

COLLABORATION AND IMPACT AT CORE OF BILATERAL CYBERSECURITY PROGRAM DEVELOPED BY QF R&D AND TURKISH RESEARCH LEADERS

Three Key Cyber-Challenge Areas to be Addressed through Partnership-Focused Funding Call

Doha, Qatar, August 20, 2017: A groundbreaking model designed to drive public-private sector collaboration and generate impact will be the cornerstone of a new program, developed by Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) and Turkey's leading research agency, that is set to strengthen Qatar's cyber resilience.

The program will focus on three themes addressing cybersecurity challenges that Qatar and Turkey share – cloud and big data security, security systems for mobile devices and applications, and critical infrastructure cybersecurity – and will be jointly funded by QNRF, part of Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D), and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK).

Academic and research institutes, and industry, private sector, and government partners, from both nations will work side-by-side through the joint funding program, which is due to be launched in mid-September 2017. The awarded projects will be announced in March 2018, with those comprising both a software and hardware element being funded for three years, and software-only projects being funded for two years.

The program has been developed following a December 2015 agreement between QNRF and TÜBİTAK to collaborate on projects in areas of mutual interest, recognizing the vital role of science, research, and technological innovation in the economic and social development of their respective countries. Cybersecurity's status as an issue of strategic priority for both Qatar and Turkey led to it being selected as the focus of the initial program, with the partnership having scope for further bilateral cooperation in other key areas.

A QF R&D delegation visited TÜBİTAK's headquarters from August 2 – 3, 2017, to formalize the joint funding call, which will employ a collaboration model called '2+2'. This model outlines how the impact of research and innovation can be intensified by academia, research institutes, and other stakeholders – industries, private companies, and government entities – pooling their resources, facilities, and expertise to nurture innovation and create economic growth.

"Turkey's capacity for innovation and the development of advanced technology in the realm of cybersecurity – one of Qatar's Research Grand Challenges – is very strong, and our shared challenges, priorities, and belief in science and research as a driver of economic growth, mean



there is great synergy between us,” said Nada Al-Olaqi, Head of the Qatari delegation, and Business Planning and Performance Manager, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, QF R&D.

“This joint funding program mirrors QF R&D’s strategic objective of fostering public/private sector collaboration, which is instrumental to advancing Qatar’s research agenda and addressing its national priorities. It has the potential to bolster the cyber resilience and economic strength of both countries, and we hope it represents the start of a successful, enduring partnership.”

Dr. Abdul Sattar Al-Taie, Executive Director, QNRF, a member of the delegation to TÜBİTAK, said: “QNRF places great emphasis on international and regional collaboration, recognizing that challenges are not unique to one nation, expertise transcends geographical boundaries, and the amalgamation of knowledge, resources, and ambition opens up the potential for greater impact and global competitiveness in science and research.”

“Our collaboration with TÜBİTAK reflects the fact that partnership generates strength, ideas, momentum, and the most mutually-beneficial research outcomes. This approach is the essence of our initial joint funding program and, through adopting a model built on multi-sectoral collaboration and focused on commercialization and impact, we believe it will make a pivotal contribution to developing Qatar’s cybersecurity expertise and ensuring the resilience of the nation’s critical infrastructure.”

The “extensive cooperation agreement” between TÜBİTAK and QNRF – which also includes the establishment of joint fellowship programs and workshops – makes “the exchange of research and knowledge possible,” said Professor Dr. A. Arif Ergin, President, TÜBİTAK.

“Both parties plan to support high-caliber research consortia – including partners from industry, universities, research institutes, and public bodies – in order to develop cybersecurity projects,” he added. “The aim of these collaborations is to jointly build a defense against cyberattacks, through making our cybersecurity technology a reality.”

Image Caption

Image 1: The QF R&D delegation meet senior figures from TÜBİTAK to discuss research collaborations between Qatar and Turkey.

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Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D)

Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D) is charged with the Qatar National Research Strategy, dedicated to making Qatar a leading centre for research and development excellence and innovation. QF R&D is home to Qatar National Research Fund, a leading scientific research funding organization, and Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), an international hub for technology innovation and commercialization.

For more information, please visit www.qfrd.org

Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF)

Driven by the aim of fostering a culture of research in Qatar, QNRF was established in 2006 to advance knowledge and education by acting as a support system for researchers.

QNRF, part of Qatar Foundation Research and Development, administers funding for original, competitively selected research and furthers collaborations within academia, the public, private, governmental and non-governmental sectors through effective, mutually beneficial partnerships. While QNRF actively seeks internationally-recognized researchers, it is dedicated to funding research that meets the needs of Qatar. For more information, visit: www.qnrf.org

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development.

QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development.

QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global research and development challenges. By promoting a



culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>