



Awards Arab World 2025

Outstanding Contribution to Environmental Leadership

Institution Name	Ajman University
Submission title or project name	Greening communities: mangrove planting project
Nominee / key personnel	Ajman University, in collaboration with Al-Zorah Development Company and Quest for Adventure (Al Zorah Nature Reserve)
URL	https://www.canva.com/design/DAGXTwne12I/yTZ9zwgaFxtELWguPX7KBA/edit?utm_content=DAGXTwne12I&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton
Submission	<p>Ajman's vulnerable coastline is being protected by the "Greening communities: mangrove planting project" implemented in 2023-24 by Ajman University along with Al Zorah Development Company and Quest for Adventure. This nature-based solution combats rising sea levels and carbon emissions by harnessing the remarkable abilities of mangroves to stabilise shorelines and sequester up to four times more CO₂ than terrestrial forests. With over 3,300 mangroves planted thus far, the project could absorb between 66,000 and 990,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide. Beyond its environmental impact, the project empowers communities: women lead planning efforts, students gain hands-on experience, and underserved youth connect with nature. With goals to expand mangrove cover by 50 per cent within five years and engage more than 10,000 participants, the initiative is a replicable model for coastal resilience. By uniting academia, businesses and volunteers, AU is demonstrating how local action can address global climate challenges while fostering social equity and biodiversity.</p>



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Institution Name	University of Sharjah
Submission title or project name	From waste to wonder: the ADT Research Group's holistic model for circular innovation
Nominee / key personnel	Dr Iman Ibrahim (associate professor in architecture, research group coordinator, University of Sharjah); Dr Narjes Haj Salem (associate professor in management, University of Sharjah); Dr Ahmed Farouk (associate professor in public relations, University of Sharjah); Dr Ali Radwan (associate professor in SREE, University of Sharjah); Dr Waleed Zeida (associate professor in civil and environmental engineering, University of Sharjah); Dr Suhail Mubarak (postdoctoral researcher, Research Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah); Hadeel Al Qaysi (graduate research assistant, Research Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah); Ayat Ashour (graduate research assistant, University of Sharjah)
URL	
Submission	<p>A diverse team of researchers from engineering, communication, design and business at the University of Sharjah united to ask: what if plastic waste sparked not just material change but mindset transformation? This question led to the creation of the Art and Design Transformation (ADT) research group – a multidisciplinary initiative backed by the Research Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences. Together, we began converting plastic waste into opportunity through creativity and collaboration. Our hybrid composite, made from recycled HDPE, aluminium foil and carbon fibre, achieved an 87.6 per cent increase in tensile strength. But our innovation goes beyond science – it's seen in modular products, zero-waste design and public engagement. In 2024, our lab became a hub for hands-on sustainability, welcoming volunteers, students and partners. We've co-developed prototypes, studied behavioural trends and analysed media narratives – all to shape a future in which recycled plastics are not just viable, but visionary.</p>



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Institution Name	Saint Joseph University of Beirut
Submission title or project name	Advancing water governance through civil society empowerment in Lebanon
Nominee / key personnel	Professor Fadi el Hage (chairholder at the chair of the “Fondation Diane” for Education in Eco-Citizenship and Sustainable Development (CEEDD) and delegate of the rector for professional development at Saint Joseph University of Beirut); Judy Zeineddine (project manager)
URL	https://www.usj.edu.lb/ceedd/archive.php?lang=2&cat=264
Submission	<p>Lebanon’s water sector faces significant challenges resulting from mismanagement, pollution and political instability. While civil society organisations (CSOs) play a crucial role in addressing these issues, they often lack the resources to drive effective change. To address this, the chair of the “Fondation Diane” for Education in Eco-Citizenship and Sustainable Development at Saint Joseph University of Beirut implemented the “Improving CSOs’ Capacity to Engage in Water Sanitation and Conservation” project, supported by the USAID-funded Water Sanitation and Conservation (WSC) initiative. The project introduced a pioneering model combining technical water management training, non-technical capacity-building and participatory research, strengthening CSOs throughout Lebanon. Following a nationwide call for participation, 24 CSOs received training, resulting in 21 project proposals addressing water-related issues. By early 2025, several CSOs had transitioned from planning to implementation. Building on this momentum, Saint Joseph plans to support selected CSOs in securing funding and advancing sustainable water initiatives across Lebanon.</p>



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Institution Name	An-Najah National University
Submission title or project name	PALGAP: Pioneering sustainable agriculture through academic-policy partnership
Nominee / key personnel	Dr Anan Jayuosi (Project Director and Director of Energy, Water, and Food Security Center); Professor Munqez Shtaya (Director of Scientific Research Center); Dr Tawfiq QubBaj (Project Officer); Dr Heba Faris (Project Officer); Dr Abdel Fattah Hassan (Project Officer); Eng. Majd Quqa (Project Staff); Eng. Bilal Shayeb (Project Staff); Eng. Alaa Yasein (Department of World University Ranking).
URL	https://agri.najah.edu/en/scientific-research-and-innovation/projects/building-community-resilience-and-improving-livelihoods-and-food/
Submission	An-Najah National University (ANNU) has become a leader in environmental sustainability through its Safe Agriculture Initiative and the development of PALGAP, the first Palestinian Good Agricultural Practices standard. Co-created with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Standards Institute, PALGAP addresses challenges such as groundwater stress and land-access volatility. After field pilots in 2022, its national roll-out was mandated in 2024. PALGAP led to a 64 per cent reduction in pesticide residues, 98 per cent compliance with water-use standards, and enabled 83 per cent of farmers, including 120 women, to secure premium contracts with an 18 per cent price uplift. ANNU integrated PALGAP into research, education and community outreach, upgrading labs and transforming farms into demonstration hubs. It trained farmers, agronomists, inspectors and auditors, embedding sustainability into national systems. ANNU's science-driven model is now expanding beyond Palestine, demonstrating how universities can drive policy, food security and regional environmental leadership.



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Institution Name	Tanta Univesity
Submission title or project name	Bidaya for sustainability: Tanta University's community-led environmental and agricultural outreach
Nominee / key personnel	Tanta University Leadership Team for Community Service and Environmental Development, led by Professor Mahmoud Farouk Selim (vice-president for community service and environmental development affairs, Tanta University)
URL	
Submission	<p>As part of Egypt's Presidential Initiative for Building the Egyptian Citizen, Tanta University launched Bidaya – a pioneering environmental outreach programme to empower rural communities through sustainable agriculture, veterinary care and ecological awareness. Through multi-sectoral convoys across more than 15 villages in the governorate of Gharbia, Bidaya (Arabic for “start”) delivered practical services and educational workshops to more than 30,000 beneficiaries. Highlights include treating more than 18,000 animals, training over 1,000 farmers in eco-friendly practices, and organising 60-plus awareness sessions on waste reduction, biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods. The initiative integrates academic knowledge, grassroots delivery and environmental leadership in a scalable, field-based model aligned with Egypt's Vision 2030 and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Bidaya promotes a greener rural economy and offers a transferable blueprint for environmental engagement across the Arab world.</p>



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Outstanding Contribution to Environmental Leadership

Institution Name	University of Al Maarif
Submission title or project name	Go Green: University of Al-Maarif's community-centred environmental leadership
Nominee / key personnel	Dr Mahmood A. Alsaadi; Dr Mohammed Ibrahim Khalaf; Khaled Jamal Ayed; Dr Yasir Mohammed Hammood; Dr Alaa Hamid Mohammed
URL	https://gogreen.uoa.edu.iq/
Submission	<p>Launched in 2023, the University of Al-Maarif's "Go Green" initiative evolved into a transformative model of environmental leadership, achieving city-wide impact by 2024. Initially a campus-focused campaign, it expanded into partnerships with the local Ramadi municipality, local hospitals, schools and private companies. Students were actively engaged in reducing plastic use, recycling, digitising to minimise paper waste, and eco-friendly commuting, supported by operational measures such as installing solar panels (40 per cent energy reduction) and smart waste systems (30 per cent overflow reduction). Go Green's success stems from integrating sustainability into academic programmes, research priorities and student activities, alongside widespread community engagement. Through public clean-up events, tree-planting drives and awareness campaigns, sustainability became a shared civic value. The initiative's influence grew further through the TIOTC conference (Conference on Emerging Technology Trends in Internet of Things and Computing) and the creation of a regional Green Clinics training platform. Today, Go Green stands as a replicable model for institutional transformation, positioning Al-Maarif as a regional leader in environmental stewardship.</p>



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Institution Name	University Cadi Ayyad of Marrakech
Submission title or project name	From campus to community: university-driven solutions for sustainable sanitation in the Arab world
Nominee / key personnel	Professor Laila Mandi (principal investigator, emeritus professor in charge of sustainable development, Cadi Ayyad University); Professor Naaila Ouazzani (vice-dean in charge of research and cooperation at Faculty of Sciences Semlalia, Cadi Ayyad University)
URL	https://sustainable.uca.ma/?_gl=1%2A1krhxgw%2A_ga%2AMTk1NjQ5MTA0LjE3MzExOTQ3NjU.%2A_ga_LTK307F627%2AMTc0NjA5NTEwMS4xNi4wLjE3NDYwOTUxMDEuMC4wLjA
Submission	<p>Cadi Ayyad University has developed and deployed low-cost, nature-based sanitation technologies designed for rural and water-scarce communities across the Arab world. The initiative focuses on decentralised wastewater treatment systems, such as Multi-Soil-Layering eco-friendly technology and constructed wetlands that require no energy, use local materials and enable safe reuse of treated water for irrigation. These patented technologies have been successfully implemented in schools, rural villages and university campuses. They have improved health, reduced water consumption and protected groundwater resources. The initiative is anchored in applied research and field-based demonstration. It is supported by specialised academic programmes that have trained hundreds of students and professionals in sustainable water and sanitation management. This integrated model, linking scientific innovation, capacity building and environmental action, demonstrates how a university can act as a catalyst for scalable, inclusive and sustainable solutions to one of the most pressing development challenges in the region.</p>



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Institution Name	Al-Ahliyya Amman University
Submission title or project name	From grape waste to wellness: a university-led innovation in sustainable health entrepreneurship and circular bioeconomy
Nominee / key personnel	Dr Rima Heider Al Omari (project lead); Bushra Akileh (participant); Professor Ghaleb Oriquat; Professor Ahmad Samed Al-adwan; Dr Tariq Alhasan; Dr Omar Abdeljaber; Raya Alsharif
URL	https://www.ammanu.edu.jo/sdo/awardsstaff/from-grape-waste-to-wellness-a-university-led-innovation-in-sustainable-health-entrepreneurship-and-circular-bioeconomy/
Submission	<p>Al-Ahliyya Amman University has led a transformative institutional initiative as part of the European Union-funded BESTMEDGRAPE project, converting grape waste into antioxidant-rich health supplements through green chemistry and interdisciplinary innovation. Spearheaded by the university's Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center, in collaboration with the Faculty of Agricultural Technology and the Pharmaceutical and Drug Research Center, the project resulted in the launch of "H&H", a start-up that embodies circular economy principles and regional entrepreneurship. The initiative aligns with SDGs 3, 8 and 12 and has already diverted more than 1.2 tonnes of waste, created new research jobs, trained over 40 students and filed a regional patent. Through scientific rigour, commercial viability and social responsibility, the project showcases how academic institutions can generate real-world impact. H&H is now scaling regionally, engaging with local farmers and expanding its product line – a demonstration of how higher education can lead sustainable innovation from lab to market, community and beyond.</p>