director, Injaz Oman.

After reviewing the current situation in Oman in entrepreneurship, this session will take a closer look at the opportunities provided by the government to those who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs. This session will give a chance to the audience/students to learn more about the criteria of each program.

- Understanding Oman's current situation in promoting entrepreneurship in higher education.
- Views from each organization on available opportunities for Omani entrepreneurship.

- Challenges that beneficiaries can address and intend to address, and what role specific programs and initiatives can play in the future.
- Needs of further actions as identified by each speaker.

14.30: Fruits and drinks to take to tables.

14.45: Session 8 – Student Competition Presentation

In this session, we hear from the students who have just completed M24, and learn about the evaluation by the panel of judges.

Discussion leader: Professor Lauri Repokari

15.45: Session 9 – Workshop Synopsis and Recommendations

HE Dr. Abdullah M Al Sarmi, Undersecretary, MoHE

16.30: End of Day 2

Day 3: Monday March 19th

08.00: Meet and greet, coffee and networking!

08.30: Session 10 – Workshop on Curricula Practicalities

Led by Professor Ge Jianxin, The Central University for Finance and Economics, Beijing, China

10.00: Fruits and/or tea and take to your table.

10.15: Session 11 – The M24 Experience

All 5 student groups will share their experiences and an evaluation of this inaugural M24 event

Chair: Bs Ville Tajaamaa (University of Turku, Finland)

Introduction: Professor Lauri Repokari, (Aalto University, Finland)

Panel discussion

12.00: Closing Speech

His Excellency, The Undersecretary, Ministry of Higher Education

12.30: Buffet Lunch