

10 Charitable Middle Eastern Family Foundations

Arabs are among the most charitable people in the world. Several Middle Eastern family businesses have now set up foundations that help society by promoting education, arts and culture or job creation by financing entrepreneurs. The following 10 family foundations have set up lasting institutions to address a diverse range of issues.

Sulaiman Bin Abdulaziz Al Rajhi Charitable Foundation

Founder: Sulaiman Bin Abdulaziz Al Rajhi

Country: Saudi Arabia

Focus areas: Community Development

Founded in: 1983

Sulaiman Al Rajhi established a private institution for charitable activities in 1983. In 2011, he transferred half his wealth to the Sulaiman Bin Abdulaziz Al Rajhi Charitable Foundation. At that time Al Rajhi's wealth was an estimated at \$7 billion according to Forbes, making his \$3.5 billion donation one of the biggest ever by an Arab philanthropist. The foundation supports approximately 1,200 charity projects in 13 regions every year, including more than 130 cities and towns across the Kingdom. Projects are selected based on the needs of the Saudi society.

Juma Almajid Center For Culture And Heritage

Founder: Juma Al Majid

Country: U.A.E.

Focus areas: Art and Culture

Founded in: 1989

Juma Al Majid established his foundation to be a cultural reference point in the U.A.E., attracting researchers and lovers of heritage. A lot of the foundation's work is focused around the preservation, processing and restoration of manuscripts, which they also provide to governmental and private institutions. The center has 8,000 original manuscripts that have to be stored at 15-20 degrees celsius, with humidity between 50-60%. It has 2,800 photocopied manuscripts, 9,000 microfilms and 330,000 digital manuscripts. The center's library has over 350,000 titles.

BMCE Bank Foundation

Founder: Othman Benjelloun

Country: Morocco

Focus areas: Education

Founded in: 1995

The BMCE Bank Foundation, founded by Moroccan billionaire Othman Benjelloun and run by Dr. Laila Mezian Benjelloun, has been promoting rural education in Morocco and Africa since 1995. Roughly 4% of BMCE Bank's gross operating profit is allocated to the foundation. It

runs 66 schools—62 in Morocco and five overseas. Around 22,000 pupils have enrolled in the network. The BMCE Bank Foundation has partnered with the Tawada microcredit association, which aims to help parents of pupils attending network schools by providing them with credit facilities.

Sawiris Foundation For Social Development

Founder: Sawiris

Country: Egypt

Focus areas: Job Creation, Education

Founded in: 2001

The Sawiris Foundation for Social Development was one of the first national donor foundations to devote all its efforts to social development in Egypt. It has helped over 91,000 people and has handed out grants to 158 winners of the Sawiris Cultural Award. The objectives of the foundation are to create jobs through financing training programs, increasing access to and quality of education, awarding merit scholarships and establishing specialized higher education institutions. It also contributes to healthcare, infrastructure development and artistic and cultural innovation through annual competitions.

Dar Ilham & Yusuf Alghanim (DIYA)

Founder: Kutayba Alghanim

Country: Kuwait

Focus areas: Foster Home

Founded in: 2003

DIYA provides a home for children that come from unstable homes or that don't have a home at all. Situated on a family estate that once belonged to Kutayba's father, Yusuf Alghanim, the location was once the private residence of the family. DIYA is non-denominational and gender blind, accepting all children and raising them together as brothers and sisters, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity and gender. The children grow up together until the age of 12. Teenagers move to separate apartments under the supervision and guidance of a "Mother"—the main caregiver for each family.

The Mansour Foundation For Development

Founder: Mansour Family

Country: Egypt

Focus areas: Education, Health and Capacity-Building

Founded in: 2001

The Mansour Foundation for Development was the first non-profit grantmaking organization to be fully and solely funded by an Egyptian family. It works with academic and nonprofit partners, and voluntarily serves on the boards of directors for two developmental NGOs, three CSR committees and two ministerial committees for sustainability. The foundation has supported philanthropic and youth empowerment projects, female leadership initiatives, entrepreneurship incubations, corporate volunteer events, youth training workshops, health initiatives and educational scholarships and fellowships. Through these initiatives it has supported over 250,000 beneficiaries.

Community Jameel

Founder: Jameel Family

Country: Saudi Arabia

Focus areas: Job Creation, Arts and Culture, Global Development, Education and

Healthcare

Founded in: 2003

Community Jameel was established to continue the Jameel family's tradition of supporting the community. Through the Bab Rizq Jameel initiative it has helped to create over 300,000 jobs, by distributing over \$533 million in microfinance loans. In 2018, it opened the Jameel Art Center, dedicated to exhibiting contemporary art—11,000 visitors visited the gallery in the first week. It also founded the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) in 2003—a global research center that works to reduce poverty. The Abdul Latif Jameel-Toyota Endowed Scholarship at MIT provides financial support for undergraduate students from more than 25 countries in Asia and MENA.

The Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor Foundation

Founder: Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor

Country: U.A.E.

Focus areas: Scientific Research, Sports

Founded in: 2013

Launched in 2013 with the objective of improving the lives of people in need within the U.A.E. and abroad, KAHF combines the charities of Khalaf Ahmed Al Habtoor, who has donated over \$100 million to philanthropic endeavors, as of January 2017. Around 20% of the Al Habtoor Group shares have been allocated for the foundation. Charitable activities include support for education, scientific research and various sports, and the provision of assistance and grants for researchers and scholars in various fields and specialties.

Alserkal Cultural Foundation

Founder: Ahmad bin Eisa bin Nasser Alserkal

Country: U.A.E.

Focus areas: Art and Culture

Founded in: 2015

Located in the Al Fahidi Historical Neighborhood in Dubai, ACF started work in 2015 as the first platform to support emerging artists and designers, with the aim of highlighting rich archeological heritage and history. ACF features five exhibition rooms, a creativity corner and a rooftop among other social amenities. It offers workshops that teach heritage art programs, such as ceramic tile workshops, heritage storytelling workshops and cultural awareness workshops for kids. It also runs an architecture preservation workshop in partnership with the Municipality Heritage Department.

Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation For Education

Founder: Abdulla Al Ghurair

Country: U.A.E.

Focus areas: Education

Founded in: 2015

The Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education—one of the largest privately funded philanthropic education initiatives in the world—was formed with an investment of \$1.1 billion. The Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation runs the Young Thinkers Programme—an online digital platform to promote university and career readiness. The Foundation has set out a target of reaching 15,000 youth over 10 years via secondary and higher education programs and scholarships.

<https://www.forbesmiddleeast.com/10-charitable-middle-eastern-family-foundations>