MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
FOR
NYU ABU DHABI INSTITUTE PROGRAM ORGANIZERS

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THE HISTORY AND MISSION OF THE NYU ABU DHABI INSTITUTE

In Fall 2008, the NYU Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) Institute began to offer various programs aimed at increasing the visibility of NYUAD and advancing the intellectual endeavors of the new project. As a major hub of scholarly and creative activity, advanced research, and co-curricular enrichment, the Institute is a cornerstone of NYUAD’s academic excellence, bringing together faculty and students from institutions of higher learning, professionals from both the public and private sectors, and leading experts from all over the globe, the region, and the UAE.

The Institute sponsors and coordinates major academic conferences, research workshops, lectures, film series, exhibitions, and theatrical and musical performances. Through a comprehensive range of activities, the Institute forms an intellectual and programmatic link between NYU New York and NYU Abu Dhabi, and bridges and creates knowledge communities across the globe.

The Institute welcomes proposals from within the NYU Global Network as well as from the broader international academic community (see page 5 for eligibility). Those who are interested are encouraged to frame program goals as explicitly as possible, not only in relation to the state of the respective field of research, but also in terms of relevance to the Institute’s mission—a connection applicants are asked to address specifically in the Commitment Memorandum (Part B of the MOU). The NYU Abu Dhabi Institute’s mission is:

- To provide public and specialized academic forums for discourse about cultural, historical, artistic, and scientific themes, and public policy topics having global significance as well as special relevance for Abu Dhabi and curricular development;
- To contribute to the academic experience of NYUAD’s faculty and students;
- To establish networks of collaboration and cooperation with local and regional academic and professional institutions; and
- To invite scholars and faculty from NYU and around the world to Abu Dhabi in order to contribute to NYUAD’s potential as an incubator of ideas and innovation.

The Institute’s Advisory Committee will look favorably upon proposals that exhibit concrete and organic collaborative opportunities with local and regional partners. To ensure that the proposed program is as successful and productive as it can be, applicants are encouraged to make a special effort to explore, as early as the proposal planning stage, all opportunities to include relevant collaborators from the UAE and the Middle East.

The Institute also hosts public programs of evening lectures and other special events for the NYUAD community that are organized by local deans, faculty, and students. These programs are generally not subject to review by the Institute’s Advisory Committee. Interested parties may submit nominations for the Institute’s public events calendar throughout the year using the appropriate form on the NYUAD Intranet. Inquiries about these programs may be directed to Nils Lewis (nils.lewis@nyu.edu), Manager of Faculty & Student Programs.
The NYUAD Institute team—with staff based in Abu Dhabi and New York—is available to offer support throughout the proposal and program planning processes. Please feel free to be in touch with a member of the Institute team (for whom contact information is outlined in Part A) with any questions and to visit nyuad.nyu.edu/research/nyuad-institute.html for more information.
**Administrative and Operational Guidelines**

In preparing a proposal, kindly pay close attention to a few administrative and operational guidelines that will facilitate the smooth execution of program plans. The Institute’s operations are governed by NYUAD financial, travel, and logistical policies and procedures. Applicants and all colleagues involved with a proposed program need to be familiar with these policies and willing to work with the Institute to assure necessary compliance.

**Travel**

Program Organizers will need, in particular, to be mindful of applicable policies regarding travel to and accommodations in Abu Dhabi and allowable reimbursements. The Institute and all of its guests participating in a program, without exception, are required to use the integrated services—airline ticketing, hotels, and airport ground transportation—of NYUAD’s authorized travel agency. Please distribute the NYUAD Travel and Accommodation Policy (which will be provided to all Program Organizers) to every member of the planning team, and refer to Category C, which specifically outlines policies related to group travel. All concerned should take note that the Institute does not have the authority to grant exceptions to the Travel Policy.

**Budget**

NYUAD’s budget and spending policies require the Institute to control costs in a disciplined and consistent way. Included in a program budget are only expenses essential to the program. While applicants are not expected to submit a budget as part of the proposal process, the Institute will develop a draft budget based on the submitted proposal for internal consideration.

**Co-sponsors**

The Institute welcomes the opportunity to co-sponsor with a relevant organization or institution and encourages applicants to bring to its attention potential co-sponsors (financial or programmatic). Please note that co-sponsor involvement will be subject to the Institute’s review.
PART A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Contact Information for NYUAD Institute Principal Staff

Sharon Hakakian Bergman, Associate Director of Academic Programs, New York. 
sharon.bergman@nyu.edu, +1 212 992 7941

Gila Bessarat-Waels, Manager of Academic Programs, Abu Dhabi. 
gila.waels@nyu.edu, +971 2 628 4025

Jason Seth Beckerman, Director of Administration & Operations, Abu Dhabi. 
jason.beckerman@nyu.edu, +971 2 628 4330

2. Program Proposal Eligibility & Process

The Institute welcomes proposals for Conferences, Workshops, and Regional Collaborative Seminars in all fields of study that have thematic relevance to NYUAD’s curriculum and areas of research (Arts & Humanities, Engineering, Science, and Social Science). Proposals can be submitted by full-time faculty from any of NYU’s global sites or scholars of another international institution of higher education who play an active and leading role in research and scholarship. The Institute can accommodate a limited number of programs proposed by non-NYU scholars each year. All proposals are subject to the selection criteria mentioned below.

As part of the program-generation process, applicants will be expected to submit a Commitment Memorandum, which will first be reviewed by the Institute’s Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee’s review of the memorandum, if favorable, will then guide the Steering Committee in determining how the Institute will ultimately move forward on a proposal.

In preparing the Commitment Memorandum, applicants should take the following selection criteria into account:

1. Highest quality of scholarly or creative content;
2. Clarity and significance of the scholarly question(s) central to the proposal, framed in the context of the state of research of the respective discipline(s);
3. The proposed outcome of the program, seen also in relation to the mission of NYUAD and the Institute;
4. The potential of the program to stimulate active interest and partnerships among UAE-based scholars and institutions;
5. Its potential to enrich and complement NYUAD’s curriculum; and
6. Prospects for creating a strong, sustainable intellectual community associated with NYUAD.

During the approval process, either Committee may decline the opportunity to consider the proposal further or recommend resubmission in a subsequent application period. The Chair of the Advisory Committee will provide the applicant with rationale in writing for the
Committees’ decision. If a proposal is denied, the applicant may resubmit a revised version only once more within a one-year period following its initial submission.

Proposals for Institute public programs in Abu Dhabi, such as Lectures, Conversations with Authors, and Panel Discussions, may be solicited by the Institute or submitted by NYUAD deans, faculty, and students. To submit a proposal for a public program, please complete the speaker nomination form which can be found on the NYUAD Intranet. These programs will normally not be reviewed by the Institute’s Advisory Committee.

Applicants should be aware that NYUAD also hosts programs at 19 Washington Square North (WSN), its center in New York. Programs at 19 WSN complement those occurring in Abu Dhabi or in some cases are regarded by the Advisory Committee as programs more appropriate for the 19 WSN venue. The Institute welcomes, from applicants for Abu Dhabi programs, indications of how their proposed program may advance the goals of 19 WSN programming (in Part B. 9).

3. Categories of NYUAD Institute Programs

Conferences
The principal purpose of Conferences is to extend the reach, breadth, and depth of a mature basic or applied research field by presenting recent research achievements, advancing research dialogues among communities of scholars and research professionals, and sharing results with attentive publics. Conferences may also be designed to stimulate new research and/or to mobilize collaborative research efforts among relevant global and Middle East regional experts. Conferences normally include no more than 40-50 invited international and local participants who meet over two to three working days in Abu Dhabi in sessions that the Program Organizer may choose to open to the public. Please note, however, that not all conference subjects draw public participants during daytime working hours in Abu Dhabi. The Institute will advise Program Organizers accordingly on the basis of experience to date with varied conference formats and substantive content. Conferences are video recorded for the Institute’s archival purposes (participants will be asked to sign a consent form) and if the Program Organizer wishes, the Institute can post the proceedings on the NYUAD website. A companion evening public lecture on some aspect of the Conference’s subject-matter is possible, if fitting for a lay audience, subject to the approval of the Institute.

Workshops
The principal purpose of Workshops is to provide an intensive working environment that facilitates in-depth scholarly review of globally significant research fields, stimulates evaluations of research-in-progress, promotes new research and cross-disciplinary perspectives, and enriches wherever possible NYUAD’s curricular development, pedagogical innovation, and advanced research agendas. Scaled for effective working dynamics and interchange, workshops normally include no more than 25 invited participants in by-invitation-only proceedings that span two to three days. Important objectives in the design of workshop agendas include promoting dialogue among research institutions and scholars globally and within the Middle East region as well as expanding networks of institutional and disciplinary contacts. Workshops are video recorded for the Institute’s archival purposes only (participants will be asked to sign a consent form). A companion evening public lecture
on some aspect of the Workshop’s subject-matter is possible, if fitting for a lay audience, subject to the approval of the Institute.

**Regional Collaborative Seminars**

The principal purpose of Regional Collaborative Seminars is to stimulate and deepen collaboration between NYUAD, the Institute, and teachers and scholars in the UAE, the Gulf, and the larger Middle East region. Regional Collaborative Seminars cater to the subject areas and disciplines of teachers and scholars in regional institutions and to subject areas that have special scholarly or policy significance in the region, or that serve curricular development goals. The Seminars, organized on a by-invitation-only basis to facilitate specialized deliberations, are designed to encourage sustained and continuous regional scholarly communication. Seminars will normally involve no more than 20 participants, at least 50 percent of whom will be drawn from the region. Typically meeting for two to three days in Abu Dhabi, Seminars will be structured to nourish sustained disciplinary dialogue within a regional network involving meetings at regular intervals over two to three years. Seminars are video recorded for the Institute’s archival purposes only (participants will be asked to sign a consent form). The Institute may exercise discretion in eliciting Seminar proposals from scholars in the region.

**Lectures**

The Institute regularly hosts lectures by scholars, experts, and policy makers of distinction in their field. These Lectures are open to the public and are intended to contribute to public discussion in Abu Dhabi of major topical issues of concern in the humanities, arts, sciences, and social sciences. All public programs are video recorded and posted on the NYUAD website.

**Special Series**

The Institute organizes series of lectures or panel discussions, open to the public, on themes having topical significance for Abu Dhabi and the Middle East. Each series typically entails four to six programs scheduled sequentially and possibly designed in tandem with programming at NYUAD's venue in New York, 19 Washington Square North. Programs in both cities may involve the same lecturers, providing thematic synergy between the two locations. All public programs in Abu Dhabi and New York are video recorded and posted on the NYUAD website.

**Conversations with Authors**

The Institute hosts conversations with one or more authors on the subject of a significant recent publication—new, re-published, or a translation of an existing work. The Conversations, which are open to the public, are designed to encourage conversational, informal exchanges between principals and audiences and to enable the public to meet authors for follow-up conversations in informal, post-event settings. An appropriate interlocutor is selected to lead a Conversation. All public programs are video recorded and posted on the NYUAD website.
Panel Discussions
The Institute organizes Panel Discussions featuring scholars, policy makers, and experts on topics of immediate relevance to local and international communities. Each panel consists of no more than three panelists and one moderator. The panel format is best suited for, but not limited to, topics of public policy, politics, and current events. Panels are strictly discussion-based, guided by an appropriate moderator, and do not feature computer-based presentation tools. All public programs are video recorded and posted on the NYUAD website.

Public Arts Programs: Film Series, Performances, and Exhibitions
The Institute is committed to establishing a presence in, and contributing to, the rapidly growing arts community in Abu Dhabi, especially in view of NYUAD’s eventual location in the arts-rich environment of Saadiyat Island. To advance this commitment, the Institute sponsors and supports Film Series, Performances, and Exhibitions. Please be in touch with a member of the Institute team to inquire about submitting a proposal for a Public Arts program.
PART B. COMMITMENT MEMORANDUM

Once completed, applicants may submit the Commitment Memorandum to the Institute by emailing it to nyuad.program.proposal@nyu.edu.

Date:

To: Advisory Committee, NYUAD Institute

From:

Subject: Proposed [INSERT PROGRAM CATEGORY AND NAME]

Note: Sections marked with “*” will inform the Institute’s program budget preparation. These elements are prime drivers of major budget lines and will be regarded as firm and authoritative estimates.

1. Program Formal Name

2. Program Overview, Goals, and Expected Results [1000 Words]
   Please be sure to explicitly state the specific scholarly question(s) that the program will address, and provide a brief description of the relevant discipline’s state of research and how this proposal fits within this context.

3. Promotional Blurb [75-100 Words]

4. Local and Regional Audience-Development Objectives [300 Words]

5. Explanation of How the Program Advances the Mission of NYUAD and the NYUAD Institute [300 Words]

6. Proposed Dates*
   Please note that dates are contingent upon the Institute’s calendar which can be booked as far as six months to a year in advance.

7. Travel*
   a. For Program Organizers*
   b. Pre-Program Reconnaissance Trip to Abu Dhabi if Required by Program Organizer*
      These trips will only be approved if there is a clear purpose and need.
   c. For Participants*
      Note that participants will arrive the day before the program begins and depart the day after the program ends.
8. Overview of Conference/Workshop/Regional Collaborative Seminar Structure and Requirements (subject to revision during program planning)

a. Description and Outline of Agenda Structure and Topics
   i. Rationale of Agenda Structure [100 Words]
   ii. Number and Description of Panels/Sessions
   iii. Provisional Roster of Speakers and Biographical Identification
       To help prepare the travel budget, please be sure to include, wherever possible, the region from which each participant will be traveling. While this is only a provisional list of speakers, it should serve as an appropriate representation of participants’ geographic locations.

b. Associated Business-Related Visits with UAE Professionals or Educational Institutions, if applicable*

9. Statement of Potential Relevance for 19 Washington Square North Programming, if applicable

10. For NYU scholars, applicant’s signature as well as signed approval of the respective Dean and/or Department Chair (See Part E)
    For all other scholars, applicant’s signature (in Part E) as well as a CV and two letters of recommendation, assessing the academic merits of the applicant(s) and the proposal.
PART C. FAQ FOR APPLICANTS

When should applicants submit their proposals? When will the applicant receive the Institute’s decision?

Proposals will be reviewed three times a year: in October, January, and March. To be considered in a particular month, proposals completed according to MOU guidelines must be submitted to nyuad.program.proposal@nyu.edu by the 15th of the month prior: September 15, December 15, and February 15. Notification will follow within three months of the submission deadline.

Is the Institute able to help applicants reach out to potential local and regional participants?

While the Institute has been successful in encouraging wide participation in its programs, it has to rely on Program Organizers and their specialized networks of scholars and practitioners to assure that programs continue to engage an appropriate audience. Program Organizers are, in fact, often better informed and more widely aware of such collaborative options than the Institute itself, though the team is always prepared to share knowledge gained over the last few years and to facilitate introductions to local universities and expertise as much as possible.

Will participants receive honoraria?

The Institute makes a significant investment in organizing a program—bringing participants to Abu Dhabi from around the world, covering their travel, accommodation, and meals during their stay, and providing them with a professional, academic environment in which to work. With this in mind, the Institute does not pay honoraria to conference and workshop participants. If an applicant feels that providing honoraria is appropriate, s/he may include a request for funds (noting the amount) and justification in the Commitment Memorandum for the Institute’s consideration.

Can a program take place over a weekend?

In the UAE the weekend comprises Friday and Saturday, during which the Institute cannot hold programs. Program Organizers are asked to understand that NYUAD’s offices are closed on Fridays and Saturdays and Institute staff is not available. In addition, Program Organizers (and/or essential planning team members) based outside of Abu Dhabi will need to arrive one full business day prior to the opening day of the program to work with the Institute team on the ground.

The Institute encourages applicants to consider scheduling the first day of their programs no earlier in the week than a Monday (and no later than a Wednesday). A Monday start date, for example, will allow the program organizing team to depart from New York on Friday, arrive in Abu Dhabi on Saturday, and meet with the Institute team on the ground on Sunday before the program begins on Monday.
Where will the program be held?
NYUAD’s Downtown Campus (DTC) is the preferred venue for Institute programs; however, because space on campus is limited, the Institute will continue to use outside venues in Abu Dhabi when DTC is unavailable or not appropriate for a program.

Will the Institute arrange any touristic activities for the participants?
If there is still time in the agenda after the program sessions are finalized, a single courtesy tour of Abu Dhabi can be arranged for guests, but the Institute is otherwise obliged to comply with NYUAD Travel Policy that precludes staff assistance or financial support for private touristic activities.
PART D. POST-PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

For the Institute’s internal purposes and in a continuous effort to improve programming, Program Organizers are asked to submit a post-program assessment report addressing the points provided below. This report evaluates the extent to which the program met the substantive program goals of the approved proposal. This assessment also contributes to the Institute’s periodic reporting and assessment, best-practice recommendations for future Program Organizers, and continuous improvement as a service partner. The Institute would very much appreciate feedback on these points, as well as any others that the Program Organizer feels are relevant.

The Program Organizer assessment should consist of:

1. A recapitulation of the Program Goals identified in the Commitment Memorandum;

2. A summary of the program events also in view of the Institute’s scholarly mission;

3. An assessment of the program planning process with the Institute team; and

4. An assessment of how the experience with the program might lead to follow-up programs in future academic years, either in Abu Dhabi or at 19 Washington Square North in New York, and/or to curricular development and major research proposals at NYUAD.
PART E. SIGNATURE PAGE

Signature confirms that:

1. Program Organizer accepts the principles and conditions stipulated in this MOU;

2. Program Organizer has read and understands the NYUAD Travel and Accommodation Policy and undertakes to inform all members of the program planning team and all participants of the content of the Policy; and

3. The appropriate academic officer verifies the scholarly standing of the applicant.

For all applicants
Program Organizer Name:
Title:
Signature:
Date:

For NYU applicants
Dean/Department Chair Name:
Title:
Signature:
Date:

For all other applicants
Please submit a CV and two letters of recommendation, assessing the academic merits of the applicant(s) and the proposal.