



- [Home](#)
- [HBKU Students Hone ICT Skills During Huawei Program in China](#)

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A group of students from the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), recently travelled to Beijing, China to participate in Huawei's annual Seeds for the Future program. The corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative by the Chinese multinational telecommunications company aims to develop the information and telecommunication technology (ICT) skills of university students from across the globe.

Hala Abou El Oula, a Master of Science in Cybersecurity student, and Mohammed Ali Abdulla, a Master of Science in Data Science and Engineering student, are two such students who took part in the two-week program together with ongoing participation from 150 international universities. The program aims to enhance knowledge transfer and promote a greater understanding of and interest in the telecommunications sector.

Commenting on her experience, Hala Abou El Oula said: “The Seeds for the Future program was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that introduced us to Huawei’s incredible journey and China’s rich history. In addition to immersing us in the latest technologies, the program has taught us how to thrive in a global, competitive environment. Through my participation in the program, I was able to enhance my understanding and knowledge of the ICT field.”

During the two-week program, participants worked at Huawei’s headquarters in Shenzhen, China where they studied at its cutting-edge ICT training center, operating and practicing in a lab with the latest equipment, and receiving up-to-date ICT solution demonstrations from the organization’s experts.

Dr. Mounir Hamdi, dean of CSE, said: “The ever-changing nature of ICT demands that scholars and practitioners in the industry are constantly kept abreast of the latest advancements to ensure they are able to thrive in their careers. We are proud of our students, who were not only able to enhance their knowledge about the industry, but also learn about China’s rich culture and heritage and represent HBKU and Qatar on a global level.”

Reflecting on his participation in the initiative, Mohammed Ali Abdulla said: “I am grateful for the opportunity to take part in Huawei’s program, which offered an invaluable opportunity to learn about the latest developments and challenges within the industry. It was a remarkable experience, and I learned a great deal about ICT and Chinese culture throughout the trip.”

Dr. Mohamed Abdullah, assistant professor, CSE, said: “The Seeds for the Future program exposed our students to global ICT from one of the leaders in the industry. With a greater understanding of the workings of the industry, students such as Hala and Mohammed, will surely excel in their respective studies and future careers. We thank Huawei for extending this incredible opportunity to HBKU’s students.”

Frank Fan, CEO Huawei Qatar, commented: “We are proud of the HBKU students and their participation, as our vision is to empower this region’s generation and develop the necessary talents and skills that would help them accelerate their country’s digital transformation. Huawei is committed to deploying the most advanced technologies that will help implement Qatar’s 2030 national vision.”

“Knowledge transfer and nurturing future ICT talent has always been a core pillar of the Huawei way”, added Farhan J Khan, VP, Huawei Qatar. “ICT is vital to the success of the region and we are committed to supporting the region’s journey of digital transformation. The future of ICT progress lays in the hands of our students, and by developing platforms and programs that allow them to grow and mature into experts, we can better equip the next generation of technology leaders.”

The program also provided a culturally immersive experience for participants who were introduced to China’s traditions and culture through visits to national historical sites and lessons to learn the Chinese language.