Background

The most common word in today's world is “innovation”. The pace of innovation is accelerating all the time and it is not only about technology but also about new processes, thinking and strategy. Many developed nations have transformed their innovation agenda by establishing national innovation centers/institutes whose major aims are to promote innovative ideas, fund startups, assist in commercialization of new businesses, and bring in FDI among others. Establishing an efficient innovation eco-system requires a holistic approach and strategies to bring together Science, Technology and Innovation under one platform, which may drive structural transformation in national institutions.

The proposed conference titled, Nurturing an efficient Innovation & Start up Eco System: Role of the National Innovation Centers will bring in experts from various IDB Member Countries' National Innovation Centers as well as international experts and local startups based in Saudi Arabia to discuss various facets of establishing and sustaining an efficient Innovation & Start up Eco System.
The conference will –

- Provide an opportunity for IDB MCs innovation centers to share ideas, challenges, and success stories drawing from their experiences
- Create cooperation and collaboration platform among Innovation Centers
- Explore issues and challenges of startups and young technopreneurs
- Identify how national institutions and Government can support young startups towards building a vibrant startup ecosystem

Sessions:

Four major sessions will be conducted in this conference, which include the following:

**Session: 1  Experts Panel Discussion**

The speakers will represent their innovation centers and will talk about the challenges that they had faced and how did they convert those challenges into opportunities. Moreover, they will also talk about what inspired them to run an innovation center at the national level.

**Session: 2  Startups Fish Bowl**

Selected International and Local Startups will discuss what is currently happening at their countries in fostering entrepreneurship, type of challenges they are facing and how they are overcoming those challenges.

**Session: 3  Mini Workshop with Startups, Participants**

The participants will be divided into 4 groups, where each group will tackle one specific area to develop an efficient Innovation & Startup Ecosystem (i.e. Access to Finance for the young startups/innovators, Commercialization of products, Collaboration etc). Participants in each group will surface their collective knowledge, share ideas and insights and gain a deeper understanding of the subject and propose solutions. Each group will develop a set of concrete, feasible solutions on their own area.

**Session: 4  Closing**

The solutions discussed and developed in the mini workshop will be compiled and shared with everyone in the room, which will be presented to the IDB to consider future advocacy and implementation.
Speakers:

Datuk Mark Rozario was Group Managing Director of a Malaysian listed property group, before stepping down to assume his current role at AIM in 2011. He is charged with driving AIM, a government statutory body chaired by the country’s prime minister, to implement a national innovation strategy. AIM was created to jump start wealth creation through knowledge, technology and innovation to stimulate and develop the innovation eco-system in Malaysia by laying down the foundation of innovation to inspire and produce a new generation of innovative entrepreneurs. Datuk Mark Rozario graduated with a BSc degree in Economics from the London School of Economics and is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Ghada Amer, Professor of Electrical Engineer, is the Vice President the Arab Science and Technology Foundation (ASTF). She is the CEO and the Co-founder of ASTF innovation Lab aims to create the Ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in Arab countries. In 2016 she selected to be one of the Rolex Enterprise Awards for Innovation Jury members. She was named in Jan 2014 as one of “Top 20 Influential Muslim Women Scientist in the World”, by an international committee residing on Muslim-Science. In 2016 she was named one of the “the 500 Most Influential Muslims in 2016”, in the filed of science and technology, by The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre.

Nabeel Koshak is the Dean of Prince Mohammad Bin Salman College (MBSC) of Business and Entrepreneurship at King Abdullah Economic City. Nabeel is the former Vice President for Business and Innovation of Umm Al-Qura University (UQU). He is the Co-Founder and the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Wadi Makkah Company (Seed Fund, Startup Accelerator, and Venture Capital). He is a Member of the Board of Directors of King Abdulaziz and His Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity (Mawhiba). Koshak is a Member of the Executive Committee of King Faisal International Prize and the Board of Directors of Oqal (Angel Investors Network) Jeddah branch.

Fatima Alnaqbi is the Chief Innovation Officer, working at Ministry of Finance, UAE to promote the culture of innovation through a number of initiatives. She is responsible of managing a number of strategic innovation initiative within the core business of the ministry to contribute to supporting the innovation ecosystem in the UAE such as Mohammed Bin Rashid Innovation Fund. Fatima received her Master’s degree in business administration from University of Sharjah and a Diploma in Public Sector Innovation from Cambridge University.
Dr. Milica Begovic is a knowledge and innovation specialist at the UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS in Istanbul. She provides policy and strategic advisory services to Governments and UNDP offices in the region to integrate new methods and approaches to development and policy making, to design new mechanisms of engagement and collaboration with the citizens, and to build new generation of skills in the public sector. She pioneered the use of various alternative finance mechanisms and technologies in UNDP (from social impact bonds and blockchain to crowdfunding and forecast based finance), new data for SDGs, design of policy labs within the Governments and set up of real-time monitoring mechanisms for impact.

Dr. Abdulnasser Minkara is currently the Director of the Knowledge Management & Innovation Department in IDB. With more than 28 years work experience, he is responsible for ensuring that the IDB Group is aligned to its 10-year strategy to become a knowledge-based IDB Group. The scope of his responsibilities also includes: Knowledge Strategy, Knowledge Brokering, Corporate Knowledge Management, Taxonomies, Networking & Partnerships, Innovation exchange, Innovation Exhibition, and Innovation Competition. He also directed in the following areas: Business Improvement, Business Process Management, Organization Management, Corporate Governance Development, Enterprise Quality Management, and Enterprise Project Management. Dr. Minkara also led the Reform of the Saudi Project for the Utilization of Hajj Meat (Adahi).
Startups Speakers:

**Lujain Al-Ubaid**
Tasamy for Social Entrepreneurship, Saudi Arabia

Lujain Al-Ubaid is the co-founder and CEO of Tasamy for Social Entrepreneurship, a nonprofit dedicated to establishing an ecosystem and a safe haven for social entrepreneurs in the region. Previously honored by HRH King Salman for her various volunteering activities conducted during her tenure at AlGhad forum, an esteemed national youth development focused organization in which she was a founding member of the strategic planning team.

**Tamer Taha**
Yomken, Egypt

Tamer Taha is the Founder and CEO of Istebdaa’ LLC., a Cairo-based Innovation Consulting and Management Company, and a PhD Fellow at UNU-MERIT. Istebdaa’ provides services on impact evaluation, feasibility studies and innovation policy and management consulting for different national, and international organizations. Istebdaa’ also owns and manages Yomken.com, a Cairo-based non-profit web-based platform that aims at linking innovative entrepreneurs with the market through crowdsourcing solutions.

**Hattan H. Ahmed**
KAUST, Saudi Arabia

Hattan Ahmed is an Entrepreneurship Collaboration Manager at KAUST Entrepreneurship Center supporting and mentoring existing startups and explore new potential ones across the kingdom. He monitors the entrepreneurial KPIs from the Entrepreneurship Center to measure the impact and file for ranking in international indices and supports building KAUST startup pipeline.

**Saja Muzaini**
Qirtas, Saudi Arabia

Saja is a Product & Graphic Designer and founder of Qirtas. Qirtas seeks to reflect great ancient Muslim inventions in quality designed mechanical puzzle blocks. The aim of their products is to spread the knowledge about the rich scientific heritage of Golden Age in hands-on experiences. Saja studied in Design and Visual Communication at the German Jordanian University

**Arif Zuberi**
MyDoctor, Pakistan

Dynamic and Experienced IT professional, possessing proven software development, team leading and management skills. Arif has over 10 years of experiences in IT sector, ranging from web and enterprise solutions to mobile applications and platform development.

He is a Certified Scrum Master and have hands-on experience in utilizing Agile methodologies including Scrum and Kanban for a number of years.
Registration:

Please go to the following link to register yourself to attend this conference.

https://isdb.eventsair.com/isdb-42/sideneventattend/Site/Register

Attendance to the conference is free. Kindly register yourself before May 8, 2017.
For more information, please send email to – KMI@isdb.org

Organized by: Knowledge Management and Innovation Department, IDB