



**Lutfia Rabbani  
Foundation**

## Lutfia Rabbani Foundation Activities 2020-2021

The COVID-19 pandemic that characterised this year at the Lutfia Rabbani Foundation necessitated the adaptation of its regular in-person activities so as to continue meeting its objectives of promoting Euro-Arab dialogue and understanding through education and cultural exchange. Namely, the creation of the online dialogue series *Rabbani Talks* and a number of other interactive activities on our virtual channels, such as Instagram takeovers and online film screenings, allowed the Foundation in order to remain connected and engaged with its network in a purely virtual environment.

Moreover, the scholarship opportunities which the Foundation offers to both Dutch and Arab students in the MENA region continued, both by granting scholarships to individual students, as well as by establishing new partnerships and collaborations with other educational institutes, such as the IHE Delft. This year, the Foundation also gave priority to developing its five-year strategy, by conducting targeted research on organisations with similar missions with which partnerships could be developed in the future.

### Activities 2020-2021

1. Overall, **17 scholarships and travel grants** were awarded to various scholars this year:
  - a. 2 students were awarded Mahmoud Rabbani Scholarship – a fully financed Master or PhD scholarship at a Dutch university or other institute for higher learning;
  - b. 1 student was awarded the Leiden University Fund – a fully financed Master scholarship at Leiden University for students from the Arab World. This scholarship fund has been renewed for another three years.
  - c. 10 students were awarded the Vreede Scholarship for International Law – for Arab students in international law, offered at the International Court of Justice in the Hague;
  - d. 4 Travel Grants were awarded – offered to Dutch and Arab students and professionals seeking experience in the Netherlands or the Arab World;
2. The Lutfia Rabbani Foundation supported for the third time the **International Documentary Film festival Amsterdam (IDFA)** in November 2020 by enabling 5 young Arab film talents from Jordan, Tunisia, Iraq, Lebanon and Morocco to attend IDFAcademy during IDFA. IDFAcademy is an intensive four-day training program that takes place during the festival, offering emerging documentary filmmakers and producers the opportunity to meet a broad spectrum of esteemed documentary professionals who share their knowledge of the industry. The aim of the support of LRF is to contribute to make IDFA more inclusive, by bringing a rich source of young Arab talents including their ideas and expertise to enrich these discussions, offering different perspectives and valuable insights. Following the festival, an **online Meet & Greet** was organised with these filmmakers to further connect with them
3. Two online **film screenings** were organised as part of the IDFA partnership, one in September 2020 and one in April 2021, in order to showcase the filmmaking talents of the Arab filmmakers. In 2020, the film 'Let's Talk by Egyptian Marianne Khoury was shown and discussed, while in

2021 the documentary 'Fifth Story' by Iraqi filmmaker Ahmed Abd was screened. This was followed by a panel discussion with the filmmaker, film producer Louai Haffer and Artistic Director of IDFA Orwa Nyrabia.

4. **Rabbani Talks** was launched in September 2020 – a series of online dialogue events which aims to bring (young) leaders, inventors, artists and dreamers from the Arab World, and from Europe whose aspirations lie in the Arab World, to the forefront, shedding light on their inspiring projects, achievements and ideas. The goal of Rabbani Talks is not only to motivate and empower the Foundation's MENA audience, but also providing its Western audience with an eye-opening experience of what the region truly has to offer. Three episodes of Rabbani Talks have thus far been organised, and can be watched on our [website](#).
5. Our partnership with **the Delia Arts Foundation** was strengthened throughout this year. In July 2020, a virtual tour was organised of the newly opened Delia Arts Centre in Gaza which has the purpose of providing a space to develop and perfect their skills, build a local and international career, and create a community where they can actively support and learn from one another.
6. The Lutfia Rabbani Foundation continued its support for the **Nour Project**, initiated by the Leiden branch of AIESEC the Netherlands. The Nour Project sends a group of both Dutch and international students to the MENA region for 6 weeks over the Summer and Winter seasons to work in various projects and internships in their destination country of choice. This year, the Foundation and the Nour Project also celebrate their **10-year anniversary** partnership, which involved an online campaign spread over several months in which alumni and team members from both parties highlighted the key events and moments shared throughout the decade, and the eagerness to continue to work together to meet their complementary missions in the future.
7. An **Instagram takeover series** was organised, spread over 2 months, in which partners and alumni of the Foundation had the opportunity to share a day in their lives as a student or as a member of their respective organisation with the LRF online network.
8. An **alumni section** was created on the Foundation's website to complement the launch of its new alumni network. The purpose of this section was to shed light on the importance the Foundation gives not only to granting scholarships, but also keeping in touch with these scholars and remaining part of their personal and professional journeys long after they completed their studies.
9. A partnership was established with the **Eye Filmmuseum**, and specifically support was granted to their **exhibition *Trembling Landscapes*** held between the 17th of September and the 30th of December. The purpose of this exhibition was to showcase some of the most prominent film and video artists from the Arab world that explore the subject of landscape. Despite the fact that the exhibition could not remain open for the entire time period due to the pandemic restrictions, it was nonetheless a huge success, and the use of virtual platforms also made it more easily accessible remotely.
10. In May 2020, the Lutfia Rabbani Foundation and **KIT Royal Tropical Institute** signed a Memorandum of Understanding to officially establish a longstanding cooperation and joint scholarship: the KIT-LRF scholarship. This year, the MOU was honoured by granting two students a travel grant to attend a Gender Training course, as well as granting a joint scholarship in the 2021 MSR application round. Moreover, a meeting was held between a member of the KIT team and a member of the LRF team on 'effective practices of online learning during the pandemic situation'.
11. A new collaboration was established with **Radixsound**, a group of young aspiring musicians from Haifa with the goal of encouraging musical talent in Palestine by providing both a physical space, the musical resources and the opportunity to network with like-minded individuals. The

goal of the Foundation is to hold regular brainstorming meetings with them, as well as increase their exposure across social media platforms.

12. A **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** was signed with **IHE Delft**, which has a long tradition of receiving water professionals from MENA countries for MSc level education on relevant water topics related to their respective region. The LRF is committed to help building sustainable, inclusive societies in Europe and the Arab World, and thus aims to strengthen its coordination with IHE Delft and explore possibilities of cooperation and coordination in their shared aims in the domains of professional development, Euro-Arab dialogue and furthering knowledge exchange.



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T: +31 70 365 88 41

Amaliastraat 3-5 – 2501 CJ The Hague – The Netherlands