

QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY

Annual Report 2018



مكتبة قطر الوطنية
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His Highness

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani

Amir of the State of Qatar



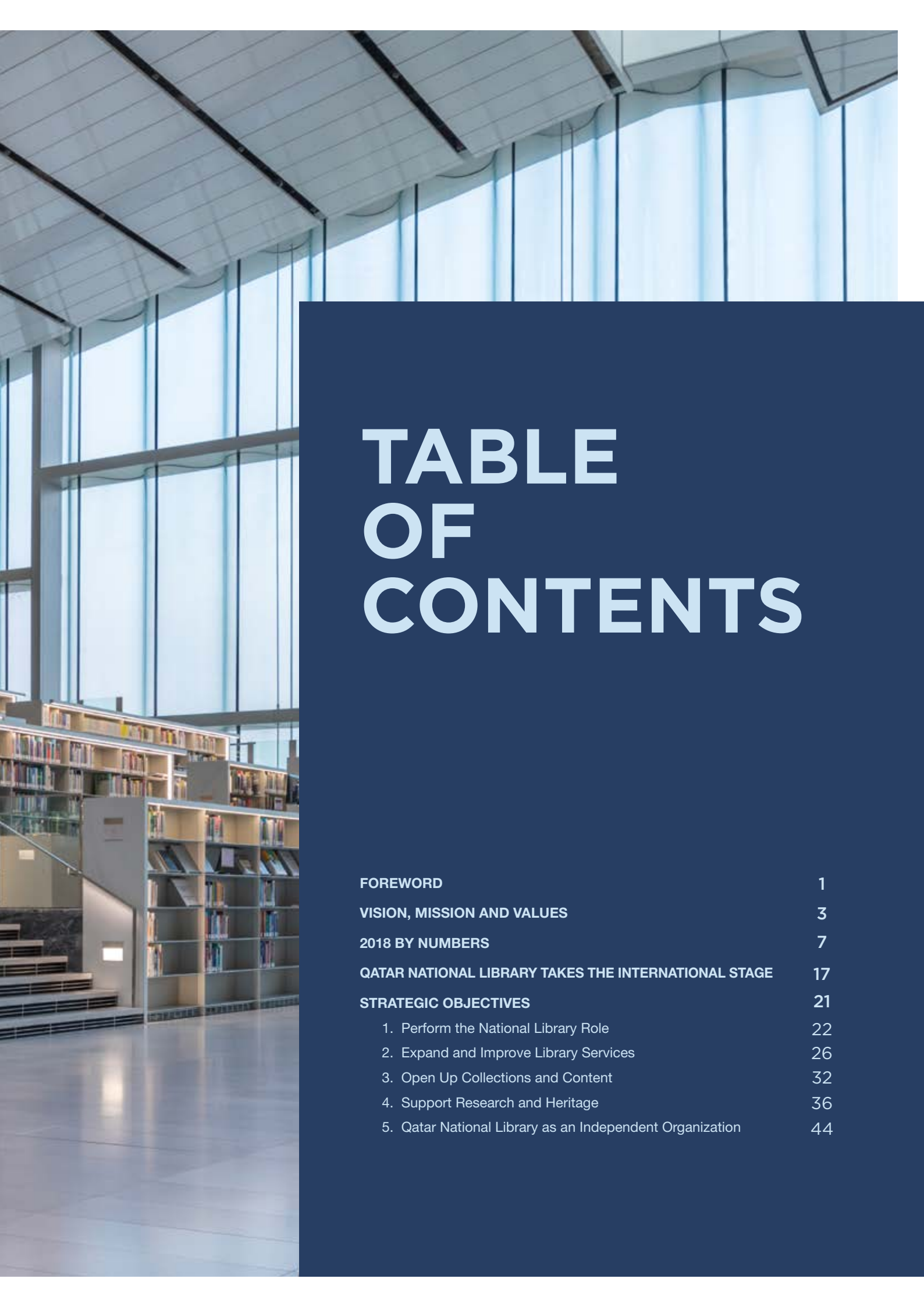
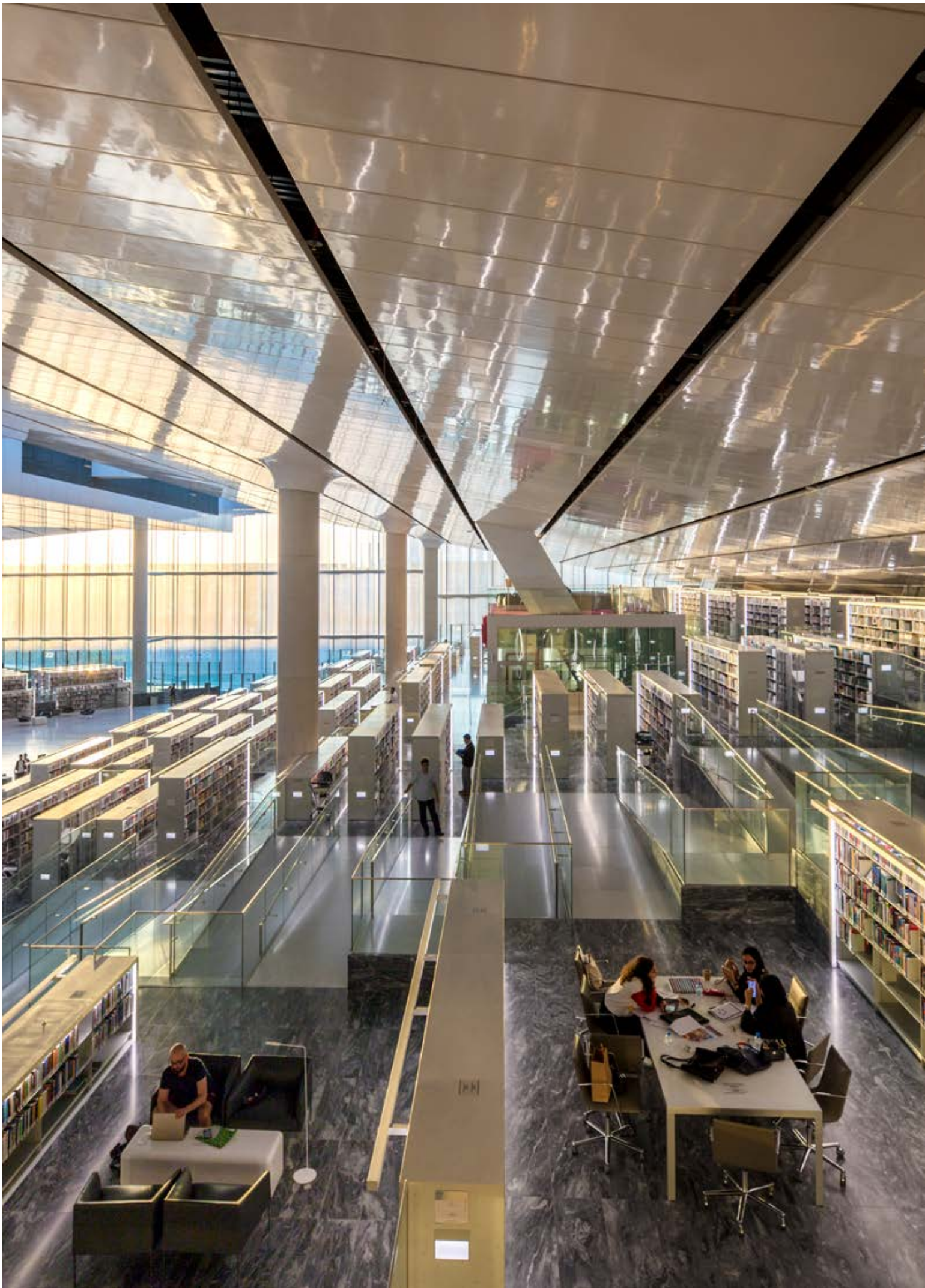


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FOREWORD



I am pleased to present Qatar National Library's first Annual Report for 2018. This year has been an extraordinary one, a year of community transformation and professional achievements.

Like many libraries over the past few centuries, ours came from the dream of one remarkable person who conceived an idea, developed it and persevered to bring it to life. Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation, is that person, the inspiration and brilliance behind the creation of a national library like no other—one which serves the public, supports research and preserves the nation's heritage in all forms for this and future generations.

Architect Rem Koolhaas' illustrious design symbolically represents the Library's vision and mission. The building, at 45,000 square meters, provides more than one million books, ground-breaking technology and unparalleled access

to digital resources, a dedicated library for children and young adults, and even a restaurant and café. It is a stunning creation, yet it is so much more than just a building. It is a public square, a place for the community to learn, and a space where people come together, build friendships, and find their common humanity and culture.

The Library's vision is ambitious and, in many ways, radical. Qatar has chosen to invest in libraries at a time when other nations are not, and we have a great responsibility to lead the way by providing the highest quality library services to all citizens, residents and visitors in the country. I am proud to have the opportunity to lead a team of talented and enthusiastic staff, and we are all delighted to have been the first occupants of such a landmark building, an iconic structure that embodies the openness and democratic values of libraries.

The opening of the Library marks a modern age for libraries in Qatar and the region. At the heart of our mission is the development of a culture of reading and learning that will bloom in the current generation of Qataris and continue far into the future.

Please read about our first-year experiences, activities and the joy of seeing nearly a half-million people join us to partake in what we offer. Whether it has been a storytelling hour, a science club meeting, an IT workshop, a concert by the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra or any of the other 757 events we put on this year, we have been grateful for the enthusiasm with which our users have embraced our offerings.

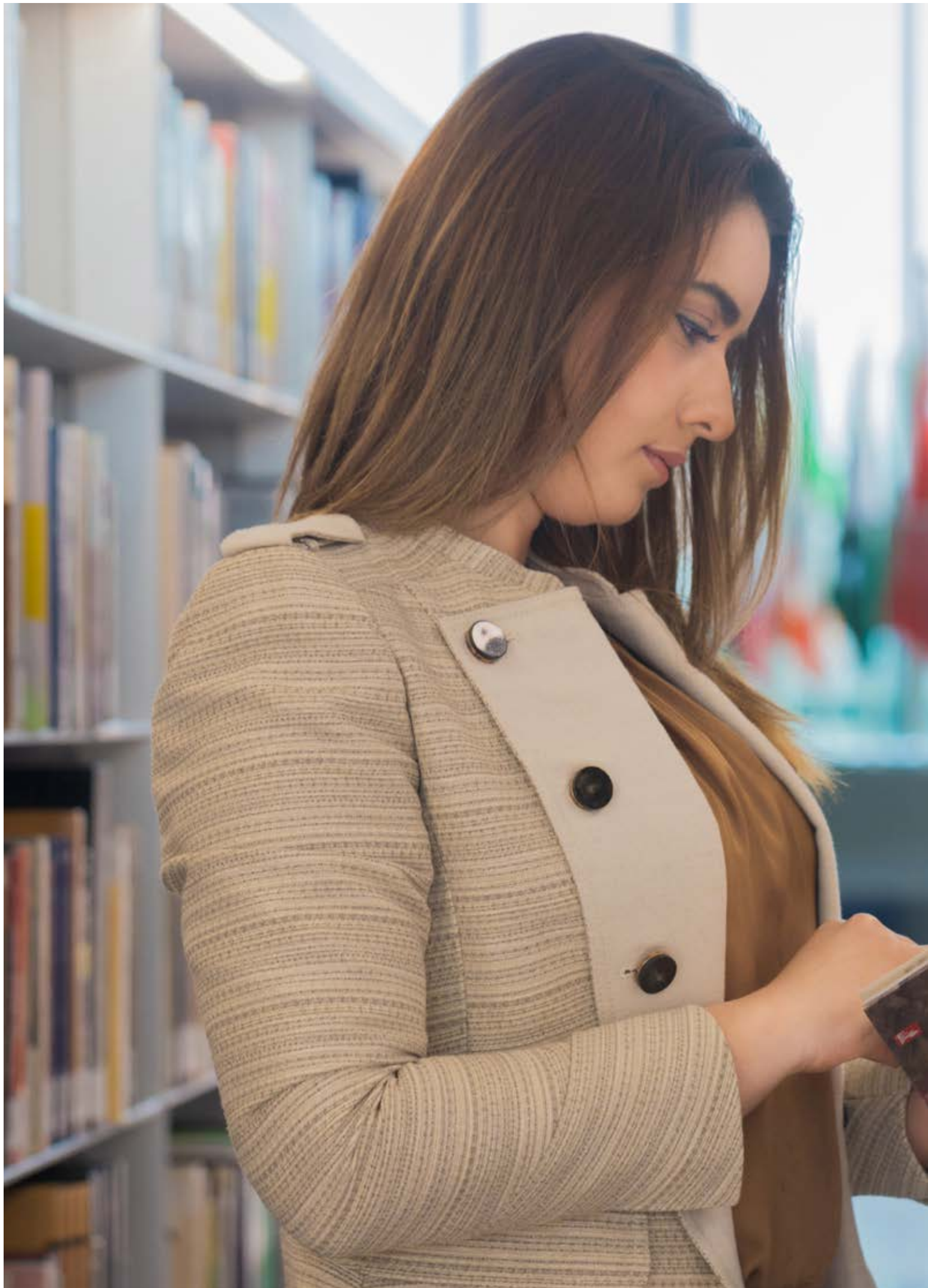
We hope in the coming years to grow our facilities and expertise to deliver the services required by a 21st-century library. We will collect, preserve and cherish the country's intellectual and cultural heritage, and we will share it for the world to enjoy. We will open up our collections and content through our digital platforms and publishing activities. We will strive to constantly raise our standards and bring our services closer to our users—wherever they are from and whatever language they speak.


The opening of this library is a profound tribute to the dedication of Qatar's leadership and the professionalism of our staff, as they have been the cornerstone of our achievements. I thank them for their tremendous efforts during our first year on the world library scene.

May Qatar always be a nation guided by knowledge.

Dr. Sohair Wastawy

Executive Director, Qatar National Library



A photograph of a library with bookshelves. In the foreground, a person's hand is holding a book titled "THE DREYFUS CASE" by "LEWIS AND CLARK". The book cover features a map and the text "THE DREYFUS CASE" and "LEWIS AND CLARK". The background shows rows of bookshelves filled with books, and a window with colorful flags is visible on the left. A semi-transparent blue box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text "VISION, MISSION AND VALUES" in white, bold, uppercase letters.

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES



The Library's Values

Qatar National Library supports the core values of librarianship as a profession to include:

1. **Openness and Transparency** with all patrons and organizations we deal with, where privacy and confidentiality are observed.
2. **Education and Lifelong Learning**, where we strive to offer services that facilitate equitable learning.
3. **Open Access**, where we are committed to free, open, unrestricted access to our collections and services.
4. **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Respect and Fairness**, where our patrons are valued regardless of race, color, sex, gender, religion, disability, age, genetic information, socioeconomic status, or national or ethnic origin, and where their opinions, needs and viewpoints are considered in every decision we make.
5. **Growth and Innovation**, where we encourage creativity, continuous learning, experimentation and the generation of ideas.
6. **Stewardship** of all the resources with which we have been entrusted and are accountable for, ensuring the proper use of state funds and the preservation of the nation's heritage and intellectual output.
7. **Intellectual Freedom**, where we are committed to facilitating the free exchange of information and ideas.

These values underpin all our decisions and our operational approach as we seek to become an institution of learning that promotes discovery and the nourishment of the human spirit.







2018 BY NUMBERS

The past year saw Qatar National Library emerge as an integral part of the community. Spurred by the public opening of the building in November 2017, membership grew significantly, driving a corresponding rise in event attendance and the number of books checked out. Since January 1st 2018:



63,314

new members have registered with the Library to take our total membership to over 128,000.



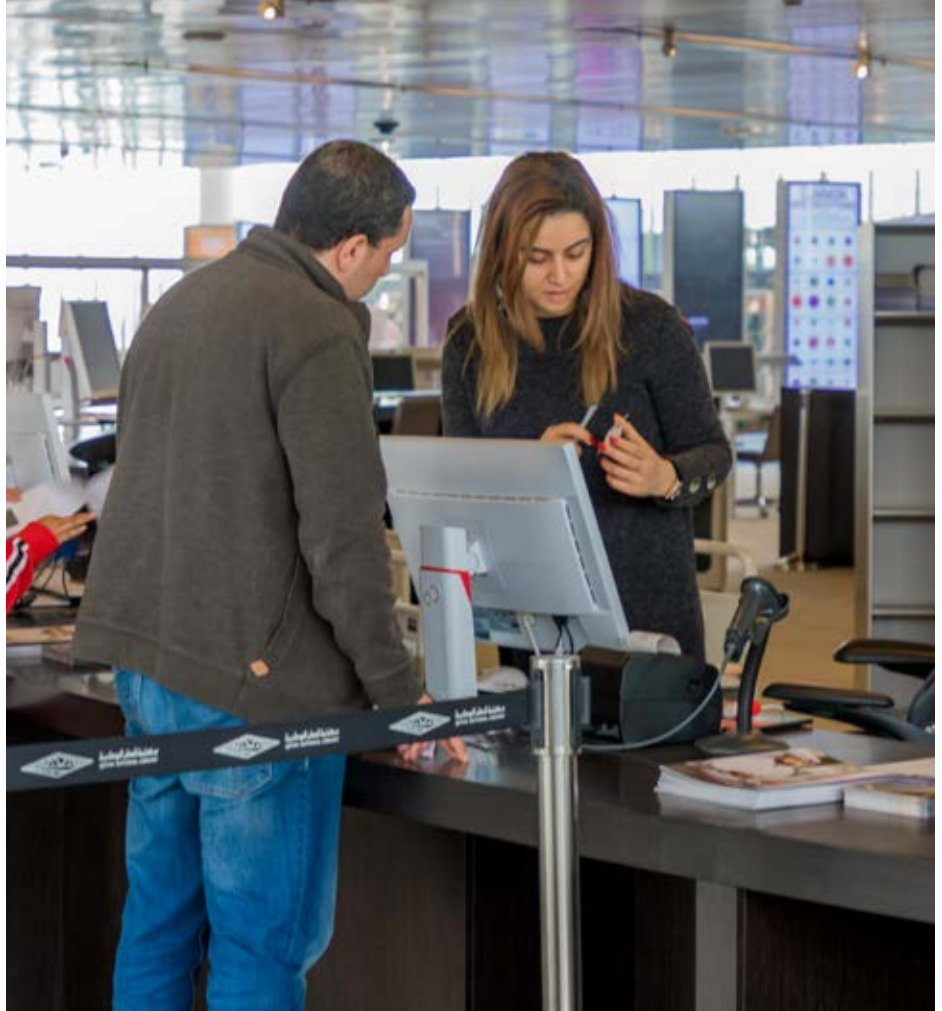
717,009

books checked out by our members, demonstrating a clear passion for reading in the local community. Furthermore, more than half of the books that have been checked out are from the Children's and Young Adults' Library, reflecting our commitment to early literacy efforts.



480,672

visitors through our doors.





The Library's print and electronic collections continue to grow to support our readers. In 2018:



41,461

New titles



29,876

New titles in Arabic



875,000

Volumes



211,244

Titles in Arabic





380,000

ebooks



17,400

ebooks in Arabic



60,000

Journals

A key part of our service to the community comes through events, which range from scientific lectures to technology training to creative workshops. These events provide our members with the opportunity to create, learn, grow and collaborate in limitless ways, and they have responded enthusiastically. Since January 2018:



757

Events



21,300

Event Registered participants



2,000

Tour Visitors



The Qatar Digital Library (QDL) provides worldwide access to millions of pages of historical documents relating to Qatar, the Gulf and the Arab and Islamic worlds. Since January 2018:



350,905

QDL Users



2,523,270

Page views



77,122

PDF downloads



378,209

Website users



4,318,526

Page views

Top locations of website visitors

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| 1. Qatar | 6. Algeria |
| 2. US | 7. Sudan |
| 3. Egypt | 8. Morocco |
| 4. UK | 9. UAE |
| 5. India | 10. Iraq |

Social media has been an important outlet for us to interact with our users, sharing our events and news with them and receiving valuable feedback in turn. During 2018, we grew our followers substantially:



20,117

Instagram followers



26,012

Twitter followers



31,744

Facebook followers



more than

8,000

Users a week on Facebook & Twitter



more than

6,000

Users a week on Instagram



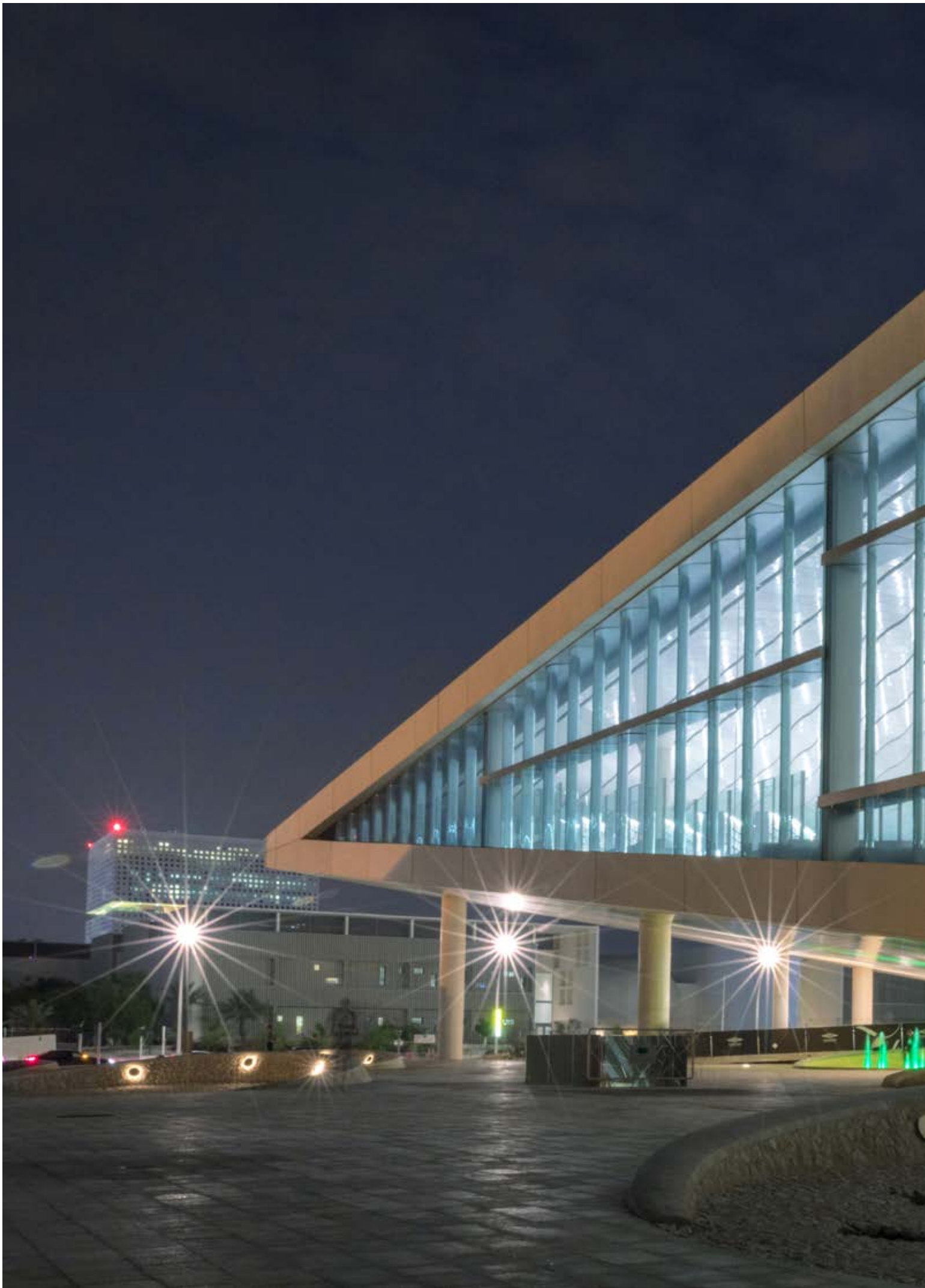
“You are a role model, and we show our pride in you to the whole world. We wish to thank you from our hearts on this day of pride. #You_are_the_pride_of_Qatar”

Maha Al Naimi, via Twitter



“We’re blessed to have a huge database provided by Qatar National Library where we can get free access to online articles and journals.”

Souad Faisal Aqeel, via Twitter



A photograph of the Qatar National Library at night. The building features a prominent glass facade that reflects the ambient light, creating a shimmering effect. The structure is illuminated from within, and the foreground shows a dark, textured ground with some sparse vegetation. A semi-transparent grey box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text.

QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY

**TAKES
THE INTERNATIONAL
STAGE**



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser and other honored guests attended the Grand Opening on 16 April 2018.

Following a soft opening to the public on 7 November 2017, Qatar National Library was officially inaugurated by His Highness the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani on 16 April 2018. To mark the occasion, the Library hosted a prestigious grand opening ceremony with more than 700 invitees, including His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani; Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation; His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of Qatar; His Highness Fahd Bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers in the Sultanate of Oman; Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey Bekir Bozdağ; Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs in Kuwait His Excellency Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah; and Princess Lalla Hasna of Morocco. The ceremony, which was managed by fischerAppelt, was honored with two trophies at the International Festival of Events and Live Communication in November 2018. The event also won the bronze medal for Best Craft at the prestigious BrandEx Awards.

As the national library, we have a responsibility to represent Qatar internationally through partnerships, events and other interactions that build bridges between Qatar and the world. While the grand opening brought world leaders to the Library and drew international attention, throughout 2018 we have continued in this

spirit of collaboration to benefit not only Qatar, but people beyond our borders.

Through cooperation with various international entities, we have been able to host exhibitions and events that explore Qatar and the Gulf's relationship with the larger world. For example, in "Arab-German Tales: Transcending Cultures," we worked with three German institutions to present a comprehensive look at storytelling traditions in Europe and the Arab world, while the British Library lent a fragment of the original Qatari flag for inclusion in an exhibition for the Library's grand opening.

We are also committed to our mandate to support and grow librarianship worldwide. We have numerous partnership agreements with our cultural counterparts around the globe, allowing us to share best practice and exchange knowledge. These prestigious institutions include the British Library; the Bibliotheque national de France; The Koninklijke Bibliotheek in the Netherlands; the National Library of China; the National Library of Turkey; the National Library of Azerbaijan; the National Archives of the Netherlands; the Ottoman State Archives; the French Diplomatic Archives; the Presidential Library in Saint Petersburg, Russia; New York University; and the University of Liverpool.

The Library is a member of leading international organisations such as the International Federation of Library Associations



and Institutions (IFLA); the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR); the Digital Library of the Middle-East (DLME); the Digital Library Federation (DLF); the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL); the Silk Road Library Alliance; the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI); the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF); the Digital Preservation Coalition; and the Global Sustainability Coalition for Open Science Services (SCOSS). Our staff also presented at and played leadership roles in respected library conferences in 2018, including the IFLA World Library and Information Congress and Next Library Berlin.

Our media outreach efforts resulted in 200 stories being published in regional and international media outlets in 29 countries, with another 364 stories published in Qatar's print and online media. Over the past year, the Library played frequent host to international visitors eager to see the model 21st century Library. We welcomed world leaders, including Her Excellency Bidhya Devi Bhandari, President of Nepal; Her Excellency Delcy Rodríguez, Vice President of Venezuela; Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni; and President of Rwanda Paul Kagame. In addition, numerous ambassadors to Qatar from nations around the world toured the building.

Her Excellency Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, Qatar National Library Executive Director Dr. Sohair Wastawy, British Library CEO Roly Keating, and Baroness Tessa Blackstone and other guests celebrate the partnership between the two libraries.







STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Perform the National Library Role



Strategic Objective 1 focuses on how we perform our role as a national library. National libraries are the guardians of the nation's heritage. Consequently, Qatar National Library has certain obligations, including “the collection via legal deposit of the national imprint (both print and electronic) and its cataloguing and preservation; the provision of central services (e.g., reference, bibliography, preservation, lending) to users both directly and through other library and information centres; the preservation and promotion of the national cultural heritage; acquisition of at least a representative collection of foreign publications; the promotion of national cultural policy; and leadership in national literacy campaigns.”¹ Furthermore, national libraries facilitate international programs and projects and support the development of the library profession in their country, whether through staff development or by working with governments to create an optimal legislative environment for library functions.



Our priority in 2018 has been to **expand the National Collection** to be comprehensive and representative of Qatar's national output and meet legal deposit criteria. We are cataloguing the collection using bibliographic data that conforms to international standards in all formats and a wide variety of languages, and the titles are available to users through our online library catalog.

A further objective is to **become a clearinghouse for rights** and provide copyright support to authors. In 2018, we started this work in earnest by commissioning a study to explore the relationship between national copyright law and the functions of the Library. The findings were outlined in a report that includes recommendations for updates to copyright law in Qatar, as well as clarifications regarding the interpretation of the current law in relation to international best practice. This report is now informing the implementation

of rights clearance workflows in the Library. During the year, more than 20 percent of our staff received training—developed in-house—on copyright law and policies at the Library.

We have also ensured our cataloging is in line with **best practice and standards**. As a result, we have been able to share our expertise with other Qatari institutions - for example, we provided Cataloging-in-Publication data to HBKU Press.

Preserving our collection in both print and digital formats is an important objective for the Library. Our Distinctive Collections Directorate includes a Preservation and Conservation (PAC) Center that provides physical services for the entire Library, including the National Collection and the Heritage Library. The unit works with our digitization team to digitize works and





make them available through **our digital repository**. At the end of 2018, we have digitized 1,878,787 pages of Arabic books, 2,165,307 pages of Latin books, 56,317 manuscripts, 15,522 newspapers and 654 maps. As with our cataloging work, our preservation standards are very high thanks to our PAC Center. We have been able to extend our services to other Qatar institutions, such as the Qatar University Library, whose staff we trained in 2018. We have also established contacts with Dar Al Kutub to offer support on preservation issues.

Our connections with other institutions in Qatar are an important part of our national library role as we seek to develop librarianship in the country. In 2018, our Integrated Library Management System (ILMS) services were shared with Dar Al Kutub, the library at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, and the library at the Translation and Interpreting Institute. Extending our expertise and services to these partners provided them with more resilient infrastructure and resource-sharing opportunities—our ILMS now hosts 426,970 item records and 1,564 patron records for these institutions.

We have also focused on **recruitment and internal training to support librarianship**. We recruited 26 new staff during 2018 and increased the number of professional librarians with a Master in Library and Information Science to 32. We placed an emphasis on professional development by providing five group training programs at the Library for 124 participants and individual training sessions for 31 staff. We also facilitated professional development with international partners, with 44 staff participating in international conferences and six undertaking training visits at libraries and other cultural institutions in the UK, Germany and South Africa.

¹ <https://www.ifla.org/national-libraries>

Heritage Library Historical Photographs

Photography brings the Heritage Library's collection to life and helps us promote our resources of special interest to Qatar. In 2018, we grew our collection of historical photographs of Qatar through targeted acquisitions. We acquired a collection of photographs of healthcare in Qatar in the 1970s and prepared them for future exhibitions. We also acquired 2,000 digitized slides of traditional buildings in Qatar as surveyed by a French archaeological team in the 1970s, as well as a number of historical photographs of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf countries. These items are available to the public in our Heritage Library reading room, where demand for them has been growing over the past year.



Membership

Anyone with a valid Qatar ID can become a member of the Library by registering either in person or online. Members can borrow up to four books at a time for up to 21 days and can renew the loan up to two times unless the book is recalled. They can also check out audiovisual media for up to seven days each, and access our online resources and databases from anywhere. Memberships can be managed online through our website, www.qnl.qa. During 2018, we witnessed an extremely high demand for membership and added 63,314 new members, taking our total membership to over 128,000—a phenomenal feat for an institution that has only been open since November 2017. Library staff introduce all new members to the advantages of membership and any related policies, show them how to use the self-checkout and book return stations, and explain how to find books on the shelves.



Social Media

With 99% of Qatar's online population using social media on a regular basis, it is an important outlet for us to interact with our users by sharing events and news and receiving feedback. During 2018, we grew our followers substantially: 20,117 people follow us on Instagram, 26,012 on Twitter and 31,744 on Facebook. On average, we reach more than 8,000 users a week on Facebook and Twitter, and more than 6,000 on Instagram. We receive about 50 positive mentions and about 50 direct messages per week across those three platforms, meaning at least 100 unique users engage directly with us by either mentioning us in their posts or sending us a message.

Training for Librarians under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education

To support the development of librarianship in government schools, the Library provided training specifically to librarians working under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. During 2018, librarians from our Children's and Young Adults' Library trained more than 66 librarians from 66 different government schools. The training exposed the librarians to effective ways to transform the traditional school libraries into inspirational learning spaces. The librarians attending also toured the Library and studied the children's and young adults' collections and spaces to take back implementable ideas to their schools.



2. Expand and Improve Library Services

Strategic Objective 2 is concerned with improving the Library's services for the future. Much of our first year was focused on understanding our users' needs and how to best deliver services, and we will focus heavily on **impact assessment and evaluation** in the next year. However, in 2018, we have been able to effectively increase our programming to **reach multiple communities** that had not previously engaged with a library. We have done this by holding regular events and activities that educate and inform, with a particular focus on encouraging creativity in our youngest users. In total, we have hosted 757 events with more than 21,300 registered participants.

Children and young adults are among our most passionate users. During 2018, our Children's and Young Adults' Library provided a wide range of services to children, their parents and caregivers, as well as to school educators and librarians. Through tailored programs, workshops, book collections and a specialized library space, we provided inspiring learning opportunities for these different target groups. There are dedicated days every week to welcome school classes and their teachers on learning trips to the Library, and we offer specific programs by engaging with groups such as the Young Mothers Group, Sumaisma Youth Center and the Step by Step Center for Special Needs. We also extended our services beyond the Library by donating books to Maktaba Children's Library, the Child Development Center at Hamad Medical Corporation and schoolchildren in Greece, Lebanon and Jordan. To increase our presence in Qatar outside of Education City, we worked closely with Kidzania to set up a program that allows children to try librarianship as a profession and encourages visits to the Library.

To reach all parts of the adult population, the Library's Research and Learning department offered programs focused on four themes:



lifelong learning, capacity building, social engagement, and culture and heritage. More than 9,600 adults attended these programs, which included cultural and heritage events such as performances by the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra and the young winners of the First Qatar National Music Competition; live readings at our Poetry Night; talks at our Qatari Authors Forum; and lectures such as "The Vision of the Leader: Founder of Qatar." Capacity building programs, such as our Postgraduate Peer Support Network, provided students with the research and mentoring to complete their degrees. We collaborated with publishers such as Karger and Elsevier to help researchers learn how to navigate the complex publication process for peer-reviewed journals.

Our commitment to lifelong learning was demonstrated by Earth Talks and Sustainability lectures presented by Nobel laureate Dr. Rajendra Pachauri and Dr. Vandana Shiva, respectively; an etiquette lecture presented by Aisha Al Tamimi; and book launches for local authors. The weekly Knitting and Crochet Circle and monthly Arabic and English book clubs highlight our social engagement events.



All of our programs aim to not only develop knowledge, but also to build social capital by fostering a sense of community and supporting social and professional networks.

A key objective in 2018 was to **expand access to our services through outreach** activities with groups in Qatar. Since the grand opening in April, we have hosted 11 such activities, which reached 599 external participants. To raise awareness of the excellent facilities at the Library for people with disabilities, we held talks for groups such as the Qatar Social and Cultural Center for the Blind and the Qatar Institute for Speech and Hearing. Other activities targeted students and educators through our participation in science

festivals, fairs and conferences, including the Qatar Sports Club Youth Festival, the Qatar STEAM Fair at Loydence Academy, and Qatar Foundation's Teaching and Learning Forum. At the Youth Festival and STEAM Fair, we held mini-workshops and hands-on activities for students and teachers to explore our Innovation Stations. Our Innovation Stations were also the topic of our presentation at the Teaching and Learning Forum in October, where we also demonstrated other Library services.

In a wired country such as Qatar, where 99 percent of the population is connected to the internet, the **delivery of new digital information services** has been a crucial objective for the Library. One of the unexpected success stories of 2018 was a huge increase in the use of ebooks. By August, there were almost one million downloads from our ebook platforms. The number of downloaded audiobooks alone grew from 70 in 2017 to 2,674 in 2018. As part of a library-wide effort, we worked to improve this service by increasing promotion of our ebook collection and inviting vendors to train staff on ebook platforms. Following careful usage analysis, we renegotiated our ebook platform fees to allow us to provide more content for better value and added 1,034 new titles to the ebook collection. In partnership with the MADA Assistive Technology Center, we also set up an agreement with Bookshare to provide people with print disabilities in Qatar access to more than 600,000 books in accessible digital formats.

The success of our events and outreach activities showed that we must **increase our capacity** over the coming years to deliver what our users require. Throughout 2018, we took several steps to address these future needs. We began studying a proposal to expand the Children's Library due to high demand, worked with Qatar Foundation to finalize plans to enhance our digitization capacity, and carried out a thorough use assessment of existing office space to propose and implement a new plan to accommodate the new staff that the Library needs in order to grow.

The Book Club for the Blind and other Services for People with Disabilities

Recognizing that people with disabilities are an integral and vibrant part of our community, we expanded and improved our services to this important user group in 2018. We organized 24 programs and activities in Arabic and English for people with disabilities during the year, reaching 1,260 participants with different disabilities. A major achievement was the establishment of the Book Club for the Blind, which launched in conjunction with April's grand opening and meets each month to discuss a different book. The club provides inclusive and equal opportunities for social communication, enables access to the Library's resources and services, and fulfills the needs of visually impaired users.



The Science Book Forum

In October, the Library established the Science Book Forum (SBF), an initiative to encourage science reading among Qatar's youth. The forum aims to encourage scientific curiosity and critical thinking skills for students through public forums with influential scientists and authors. These events let participants discuss books and scientific papers on crucial topics of general interest and address scientific misconceptions. We also host monthly follow-ups where readers can meet scientists and the authors of the books discussed in the forums. The Library has held three SBF events in 2018, on space exploration, science as a motor for peace and, in November 2018, a live stream of NASA's Insight spacecraft landing on Mars. These three events reached more than 1,000 students from independent and international schools in Qatar. The Library is the first Arab library with a science forum to help spread science literature regionally and internationally.



Nationwide Competitions

The Library hosted two major competitions that spread knowledge, nurtured imagination and cultivated creativity. In October, we held the first nationwide Chess Olympiad, with the participation of 30 independent schools in Qatar. We also hosted the 11th nationwide Robotics Competition in November, with the participation of 200 independent schools. These competitions fostered intensive learning for young adults and promoted science, technology, engineering and mathematics education. Participants were also introduced to the services and programs the Library provides to improve their teamwork, and their creative, technical and computational thinking skills.

Stargazing at the Library

The Heritage Library has a remarkable collection of historical astronomy manuscripts and tools. To raise awareness of these resources among families, we organized an astronomy activity in April in connection with the Library's grand opening and in partnership with the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute. Participants saw our incredible astrolabe manuals from the 17th century and our oldest astrolabe, made in Andalusia in the 12th century, and created their own astrolabes. Outside of the Library, astronomers and our staff helped participants to view the stars through telescopes and correlated the night skies with our original sky maps to show that the stars they were viewing had been discovered and drawn by Arab scientists several centuries earlier.



Weekly Knitting and Crochet Circle

Our weekly Knitting and Crochet Circle has become a successful example of knowledge-sharing and community-building. While some participants came expecting only to knit, they soon learned they could obtain a membership card, and started attending other outreach events. One knitter, Aisha Al Ali, had been looking for a knitting group to join since 2009. When she found our group, she also found the opportunity to do something she loves: teach. She prepares the whole week to help others learn. Other participants have said that they are most grateful for the beautiful and comfortable mix of participants from around the world. One expat joyfully shared that a Qatari national picked her up and took her to a yarn shop. As relationships developed around yarn, needles and conversation, wedding invitations were extended, gifts were exchanged and a sense of belonging grew. The Circle is proving to be an excellent opportunity to engage members of the Qatar community with a wide range of backgrounds and interests.



Book Clubs

A user survey early in the year identified that the creation of Library book clubs was a high priority for our users. Building on this and feedback from existing Doha book clubs in need of multiple copies of print books and a space to meet, we began to provide support for users who wanted to start their own book club. We created leaflets on “How to Start a Book Club,” “How to Lead a Book Discussion” and “How to be a Book Club Member” in English and Arabic, and 94 Arabic and 264 English book club kits were assembled for private book clubs to check out for a six-week period. The Library now hosts two monthly book clubs, the English Fiction Book Club and Readers and Opinions (Arabic fiction). Our Arabic Nonfiction Book Club will launch in 2019.





Innovation Stations

Some of our most inventive services that foster creativity, inspiration, collaboration and engagement are delivered through our Innovation Stations, which provide users with superior technology and equipment to learn and express themselves. The stations host 3D printers and maker tools; green, blue and black screen photo equipment; and a fully equipped music studio with recording equipment. Importantly, Library staff also provide workshops and hands-on training to help users familiarize themselves with the equipment and the software that powers it. In 2018, the Innovation Stations provided 41 programs in which 989 participants took part, including workshops on 3D modeling, photography, music and digital production. The photography and music studios are particularly popular, having been booked 867 times for individual and group projects since January.



3. Open Up Collections and Content



Strategic Objective 3 is to open up the Library's collections and content. With over one million printed books, more than 380,000 ebooks, and 200 databases giving access to 60,000 electronic journals, it is crucial that we find ways to enable our users to perform their reading and research anytime, anywhere.

Fundamental to this is the **provision of world-class digital platforms**. In 2018 our new website offered online services for members and non-members, including online registration and access to all of our electronic resources. The website is the first point of electronic contact for our members and users not only in Qatar, but regionally and internationally as well. Since its launch, the website has received 378,209 visits, resulting in 4,318,526 page views. A significant number

of these visits come from the US, the UK, India and many Arab countries, reflecting the value of our content to international users.

Providing digital access is one way of opening up our collections to users, but we have also focused on physical access. We welcomed more than 2,000 visitors on tours of the Library in 2018, and our guides have placed a specific emphasis on explaining the benefits of library use and membership in terms of the resources that can be enjoyed onsite and remotely. Exhibitions are another way that we can expose visitors to our collections, and in the last year, we organized three major physical exhibitions and one digital exhibition, which were attended by more than 64,000 visitors. Our permanent heritage exhibition presents more than 400 of the Heritage Library's most

important items, and the exhibition “Arab and German Tales: Transcending Culture,” hosted under the framework of the Qatar-Germany Year of Culture, in cooperation with three German museums, showed the similarities between the folktales of Europe and Arabia. In November, we opened an exhibition illustrating the history of Syria from 1918 to 1946, when it was governed by the French Mandate. Throughout the year, visitors could use our 11 digital totems to interact in English and Arabic with our first digital exhibition, “Information is Beautiful,” by British data visualization expert David McCandless.

Another key objective for us this year was to expand, **preserve and promote Qatar’s research outputs**. One of the key ways to do this is through **open standards and policies** such as open access. The Library’s open access program is at the forefront of a global movement to accelerate the transition from the traditional subscription model to research publications with an open access model. This will increase the impact of research by making research publications available for free for other researchers around the world to read and reuse. In 2018, we negotiated six agreements with top publishers, enabling Qatar researchers to publish under open access guidelines. In addition, our Open Access Author Fund continues to support publication with publishers outside of these agreements. As over 20 percent of Qatar’s research output is now open access, we also set up workflows to ensure that all of these publications are archived in our repository, and we are working in partnership with Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) to archive and make available all QNRF-funded publications and research data.

We are also building open access principles into **QNL Press, our own publishing program**. Under development during 2018, QNL Press will use emerging technologies and the extensive publishing expertise found across the Library’s staff to facilitate universal access to its publications as a contribution to the region and wider global society. Our first book, a catalog of the permanent Heritage Library exhibition co-authored by a dozen Library staff members, was published in April 2018, and discussions took place throughout the year to develop the initial model and content for the press to publish in 2019 and beyond.

When users are unable to access our print or digital content, the responsibility falls

on the Library to overcome obstacles and **advocate solutions to problems**. Visually impaired users are often unable to find the materials they need in accessible format due to copyright restrictions on copying and sharing content. In 2018, we set out to change that by working with the government to support the accession of Qatar to the Marrakesh Treaty for the Blind and Visually Impaired. In the week prior to the Library’s grand opening, Qatar’s Council of Ministers agreed to support our request, and in September, His Highness the Amir signed the instrument of ratification. When the Treaty comes into force in January 2019, all users of the Library, regardless of disability, will have equal access to books, and we will be in a position to make more Arabic books available in accessible format. In anticipation of this, we liaised with key stakeholders in Qatar representing the blind and people with disabilities, educators and publishers to discuss and plan the implementation of the Treaty.



Open Access Week

Open access is a core value of the Library because it offers a sustainable and equitable solution to equal access to information. The Library delivered a program of events during International Open Access Week in October to promote awareness of open access and facilitate discussions around how the Library can support equitable access to knowledge. We delivered a workshop to local publishers and researchers on how open access can be used to make local research more visible globally. Local students and librarians attended a screening of the film *Paywall: The Business of Scholarship, complete with popcorn*. To conclude the week, neuroscientist Hilal Lashuel set the scene for a public panel discussion on the role of the Library by presenting his views on the importance of open access to research.

Postgraduate Peer Support Network

A librarian in the Research and Learning team, a postgraduate student himself, realized that many students he engaged with were emotionally and mentally drained by the demands of postgraduate research. Many struggled to obtain quality resources and were sometimes confused about research methodologies and their professors' expectations. In response, we formed the Postgraduate Peer Support Network to provide intellectual and emotional support for students engaged in, or aspiring to engage in, master's and PhD programs. Library staff now facilitate monthly discussions on topics such as research methodologies, writing a research proposal, citation management tools, where to find ministry research reports and statistics, and research strategies. The group also created an opportunity for students with shared experiences to impart knowledge and provide moral support for one another.



Information is Beautiful

The Library opened its inaugural digital exhibition, "Information is Beautiful" in April. Curated by data visualization expert David McCandless, the exhibition provides users with an innovative learning and educational experience, bringing to life information and data too complex or abstract to grasp any other way but visually. The Library's 11 interactive digital totems display visual data in both English and Arabic, and visitors are able to fully engage with the unique visualizations and infographics to compare and contrast interesting facts and figures on subjects such as reading in the Gulf, social media in the Middle East, Qatar and world empires.





QNL Press

The Library has an in-house production and print shop that provides high-quality design support for all of our activities. QNL Press moved to the Library from the HBKU Digital Print House in 2017 and brought with it an accomplished team, cutting-edge technology and a print production facility that is one of the best in Qatar. The resources of QNL Press allow Library staff to be truly creative with activity planning, using a variety of options for digital printing, large format printing, 3D structures and the production of gift items. During 2018, QNL Press delivered more than 160 design projects, 408 in-house print production projects and 40 outsourced production projects. These projects included the Library's first publication, a catalog for the Heritage Library exhibition *It All Began With "Read": Unfolding The Arabs' History*. In addition to providing design solutions, QNL Press also spent the year preparing to add an open access publishing component to its role. In 2019, we envision that new publications relating to Qatar's heritage and history will be published under the QNL Press imprint.

4. Support Research and Heritage

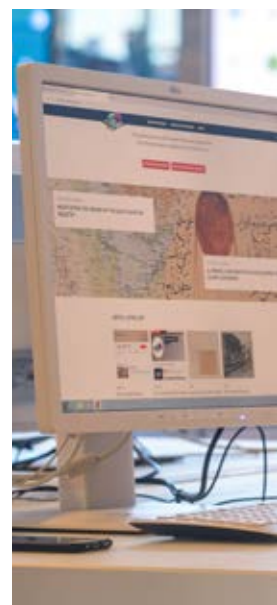
Strategic Objective 4 addresses a key responsibility of any national library: the preservation and promotion of research and cultural heritage. Qatar is in an unusual circumstance, whereby a large number of records relating to its history are in the possession of other countries. In this context, our main priority has been to forge partnerships with cultural institutions abroad to develop projects that can **repatriate these records to the Qatari public** in a digitized form.

The Library increased its partnership activity throughout 2018, with a specific focus on libraries and archives holding historical records on Qatar and the Gulf. We signed work agreements with the British Library, Ottoman State Archives, and University of Liverpool that helped make available hundreds of thousands of digital records relating to Qatar and increased awareness of the country's cultural heritage through the Qatar Digital Library (QDL). Memoranda of Understanding were signed with the national libraries of France, the Netherlands, China, Azerbaijan and Turkey, along with the National Archives of the Netherlands, the French Diplomatic Archives, and the Presidential Library in Saint Petersburg, Russia. These agreements will enable us **preserve and conserve cultural heritage relating to Qatar** and host the resulting digitized collections on the QDL where they will support digital scholarship projects about the country. We also entered into advanced negotiations with the Government of India to digitize records in the National Archive of India and Maharashtra State Archive.

To **increase access** to our digital repatriation work, we have continued to develop and promote the QDL, which we maintain through a partnership between Qatar Foundation and the British Library. The QDL hosts digitized records that result from our partnerships,



and also digitized material from our own collections on Qatar. In 2018, 350,905 users visited the QDL, resulting in 2,523,270 page views. With more than 1.5 million digitized pages available for everyone in the world to access, completely free, the QDL has been highly successful and its usage has resulted in 77,122 PDF downloads. This worldwide digital platform is transforming people's understanding of the history of the Gulf and the Middle East, **generating new content**, and is increasing awareness of the Arab and Islamic cultural and intellectual legacy. The QDL has supported a number of academics and students with their ongoing research and is regularly being used by UCL-Qatar's Professor of Arabian and Middle Eastern Archaeology for his research project on *The Origins of*



Doha and Qatar, which specifically combines historical research with archaeological excavations and surveys. For this research, having access to the historical framework is imperative, and using primary documents wherever possible is ideal. The QDL makes this possible in a highly efficient way.

As **digital scholarship** evolves, it is not enough to simply make content available online—it must be enriched. Digital



humanities is fast becoming a growth area for national libraries, as the application of digital technologies to heritage materials enables libraries to derive more value from their collections and to work more closely with researchers to gain new insights into cultural heritage. We are beginning to explore this area in our mission to support research and heritage, and in June 2018, the Library engaged in a pilot project with Aga Khan University in London, to develop digital methods for machine-reading Arabic manuscripts. The pilot has delivered a machine-readable corpus of texts relating to the *sīra* and software to detect the reuse of passages of text across historical Arabic manuscripts. Under the guidance of a local advisory committee of experts, this pilot will become a full project in 2019 and will deliver a virtual reading room for Arabic manuscripts, as well as becoming a focal point for engagement with the local computer science and Islamic history communities.

Support for research and learning underpins all of the Library's activities. International researchers visiting the Library who use our Wi-Fi are able to use Eduroam, an international roaming service that provides researchers, teachers and students easy, secure and free network access when visiting an institution other than their own. Our librarians have collaborated with organizations from many sectors of the local community to provide more than 100 information literacy sessions and offer research support. Throughout 2018, we collaborated with entities such as Qatar Development Bank, Qatar Business Incubation Center, Qatar Central Bank, Joaan Bin Jassim Military College, Qatar Football Association, Aspetar, Ras Laffan Emergency and Safety College, Stenden University-Qatar, Qatar Community College, and many more colleges and universities to provide tours, resources, research support and information sessions. In addition to formal research instruction, librarians provided advanced research consultations and research support for approximately 1,000 visitors at the Information Desk and online through the Ask QNL Librarians service. Librarians also engaged in collection development to provide electronic and print resources in English, Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Tamil, Urdu, Malayalam and Korean.

The British Library and Qatar National Library Partnership

In 2012, the Library began the implementation of a partnership with the British Library to digitize the latter's historical records on Qatar and the Gulf for use by scholars and students around the world. Since then, we have digitized more than 1.5 million pages and made them accessible for free through the Qatar Digital Library (QDL). We completed Phase Two (2015-18) of the QDL project in 2018 and surpassed one million users and more than ten million total page views. The impact of making this world-class resource freely available for everyone can be seen in the continued growth of users, as well as the publication of expert articles on the Islamic world, Arab cultural heritage, and the modern history of Qatar and the Gulf. In this context, we signed a new work package agreement in April 2018 to extend the British Library partnership by another three years, to 2021. While the material digitized in the first two phases of the partnership has been available to the public since 1979, the bulk of the material to be digitized in Phase Three has not seen the light of day since the 19th century and promises to shed new light on the history of Qatar and the Gulf. Phase Three will begin in January 2019.



Her Excellency Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, CEO of Qatar Foundation, toured the British Library in October 2018.



IFLA PAC Center

Since 2015, the Library's Preservation and Conservation (PAC) Center has been the official International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) PAC Centre for Arab countries. It plays a significant role by advising and supporting conservation activities in all Arab libraries through its advanced facilities—such as a mass de-acidification machine—and the expertise of its conservators. In 2018, we organized four advanced courses to train more than 40 conservators from the Arab region. These courses, along with the everyday tasks of sharing up-to-date technical information, were extremely well received in the Arabic world and led to more than 300 requests for training and technical assistance from MENA countries. The Center has also developed interesting research programs using its new equipment to analyze the material of manuscripts in our collection. We have undertaken a program of systematic chemical analysis of the Arab pigments and inks used in early Islamic manuscripts, including the rare Blue Qur'an, where we have been able to identify the dyes, the composition of the gold ink and some erased words.





Services to Partners

The Library's facilities and expertise have proved attractive to numerous national and international partners seeking to digitize their collections or improve their cataloging. During 2018, we implemented a number of partnership agreements to help other institutions with often difficult projects. These include:

- a. **New York University (NYU):** This joint project applies optical character recognition to more than 8,000 Arabic books in NYU Library's digital collections, which will then also be made available on our own online platforms.
- b. **Qatar Museums:** We have begun a project to digitize 109 of the rarest books and manuscripts in the Museum of Islamic Art collection, and loaned many digital documents to the new National Museum of Qatar.
- c. **Doha Historical Dictionary of Arabic Language:** We are providing support in the area of optical recognition of Arabic

characters, which will help researchers working on the etymology and meaning of Arabic words.

- d. **Ottoman Archive:** Our digitization team has processed 1,600 digital images of heritage documents related to the Gulf region from the Ottoman Archive, which will be made available on our online platforms.
- e. **Qatar Traditional Architecture Photographic Collection:** The Library digitized a collection of 1,793 photographs from a 1985 French archeological expedition to Qatar that produced a comprehensive record of traditional 19th century Qatari architecture.
- f. **Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) services:** We are providing CIP services for all books published by HBKU Press. The program catalogs books in advance of publication and enables publishers and libraries to be aware of forthcoming publications.





The Library hosted the Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) General Assembly 2018 in November.



EIFL Conference

In November, library and information professionals from 37 countries convened at the Library for the Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) General Assembly 2018. EIFL works with libraries to promote knowledge sharing and library consortiums, and to build continuing education networks worldwide. This major librarianship event focused on supporting access to knowledge, research and learning in developing and transitional economies. One of our prime objectives is to increase access to quality information and provide a wealth of information resources, and the EIFL General Assembly provided a valuable opportunity for our library professionals to meet leading experts from other countries, share information and expand their networks.

The Qatari Authors Forum

Influential Qatari authors Ahmed Abdelmalek, Mozah Al Malki and Abdulla Essa shared their experiences at the Qatari Authors Forum in October, moderated by creative writer Amal Abdulmalik. The participants imparted their knowledge and engaged with aspiring writers in the audience, motivating the next generation of Qatari authors. The evening also served as an opportunity for writers to meet and network with professionals in the field. We will conduct the forum on an annual basis to generate an interactive dialogue between Qatari authors from different disciplines that will inspire our users.



Gulf Architecture Conference and Traditional Gulf Architecture Week

In April, we held our first Traditional Gulf Architecture Week at the Library, in partnership with Qatar University's Department of Architecture and the University of Liverpool's School of Architecture. Around 100 participants interested in Qatar's architecture, heritage and material culture met with some of the world's leading experts on the subject and discussed the fascinating history of the region's architecture and its influences. The event included an exhibition of historical photographs of traditional Qatari architecture, as well as a public conference with lectures on the region's fascinating pre-oil architectural heritage.





QNL-UNESCO Partnership

To support the preservation of cultural heritage, we signed an agreement with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in July to implement a joint 18-month project entitled “Supporting Documentary Heritage Libraries in the Arab Region.” The project will strengthen the role of the Library and UNESCO in preserving the rich cultural heritage present in libraries across the Arab region, which is of critical importance worldwide. It will increase knowledge of the region’s heritage by mapping collections, holding capacity-building training sessions and workshops for documentary heritage preservation practitioners based in countries in crisis, and providing guidance on the preventive conservation of documentary heritage in emergency situations.



5. Qatar National Library as an Independent Organization

The Library has gone through an evolution of concept and function. While it started as a Central Library for Education City, it quickly moved to become a national library with a mandate to serve the public and universities.

A decision was taken to limit the functions to national, research, and public as neither the funding nor space will allow the acquisition of material for every discipline in Qatar's academic institutions. This also allows the Library to focus on its national mission and better serve the public.

The highest authority in any country always grants the National status to a library where the legal deposit collection is kept. The Library was granted that status in March 2018 by an Amiri Decree.

Ever since its conception, the Library has been created and supported by Qatar Foundation (QF). Under the law, QF is considered a private foundation for public benefit. However, a national entity



such as the Library must be part of the national infrastructure and cannot be privately owned. As such, a legal separation would be needed even if management of the Library takes a different form, with QF as a service supplier.

This entanglement requires clarification of the administrative structure, a separate financial system, assets transfer or management, and a way to recognize how an entity that was created and owned by a private foundation becomes a nationalized entity.

QF and the Library are working to identify consultancy companies that specialize in separation operations. The Options will be evaluated and shared with the Library's Board of Trustees for input. When the process is completed, the suggested resolutions will also be discussed with the Board for action.

